

Talbott Springs Families,

As we approach the 2020-2021 school year with an instructional start date of September 8, 2020 for students in Grade Kindergarten through Grade 5 and September 10, 2020 for our full day Pre-Kindergarten students, there is a great deal of activity being done in preparation for virtual instruction. Starting on August 25, 2020 our entire staff will be involved in training sessions and in planning meetings as we prepare for live virtual instruction. We are very excited about the possibilities that lie ahead for student learning. COVID has changed how we think about the process of teaching and interacting with children and families. School is defined by relationships, community and learning and with that, and working together, children will learn. Your support in preparing your child for virtual learning by focusing on the positive, teaching your child to take breaks by engaging in physical activity either indoors or outdoors and talking about seeing their classmates again on-line with the video on is a great way to start the process. The comprehensive re-opening plan containing student schedules for each grade level is found at this [link](#). Please read additional important information contained in the rest of this newsletter. I hope that each of you has a wonderful weekend.
Take care, Nancy Thompson, Principal

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS:

FAMILY FILE STUDENT EMERGENCY FORMS: Although schools remain virtual through 1/28/21, we **MUST** have up-to-date emergency contact information for each student, in the event that our staff need to communicate directly with our families. *Families are to update the Family File information each school year for each child in the family.*

Please access the Family File by logging in to the [HCPSS Connect](http://www.hcpss.org/connect/) at www.hcpss.org/connect/. Parents who are new to the Howard County Public School System will receive a welcome email with instructions on how to activate an account. Once you have logged into the [HCPSS Connect](http://www.hcpss.org/connect/), select the Family File tab on the left-hand side, and then select the blue underlined "Family File" towards the center of your screen. Once logged in, parents/guardians will be asked to provide, update, or confirm the following information:

- Student Information
- Parent/guardian Contact Information
- Emergency Contacts
- Medical Information
- Media Release (photo approval)
- Data Confidentiality
- PTA/PTSA Directory

Please note, if the section you are looking at is not allowing you to move forward, then there is a question/checkbox on that page that may still need to be addressed. Please make sure to read the prompts at the top of each tab, and click to expand each section. Assistance is available at this [link](#). Parents who have forgotten their login credentials may click the "Forgot Password" link on the sign-in page. If you need additional assistance, please fill out the [Connect Help Form](#). In addition, once you press submit, you will be given a choice to fill out a FARM application. Please complete the FARM application if you think that you might qualify.

Free and Reduced Meals Program: The coronavirus pandemic is causing a lot of hardship for many of our friends and neighbors. Many HCPSS families have been impacted financially by the pandemic, and may be eligible now to receive benefits through the Free and Reduced Price Meals (FARMs) program. Qualifying families can take advantage of a wide range of additional resources and discounts, including testing fees, tuition, internet and more. <https://www.hcpss.org/food-services/farms/>

School Supplies: Elementary School staffs are working with Central Office as they develop a revised school supply list that is appropriate for online learning. While there will be some items from the traditional supply list, there will likely be some additions. Information will be sent out when this list is complete.

Student Chromebooks for Virtual Learning All HCPSS prekindergarten to 8th grade will receive a Chromebook for use during virtual learning. We have not yet received information about the distribution plan. Families of students in elementary school do not need to request a Chromebook. [Read more](#)

TSES PTA: The first 2020-2021 TSES PTA meeting takes place virtually this Thursday August 20, 2020 at 7:00 PM. Please join us via Google Meet using the code below. We are so looking forward to meeting parents of new TSES students and to seeing our returning families! Google Meet Code:
<https://meet.google.com/zkr-ewzh-ovz>

From the Columbia Association: CA will offer full day childcare (7 am- 6pm), beginning on September 8, at the following schools: Clarksville, Centennial, Clemens Crossing, Cradlerock, Hammond, Northfield, Phelps Luck, Swansfield, Waterloo, and Worthington. Registration will be open for current school age participants by August 21. The Teen Center in Oakland Mills will be added, as needed. Income qualified discounts are offered. Registration will be open to the general public on a space available basis beginning Monday, August 31. **Space is limited at all sites and the program may be canceled** or sites combined if there are not enough participants. Please contact **SAS@ColumbiaAssociation.org** or Marilyn Watring at 410-715-3164 for information. CA's **website** will be updated, and an email sent to current participants when the on-line registration is live.

The Howard County Early Childhood Advisory Council recently announced their partnership with The Basics (Links to an external site.) in an effort to introduce Howard County families to evidence-based strategies that capitalize on every child's first 3 years to help them reach their full potential. Please see the parent toolkit (Links to an external site.) and literature review on the science behind the five Basics Principles (Links to an external site.). Families are encouraged to **sign up before August 31st for the free Basic Insights (Links to an external site.)** text messaging service to receive developmental tips in either English or Spanish. Two messages are sent a week until the child turns 3 yrs old, with the choice to opt out of the service at any time. Please contact Amy.H.Kelly@hcpss.org with any questions. The deadline for signing up is August 31, 2020.

IMPORTANT DATES:

August 20, 2020	TSES PTA Meeting (Google Meet Code above)
September 2 and 3	TSES Student material Drop Off and Pick Up (See 8/13/2020 School Messenger)
September 4, 2020	Virtual Family Orientation Sessions-Codes for these meetings will be sent to families 9:00 Kindergarten and Grade 1 10:00 Grades 2 and 3 11:00 Grades 4 and 5
September 8, 2020	First Day of School for Students in Grades K through 5
September 10, 2020	First Day of School for Pre-Kindergarten
September 24, 2020	Back to School Night