



ELEMENTARY

ACADEMIC PLAYBOOK

2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR



ACADEMIC PLAYBOOK



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Partnerships between school staff, parents, and other family members are important for students to be successful in school. Teachers at school and parents at home work together to help students’ academic progress. When parents, family, and local community members get involved, it helps students do well in school.

Research shows that great schools have everyone working together, improving students’ learning, attendance, behavior, and graduation rates.

The **Elementary Academic Playbook** will help you, the parent or caregiver, ask questions about how your child is doing in school. It will also help you work with teachers to make sure your child does well in school and know what support your family can receive if your child is struggling. This is YOUR parent guidebook, helping you to help your child successfully navigate through elementary school.

Sincerely,
Sean W. Bulson, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

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SCHOOL DIRECTORY

ELEMENTARY

Abingdon Elementary ◇

Dr. Stacey Gerringer, Principal
(410) 638-3910

Bakerfield Elementary* ▀

Tara Dedeaux, Principal
(410) 273-5518

Bel Air Elementary* ♦◉

Jeanna Gentile, Principal
(410) 638-4160

Church Creek Elementary ▀

Harley Main, Principal
(410) 273-5550

Churchville Elementary ▀*◉

Stephanie Barnes, Principal
(410) 638-3800

Darlington Elementary *

Danielle O'Neill, Principal
(410) 638-3700

Deerfield Elementary* ◇

Meridith Dunlap, Principal
(410) 612-1535

Dublin Elementary ◉◉

Lorien Covelly, Principal
(410) 638-3703

Edgewood Elementary ◇▶

Cynthia Womack, Principal
(410) 612-1540

Emmorton Elementary ♦

Zachary Greenbaum, Principal
(410) 638-3920

Forest Hill Elementary ♦◀◉

Cheryl Shaw, Principal
(410) 638-4166

Forest Lakes Elementary* ♦◀

Kelly Sayre, Principal
(410) 638-4262

Fountain Green Elementary ◉

Mary Ann Clinton, Principal
(410) 638-4220

George D. Lisby Elementary ▀

Christine Langrehr, Principal
(410) 273-5530

Hall's Cross Roads Elementary ▀

Karen Jankowiak, Principal
(410) 273-5524

Havre de Grace Elementary* *

Jennifer Gasdia, Principal
(410) 939-6616

Hickory Elementary ♦◉

Stacey McCord, Principal
(410) 638-4170

Homestead/Wakefield Elementary ♦Δ

Chris Cook, Principal
(410) 638-4175

Jarrettsville Elementary ◀◉

Christian Slattery, Principal
(410) 692-7800

Joppatowne Elementary ◀▶

Jessica Hichkad, Principal
(410) 612-1546

Magnolia Elementary ▶

Sara Jo Brown, Principal
(410) 612-1553

Meadowvale Elementary *

Mark Warfield, Principal
(410) 939-6622

Norrisville Elementary ◉

Jennifer Drumgoole, Principal
(410) 692-7810

North Bend Elementary ◉

Gregory Lane, Principal
(410) 692-7815

North Harford Elementary ◉

Christopher Yancone, Principal
(410) 638-3670

Old Post Road Elementary ◇

Ronald Wooden, Principal
(410) 612-2033 (Intermediate Bldg)
(410) 612-1566 (Primary Bldg)

Prospect Mill Elementary ◉

Amanda Heise, Principal
(410) 638-3817

Red Pump Elementary* ♦◀

Heather Skopak, Principal
(410) 638-4252

Ring Factory Elementary Δ

Parfait Awono, Principal
(410) 638-4186

Riverside Elementary ▶

Marc Hamilton, Principal
(410) 612-1560

Roye-Williams Elementary ▀

Rose Martino, Principal
(410) 273-5536

William S. James Elementary* ◇Δ

Bethany Farver, Principal
(410) 638-3900

Youth's Benefit Elementary ◀

Lisa Minutoli, Principal
(410) 638-4190

MULTI-LEVEL

Harford Academy

Randy Geyer, Principal
(410) 638-3810

Swan Creek

Mark Truskowski, Principal
(410) 273-5594

Feeder School Key

- ▀ Aberdeen Middle
- ♦ Bel Air Middle
- ◇ Edgewood Middle
- ◀ Fallston Middle
- * Havre de Grace Middle

- ▶ Magnolia Middle
- ◉ North Harford Middle
- Δ Patterson Mill Middle
- ◉ Southampton Middle



Click here to access
HCPS School websites.

Elementary school office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
*Fourth tier school office hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

All school information accurate as of July 2025.

MY SCHOOL INFORMATION

Principal's Name _____

Assistant Principal's Name _____

School Phone Number _____

Teacher Name(s) _____

Teacher Email(s) _____

Bus Number _____ Bus Stop _____

School Nurse's Name _____

School Nurse's Email _____

School Counselor's Name _____

School Counselor's Email _____

More Key Contacts _____

(Examples include: PACE Coordinator, Title I, Social Worker, etc.)

SCHOOL BUS INFORMATION

Friendly reminders for our youngest bus riders:

- Be at the bus stop at least five minutes before your pick-up time.
- Use a quiet voice when you are on the school bus.
- Follow directions and listen to the bus driver.
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself and out of the aisle.
- No drinking or eating on the school bus.
- Be safe and be kind!

If there are unexpected delays or other causes for a school bus route to be altered, updates are posted on the HCPS website on the **Bus Route Status page**.



Click here for more information about **HCPS Transportation**.

Click here to see **up-to-date bus route information**.

FIND YOUR BUS STOP AT HCPS.ORG!



CLICK HERE!



STUDENT

HEALTH SERVICES

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) nurses support student success and achievement by identifying health concerns through assessment, intervention, and follow-up for all students in the school setting. With caring and respect, school nurses assist students to assume personal responsibility and self-care behaviors for their own health and well-being.

Printable Forms and Health Resources

Visit the Student Health Services page on hcps.org for important student health forms such as vaccination, medication, and treatment policy and permission forms, a school nurse directory, and guidelines for medication administration in schools.

 Click here to access **HCPS Student Health Services**.

 Click here to access the **2025-2026 Guide to Immunization Law**.

Click here to access more **student health information**.

PAYMENT

OPTIONS

HCPS utilizes multiple payment options for school related payments. These platforms have been carefully evaluated and selected to ensure parents and guardians have access to the most effective, easy to use, and secure, payment options available to public school systems. The payment options noted below are known for being user friendly and efficient in their payment area.


MySchoolBucks

MySchoolBucks gives parents and guardians the convenience and flexibility of one account to securely pay for all of their student meals with a credit card, debit card, or electronic check. Parents and guardians may access meal balances, cafeteria purchases, and more.

 Click here to access **MySchoolBucks**.

School Cash Online

HCPS uses School Cash Online to facilitate payments for school items and other activity fees, as well as reduce the need for students to carry cash. Schools can post items and activities so you can make purchases on a convenient, secure, easy-to-use system using your credit card or echeck. Once parents and guardians register for an account and add all their students, parents and guardians may choose to receive email notifications as new items are available for purchase. This allows you to stay informed about upcoming school activities while keeping track of the school fees that require your attention. Up to five households may add each student, so additional family members and guardians may also create an account.

 Click here to access **School Cash Online**.

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES

HCPS Food and Nutrition Services provides a full service breakfast, lunch, and afterschool snack program for all students. All students may participate in the school meals program and no student may be denied or refused a meal.

MySchoolBucks

MySchoolBucks is used to fund student meal accounts. Features include low balance alerts, auto-replenish options, and more. By enrolling/signing into MySchoolBucks, parents may also view student purchases. Cash is accepted at the registers in school cafeterias.

Student Allergies

Parents should provide the school nurse with medical information provided by the student's physician. Medically required restrictions, such as food allergy diagnosis, are flagged in the computer registers in school cafeterias.

Food Health and Safety

Foods are evaluated and menus are planned to meet United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Dietary Guidelines for Americans and federal laws like the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act. Lean protein, whole grain rich items, several fruit and vegetable choices, low fat and fat free fluid milk are available in all school cafeterias. All a la carte foods must meet Smart Snack federal restrictions.

All staff receive continuous sanitation and food safety training. Each school kitchen has at least one ServSafe certified staff member. All kitchens are inspected twice a year by the Harford County Health Department. HCPS professional staff are members of the School Nutrition Association.

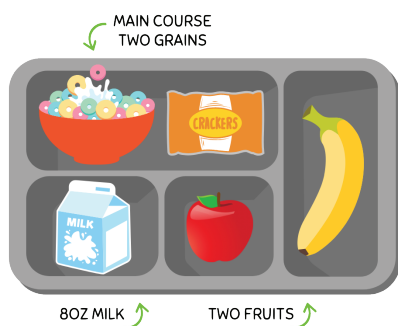
Free and Reduced Priced Meals

If a student's family receives certain benefits, the student may automatically be enrolled for free or reduced priced meals ("meal benefits"). Households will receive a confirmation letter outlining which benefit is provided. All other students must pay for meals or apply for meal benefits using the online or paper application. **Meal benefit applications must be submitted each year.**

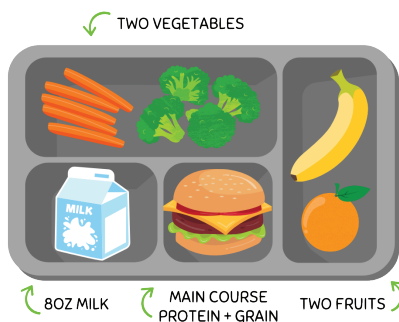
➡ Click here to access the **meal benefit application**.

EACH SCHOOL MEAL INCLUDES:

BREAKFAST



LUNCH



BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Building a positive relationship with each of your child(ren)'s teachers will help set you and your child up for success this year! Teachers observe many things with each of their students that can help them succeed both in and out of the classroom. Here are a few helpful strategies to help cultivate a positive relationship with your child(ren)'s teachers:

- **Say Hello:** Start by introducing yourself and saying hi to the teacher. Let them know you care about your child's learning.
- **Go to Meetings:** Take the opportunity to meet with the teacher. Talk about how your child is doing and ask questions.
- **Keep Talking:** Stay in touch with the teacher during the school year. You can send messages or call if you have questions or want to share something about your child.
- **Be Kind:** Be kind and positive when you talk to the teacher. They want to help your child, too!
- **Listen:** Listen carefully when the teacher talks to you. Ask if you don't understand something.
- **Follow the Rules:** Help your child follow the rules the teacher sets in class. This makes it easier for everyone to learn.
- **Help at Home:** Ask the teacher what you can do at home to help your child learn better. They have great ideas!
- **Check In:** If you notice something different about your child's behavior or school work, talk to the teacher about it. They can help!
- **Say Thank You:** Tell the teacher thank you for all they do to help your child learn. It's nice to show you appreciate them.
- **Resources:** Ask about resources available at the school or district to help your child succeed.

Having a positive relationship with your child's teacher is important and helps to create a powerful partnership that will help your child succeed in school!

ELEMENTARY

GRADING INFORMATION

Your goal as a parent is to make sure that your child is ready for post graduate opportunities, whether that includes college, technical or trade school, the Armed forces, or a career. Your child's report card will be sent to you by the school once a quarter. The report card will be emailed to you, and some schools send a hard copy home. You can also access your child's Report Card on the **Home Access Center (HAC)**. Report cards are available on the following dates for the 2025-2026 school year:

- **Quarter 1:** Friday, November 21, 2025
- **Quarter 2:** Friday, February 13, 2026
- **Quarter 3:** Friday, April 24, 2026
- **Quarter 4:** Tuesday, June 30, 2026

For students in grades 1-5, grades are posted to HAC on an approximately bi-weekly basis throughout the school year, beginning on Friday, September 12, 2025.



Click here to access **HAC**.

Quarterly progress report cards for students in prekindergarten through grade two are given to you through a non-graded checklist of "competency" marks.

- **CE- Consistently Evident:** Students consistently demonstrate understanding of the learning.
- **EV- Evident:** Student demonstrates understanding of the learning.
- **DV- Developing:** Student does not consistently demonstrate understanding of the learning.
- **NE- Not Evident:** Student does not demonstrate understanding of the learning.
- **NA- Not Assessed:** Item not yet taught.

The competency marks may be used for supplemental instructional competency marks are as follows:

In grades 3 through 5, student progress shall be reported using letter grades for mathematics, reading, science, social studies, and writing

- **A** = 89.5%- 100%
- **B** = 79.5% - 89.49%
- **C** = 69.5% - 79.49%
- **D** = 59.5% - 69.49%
- **E** = Below 59.5%

Unified arts classes such as art, band, media, vocal music, orchestra, and physical education will also receive competency marks.

STANDARDIZED

TESTING INFORMATION

Now that you are beginning your journey as a family with HCPS, your child's job is to learn, study, and always try their best. As a parent, your job is to stay informed so that you can support your child's progress – know what kinds of tests your child is taking, why they are being administered, how the results will be used, and when that information will be communicated with your family. Throughout their K-12 education with HCPS, your child will be assessed in many different subjects and skills. Remember that a true love of learning is the greatest sign of success, and academic success is not defined by test scores alone. Encourage your child every step of the way.

Tests only show part of what your child has learned. Teachers will use tests, your child's classwork, participation, and how they complete assignments. Teachers may share this information during parent-teacher conferences, through phone calls, emails, or notes sent home. Help your child understand that tests matter and they should try their best—but also let them know you're proud of all their efforts and achievements, not just their test scores.

Here is an overview of some tests that will be given to your child in the early grades:

ASSESSMENT	TARGETED GRADE LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)	K	This assessment, given at the beginning of kindergarten, measures a student's school readiness across four domains including social skills, math, literacy, and physical well-being/motor skills. This assessment doesn't look like a traditional test. It includes a variety of activities and teacher observations.
Student Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP)	K	This is a one-on-one math assessment that measures number sense. The teacher asks the students questions to assess their performance along several areas. This test does not result in a score. Rather, the interview indicates the child's strengths and needs, which the teacher can use to plan math instruction that meets your child's needs.
DIBELS, 8th edition	K-3	The DIBELS assessment is given to all kindergarten students and students in grades 1-3 performing below grade level. This assessment is an early reading screener and provides teachers with data regarding your child's phonics skills. The assessment is done in a one-on-one setting with the teacher and the student and consists of short subtests, which result in an overall score. Students who are in the "at risk" category must receive additional reading instruction in a small group setting.
Cognitive Abilities Test (CoGAT)	2	This is a computer-based standardized assessment that measures students' in the areas of verbal, numerical, and nonverbal reasoning. This assessment encourages students to demonstrate their creative problem-solving skills and their ability to learn in different situations.
iReady Reading Diagnostic	K-high school	To provide a means of gauging students' reading levels and to measure reading growth over time.
iReady Math Diagnostic	2-8	To provide student performance data regarding mathematics skills and measure student growth over time.



Click here to access **Top 10 Tips for Effective Test Taking at FamilyEducation.com**.

Click here to access **State Assessment Resources at PTA.org**.

ELEMENTARY

READING PROGRAM

In kindergarten, children embark on an exciting journey into reading and writing! They will learn to recognize letters and sounds, helping them decode simple words. By the end of the year, students will be able to read basic sight words and understand simple stories by engaging in reading many decodable books. Students have daily opportunities to build their vocabularies through read alouds and shared reading of texts.

As they begin to write, children will practice forming letters and writing their names, along with short sentences. They'll explore different types of texts, including stories and informational books, fostering a love for reading.

To support your child's growth, engage in daily reading together and encourage them to express their thoughts through drawings and writing. These early experiences lay the foundation for a lifelong love of learning! To support your child in becoming a strong reader, encourage the development of good reading habits and practice the kindergarten reader activities on hcps.org!

HCPS implements a comprehensive reading and language arts program aligned to the Science of Reading research and designed to meet the instructional needs of our students. The Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Program occurs daily across all kindergarten and first grade classrooms. This research-based program is aligned to the essential early literacy skills in phonological awareness.



Click here to access **HCPS Reading and Language Arts information**.

Click here to access **HCPS Kindergarten Reader Activities**.

KINDERGARTEN READING ACTIVITIES

To foster your child's growth, read together daily and encourage expression through drawings and writing. These activities promote a lifetime love of learning. Additionally, support good reading habits and practice essential skills.

Comprehension

Asking questions as you read. Read a story together with your child. Engage their curiosity by having them ask questions as they read. Some prompts that may guide your child to ask questions are:

- Preview the text and start with "I wonder" questions.
- While reading ask who, what, where, when, why, and how questions.
- Ask questions about what may come next in the story.
- Ask how a character might be feeling and why, or why a character may have acted a certain way.

Phonics

Shaving cream letters. Spread a small amount of shaving cream on a countertop or cookie sheet. Call out letter names or letter sounds. Have your child write the letter in the shaving cream.

Phonological Awareness

Blending a first sound with a rime. Ask your child what this word is- "c-at?" The sound of 'c' is your first sound, and the rime is 'at.' Give them other first sounds to blend with the rime. Repeat with other rimes - "ip," "ot," etc.

Quick Tips for Reading Time

- Make reading a part of your daily routine- morning or bedtime is a great time to read together.
- Let your child turn pages, point to pictures, and share what they are thinking.
- Ask questions as they read.
- Re-read favorite stories- they build confidence and memory!

PARENT-TEACHER

CONFERENCE CHECKLIST

Your school will communicate with you when it is time for you to have a conference with your child's teacher. It will be a great opportunity for you to dialogue with your child's teacher(s) so that your child can succeed.

What to Expect:

Two-way conversations are best. Like all good communication, parent-teacher conferences are best when both people talk and listen.

Before the Conference:

- **Scheduling:** Confirmation of the date, time, and location of the meeting will be provided by the school. Some meetings can be held virtually if needed.
- **Preparation:** Teachers may send home reports or information about the student's progress before the conference. Keep track of their progress and write down questions you may have.
- **Major Changes:** Are there changes to your child's home routine that may have an impact on school work such as health, family issues, separation from friends, etc.?
- **Social-Emotional Learning:** Is my child making friends? Are they socializing on the playground, at recess, and at lunch?
- **Special Interests or Other Information to Share:** Is there anything going on at home that your child's teacher should know about? This may be added stressors that could disrupt your child's ability to focus or connect with their peers.

PRE-CONFERENCE NOTES

CONFERENCE

NOTE TRACKER

Not sure what you should talk to your child's teacher about? Use these recommended questions to get the conversation started!

Student's Name _____ Teacher's Name _____

What are my child's:

Strengths

Areas to Improve

In which subject areas is my child performing at grade level and doing well?

Is my child making friends and getting along with others?

How can I help my child at home?

As a parent, what are any additional things you'd like your child's teacher to know?

AFTER THE CONFERENCE

After a parent-teacher conference:

- **Praise** your child for doing well and making progress and discuss together areas for improvement suggested by the teacher. “For every negative, there are two positives” is a great mindset for this situation.
- **Talk** to your child about the information that the teacher shared at the conference.
- **Communicate** with your child’s teacher on a regular basis.

It is important to create a plan after the conference. List action steps you will take to help your child continue to make progress:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal green ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

YOU BELONG IN PTA

UNITE

SPEAK

ADVOCATE

CHAMPION

CONNECT

INVEST

WHY JOIN PTA? BECAUSE...



PTA CREATES CONNECTIONS

- Get to know your school's teachers and staff
- Learn about helpful school and community resources
- Get involved - your unique perspective matters



PTA SUPPORTS YOUR CHILD

- Access resources to support your child's success at school, at home, and in achieving their future goals
- Bring more fun and learning to your child's school experience with proven programs



PTA AMPLIFIES YOUR VOICE



WILL YOU JOIN US?

Together we can make every child's potential a reality- with your help!

Get started - connect with your local PTA. Just scan the QR code.



CONNECT WITH US!

**Follow HCPS online for important events, information,
and updates throughout the school year!**



**Visit our website,
www.hcps.org!**



**Download the
HCPS app!**



**Follow us on Facebook
@HCPSSchools and
@HCPSParentAcademy!**



**Follow us on X
@HCPSSchools!**



**Follow us on Instagram
@HCPS_schools!**



Canvas Parent Access



HOPS

What is the benefit of creating a Canvas Parent account?

Canvas provides parents and guardians a window into their student's learning.



OBSERVERS

- ✓ Parents and guardians are "observers" in Canvas. Observers can view courses, pages, assignments, course calendars, and their Inbox.



ACCESS

- ✓ Canvas can be accessed using a browser or using an app on your phone. (Scan or use URL below to access course.)



ORIENTATION COURSE

- ✓ This course is designed to assist you with the process of creating an account in Canvas, learn how to navigate Canvas, and connect with your student's courses.



Link to Canvas Parent Access Orientation:
<https://www.hcps.org/parents/canvas/>

HCPS PARENTS ARE STUDENTS' *first and best teachers*



PARENT
ACADEMY

*Visit www.hcps.org/parents/parentacademy
for parent resources including:*

- Real Talk videos
- Workshops
- Lunch and Learns
- Parent Resources
- *and more!*



Like us on Facebook!
@HCPSParentAcademy



Parents are essential members of the learning team for each student. HCPS elementary schools focus on engaging every parent, inviting all parents to play a proactive role in the learning life of their child.

One way we do this is by inviting parents to visit the school, and attend Learn with Me events! Learn with Me events are family engagement activities and two events are hosted per grade level.

Stay tuned to hear from your child's school about this great opportunity to join in the fun and learning with your child!

At least one event will occur in the classroom so parents can participate in the learning process.

STUDENT

SUPPORT SERVICES

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Who are school counselors and what do they do for students?

PLANNING

Individual student academic planning and goal setting.

SUCCESS

Counseling classroom lessons based on student success standards.

COUNSELING

Short-term counseling to student groups.

SUPPORT

Referrals for long-term support.

COLLABORATION

Collaboration with families, teachers, administrators, and community members for student success.

ADVOCACY

Advocacy for students at individual education plan meetings and other student-focused meetings.

ANALYSIS

Data analysis to identify student issues, needs, and challenges.

The School Counseling programs in HCPS are based on the American School Counselor Association's (ASCA) National Standards, facilitating student development in three broad content areas: Academic Development, Career Development, and Personal/Social Development.

➡ [Click here for more information on the HCPS School Counseling Program.](#)

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

HCPS School Psychologists provide professional expertise to help parents, teachers, and schools work together for the benefit of the student. School psychology focuses on the development of individuals in the school environment and addresses the emotional and social factors that influence learning. Types of services include:

- **Consulting** to assisting others in dealing more effectively with children in terms of their mental health, behavior, and education.
- **Intervening** by working directly with teachers, families, and/or students to provide specific services, such as counseling, and recommend techniques or programs which may enhance educational, emotional, social, and vocational development.
- **Recommending** resources in the community as appropriate when the indicated services exceed those the school can provide.

Referrals for psychological services begin with an individual school Student Services team conference, held on a regular basis. After a case review, the team may recommend that one or more specialists be assigned for further evaluation, study, or review. Signed parent or legal guardian permission is obtained before a student is seen by a psychologist. Psychologists are also available for consultation on classroom, staff, and school concerns.

➡ [Click here for more information on HCPS School Psychologists.](#)

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education in HCPS is a collaborative partnership among schools, families, and community agencies. Together, we work to ensure that every child with a disability, from birth through age 21, receives a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), as required by law. If you have concerns about your child's learning, talk with your child's teacher. By sharing concerns, you can gain a better understanding of how your child is performing in school both academically and socially. Your child's teacher can provide you with resources and information about next steps.



Click here to access **additional HCPS Special Education information**.

- **Infants and Toddlers:** Services provided to children with disabilities and their families, birth to age 3-4, in home, community, or center-based settings.
- **Preschool Services:** A continuum of services provided to children with disabilities, ages 3 to 5, in community or school-based settings.
- **School-age Kindergarten through Grade 12:** A continuum of services provided to children and youth with disabilities in comprehensive schools, regional programs, and a public separate day school.

SPECIALIZED SERVICES

HCPS provides a variety of related services for eligible students in partnership with licensed healthcare professionals trained to address the needs of students to support access, participation, and/or progress in his/her learning environment. These services include:

- **Occupational Therapy:** Sensory integration/processing, fine motor skills, feeding, attention, and self-help skills.
- **Physical Therapy:** Gross motor skills, safe navigation of the physical school environment, access to learning environment, and maximizing independence.
- **Speech-Language Therapy:** Articulation, language, fluency, feeding, and communication development to facilitate learning.
- **Vision Services:** Services provided to students, birth through age 21, who are blind or have a visual impairment which in accordance with COMAR 13A.05.01.03B(84), even with correction, adversely affects a student's educational performance.
- **Hearing Services:** Specialized instruction provided to students, birth through age 21, who are deaf or hard of hearing. Depending on the need, students may be provided accommodations and modifications such as assistive listening devices or interpreting services.
- **Audiology:** HCPS' audiologist will review a student's audiogram, functional hearing, and ability levels to determine if a student has an educationally significant hearing loss. The audiologist will consult with school personnel to ensure appropriate accommodations are made in the school.

Eligibility for specialized services and vision/hearing services is determined by the appropriate team once all relevant evaluations are completed and reviewed. Referrals can be initiated by a parent or outside provider with parent permission.

Partners for Success

RESOURCE CENTER

A FREE SERVICE
OF HCPS'
**DEPARTMENT OF
SPECIAL EDUCATION**

SERVING FAMILIES AND EDUCATORS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN HARFORD COUNTY

Partners for Success promotes partnership, teamwork,
and parental involvement in special education.

WHAT WE PROVIDE

- **An information, resource, and referral center for parents, caregivers, and educators.**
- **A multi-media lending and sensory library.**
- **A laminator and copier for parent use.**

WORKSHOPS AND TRAININGS

- **IEP Workshops**
- **Monthly Parent Workshops**
- **Parent Surrogate Trainings**



PARTNERS.SUCCESS@HCPS.ORG

HELPING YOUR YOUNG CHILD DEVELOP SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS HELP YOUR CHILD:

- develop healthy relationships
- manage emotions
- solve problems
- build confidence
- succeed in school and life

TALK ABOUT FEELINGS

Feeling words to discuss:

- Basic:
 - happy
 - sad
 - angry
- scared
- excited
- Advanced:
 - frustrated
 - disappointed
 - nervous

Questions to ask:

- "How did you feel when...?"
- "What made you feel frustrated today?"
- "How do you think the character felt when...?"
- "What does your body do when you feel angry?"



MODEL EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

Show how you handle emotions

- "I'm feeling frustrated because I dropped the groceries."
- "I'm going to take three deep breaths to calm down."
- "I feel so disappointed that we can't go to the park today."
- "I guess we can always try again tomorrow!"

Validate their feelings!

- "It's okay to feel angry. Everyone feels angry sometimes."
- "I understand you're disappointed. It's hard when things don't go as planned."
- "Your feelings make sense to me."



PRACTICE PROBLEM-SOLVING TOGETHER

When conflicts arise:

- **Help your child identify the problem:**
"What happened?"
- **Encourage them to name their feelings:**
"How did that make you feel?"
- **Brainstorm solutions:**
"What could we do about this?"
- **Try a solution:**
"Let's try your idea."
- **Reflect:**
"How did that work?"
"Should we try something else?"

CONVERSATION STARTERS FOR CONNECTION

- "What made you smile today?"
- "Was there a time when someone was kind to you today?"
- "Did anything feel challenging for you today?"
- "What's something you're looking forward to tomorrow?"
- "When did you help someone today?"

CREATE A FEELING-FRIENDLY HOME

Daily practices:

- Use a feelings chart or thermometer
- Read books about emotions
- Play feeling guessing games
- Create a calm-down corner with comforting items
- Celebrate emotional growth:
"You found words for your feelings!"

Phrases that help during big emotions:

- "I'm here with you."
- "Let's take a deep breath together."
- "Would you like a hug or some space?"
- "When you're ready, we can talk about it."
- "Let's find a way to feel better together."

REMEMBER:

Young children are still learning about emotions.
Be patient, stay consistent, and celebrate small steps!

**FOR MORE RESOURCES, ASK YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER OR
VISIT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY FOR BOOKS ABOUT FEELINGS.**

Mental Health Supports

PARENTGUIDANCE.ORG

ParentGuidance.org is a free, comprehensive Mental Health and Well-Being Resource Library for all families in our district.

Key features:

- Over 70 courses in English and Spanish
- Topics: Anxiety, Depression, Self-Harm, Bullying, Social Media, Substance Abuse, Grief, Loss, and so much more!
- Created by licensed clinicians
- Accessible anytime online



PARENT COACHING

We understand that parenting is a challenging and oftentimes overwhelming experience. Our partnership connects you with a free parenting coach and therapist-created content to help you navigate the ups and downs with confidence.

Key features:

- Virtual Parenting Support
- Weekly 1:1 sessions with your coach
- 24/7 text/email access with a response within 24-48 hours
- Expert Guidance
 - Topics: Grief, Anxiety, Depression, and Parenting Basics
- HIPAA Protected
- Get matched with a coach within 48 hours



PARENT ACADEMY MENTAL HEALTH SERIES

The Parent Academy Mental Health Series will offer Lunch and Learn/Dine and Learn sessions throughout the school year tailored to the needs of our parents. These virtual events are designed to provide valuable support and insights.

Key features:

- Expert-Led Sessions
 - Led by mental health facilitators and therapists
- Live interactions
 - Engage in real-time with professionals
- Anonymous Q&A
- Convenient Timing
 - Each session is one hour long

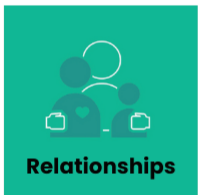


Positive Experiences are Key!

We have identified four building blocks that you can use to promote positive experiences for your child to help them build resilience!



The 4 Building Blocks of HOPE



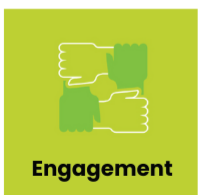
Nurturing, supporting relationships are critical for children to develop into healthy, resilient adults.

- Play and connect with your child(ren) regularly! Be silly, move your bodies, read a book, the options are endless!
- Help your child make connections with other adults in your life – aunts, uncles, coaches, pastors. It takes a village, and the larger the village, the more opportunities your child has for connection and support.



Children thrive when they have safe, stable, equitable environments to live, learn, and play.

- Check your house for safety issues, like access to guns, medications, alcohol, and drugs. Create a plan to address any identified risks.
- Talk with your child(ren) about school. Do they feel safe there? Are they being treated well by their peers? If not, connect with their teacher and brainstorm solutions.
- Help your child find safe places to play outdoors.



Children need to feel that they matter. Help your child connect with opportunities for engagement!

- Sign your child up for after school activities that interest them.
- Consider volunteering in the community as a family.
- Get involved in your place of worship, if that feels supportive.
- Create tasks that your child can help with around the house.



Children grow socially and emotionally through play.

- Help children name their feelings as they arise, and talk about what that feeling feels like in the child's body.
- Normalize disagreements with friends, and model or role play about how to disagree respectfully and productively.
- Make sure children have plenty of unstructured time to play with peers.



Mental Healthcare Coordination Service *for Harford County Public Schools Students, Staff, and their Families*

Getting help can be a daunting process.
Let our Care Companions find the help you need for

- *depression*
- *stress*
- *anxiety*
- *and more*

caresolace.com/site/harford



It's okay
to ask for help.

(888) 515-0595



TRUSTED path

Life can be unpredictable. Ensure your child has a safe, trusted place to go if you're unavailable. Use this guide to establish your family's Trusted Path. After completing the plan, be sure to make family, neighbors, and friends who are part of your plan, aware. Then, place a copy of your plan in your child's backpack, post a copy somewhere it can be seen in your home, and review it regularly with your child.

SAFE LOCATION

If no one is at the bus stop or home, where should your child go?

(A trusted neighbor, family friend, or community member?)

Name of Location or Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

BACKUP TRUSTED CONTACT(S)

Who else can your child call if the primary contact is not available?

(List at least two people.)

Name: _____ Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Phone Number: _____

Relationship: _____ Relationship: _____

ROUTE TO SAFE LOCATION PLAN

- Identify the safest walking route your child should take to reach the safe location if no one is at the bus stop or home.
- Walk the route with your child to help them feel confident and familiar with the directions.
- Point out landmarks or safe places they can ask for help along the way.

AWARENESS AND PRACTICE

- ☐ Have you talked to your child about what to do?
- ☐ Have you practiced calling backup contacts?
- ☐ Does your child feel comfortable with the plan?



2025-2026

AskHCPS@hcps.org | (410) 809-6193

The Board of Education of Harford County is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students, employees, and members of the school community. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Board of Education of Harford County prohibits discrimination based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, or any other protected characteristic in any program or activity it operates. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to HCPS' Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both.

HCPS' Title IX Coordinator is Dr. Eric Davis, 102 S. Hickory Ave, 21014, at (410) 588-5202 or TitleIX@hcps.org; Title IX Designee specific to students is Ken Miller, 102 South Hickory Avenue, Bel Air, MD 21014, at (410) 375-0408 or Kenneth.Miller@hcps.org; and The Title IX Designee for all other members of the school community is Renee McGlothlin, 102 South Hickory Avenue, Bel Air, MD 21014, at (410) 809-6087 or TitleIX@hcps.org.

HCPS' nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located at <https://www.hcps.org/Nondiscrimination.aspx>. To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please contact Ken Miller or Renee McGlothlin.

Discrimination complaints may also be filed with other agencies, such as the Office of Civil Rights in the United States Department of Education. Assistant Secretary for the Office of Civil Rights: 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202, 1-800-421-3481. For updated information on the Board of Education, visit www.hcps.org.