

HARFORD HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FAMILY HANDBOOK



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<http://harfordhillses.bcps.org>

Harford Hills Elementary School
2009-2010 Family Handbook



Dear Parent/Guardian,

This handbook was designed to welcome and assist you and your child as members of the Harford Hills community. It provides information about school procedures and covers most of the commonly asked questions and concerns of parents and students.

We, the faculty and staff at Harford Hills, encourage your active involvement as partners in your child's education. Together we can make sure that all of our children achieve learning success.

We look forward to working together for a successful school year. Please contact us if we can be of service to you.

Sincerely,

The Faculty and Staff of Harford Hills Elementary

PLEDGE/CODE OF CONDUCT

Today,
I will be respectful, I
will be responsible, I
am ready to learn. I
will cooperate to make
Harford Hills a special place.

SONG

(To the tune of "Edelweiss" from The Sound of Music)

Harford Hills, Harford Hills,
Every morning we greet you.
Red and white, clean and bright,
We are happy to see you.
Just like flowers, we'll bloom and grow,
Bloom and grow forever.
Harford Hills, Harford Hills,
Bless our dear school forever!

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• **Hours:**

8:00 a.m.	School office opens
8:35 a.m.	Safeties enter the building
8:40 a.m.	Students enter the building and report to the homeroom
8:50 a.m.	Homeroom exercises and morning announcements (Late arrivals report to main office after morning announcements.)
11:10 a.m.	Morning pre-kindergarten dismissal
3:10 p.m.	Afternoon announcements & afternoon dismissal
4:30 p.m.	School office closes

• **Mission:**

Harford Hills Elementary School strives for excellence and is committed to ensuring the academic achievement and social development of all students. Our instructional program will enable students to demonstrate on or above grade level skills in all academic areas as well as age-appropriate social skills.

Vision:

In order to achieve its mission, the staff of Harford Hills will:

- > challenge students to achieve their highest potential through a rich academic program.
- > guide students to recognize and develop their strengths and talents.
- > create a safe, welcoming, supportive, and positive environment.
- > encourage students to become respectful, responsible, and independent members of society.

• **Commitments:**

To achieve its vision, the staff of Harford Hills is committed to:

- > actively involving students in the learning process.
- > engaging in meaningful, on-going staff development related to research-based instruction.
- > applying research-based instructional strategies in order to improve student achievement.
- > incorporating a variety of assessment strategies into daily instruction.
- > providing time in the schedule on a monthly basis for collaborative teams to analyze data, monitor group and individual progress, and address student needs.
- > using flexible grouping and differentiated instruction to meet individual student needs.
- > incorporating technology into all curricular areas.
- > using school wide positive behavior interventions.
- > providing timely and informative feedback to students and families.
- > inviting, involving, and including parents in the school learning community.
- > developing a school community that is respectful, responsible, and ready to learn.

IMPORTANT PHONE	NUMBERS
Office	410-887-5236
Nurse	410-882-3476
Cardio Kids Fitness	443-520-1601
Open Door	410-825-6300
Baltimore County Public Schools Weather Information Number	410-887-5555

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I. THE SCHOOL DAY

• Arrival

Our school doors open for safeties at 8:35 a.m., and for all other students at 8:40 a.m. each morning. Supervision of students is not provided before 8:35 a.m. Students arriving at school before 8:40 a.m. must wait outside. **Please have your children arrive at school no earlier than 8:35 a.m.** When students enter the building at 8:40 a.m., they proceed directly to their homerooms. Daily announcements begin at 8:50 a.m. **It is essential that children arrive at school BEFORE the 8:50 a.m. bell.** Parents are strongly encouraged to say their good-byes at the school doors. We appreciate your support in helping our students develop independence in making their way to the classroom. Students are supervised in the hallways to ensure safe passage to class.

• Arrival Bus Riders (see arrival and dismissal map on page 25)

Buses will arrive in the front of the school and park in the circular lane closest to the main lobby doors. School staff and safeties will assist students as they leave the buses and enter the school through the main lobby doors. Students will go directly to their homerooms.

• Arrival Car Riders (see arrival and dismissal map on page 25)

Parents who transport children to school will enter the school driveway and stay to the right proceeding into the staff parking lot area. Students will exit their cars at the exterior door to the cafeteria. (Look for the Harford Hills Chanticleer sign.) Upon entering the school, students will go through the cafeteria to their homerooms. Parents and students are asked to remain in your cars and move up in single file to the drop off area. Staff and safeties will be there to assist students as they exit cars. Drivers are reminded to stop at the crosswalk that is just after the drop off area. State law requires all drivers to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks

• Arrival Walkers

Walkers should plan to arrive between 8:35 and 8:40. Prior to 8:35, there is no adult supervision. When the weather permits, walkers will wait on the grassy area outside the cafeteria doors. During inclement weather, walkers will be permitted to wait inside the cafeteria. For your safety, we remind all students to use the sidewalks and crosswalks at all times.

• Dismissal Bus Riders (see arrival and dismissal map on page 25)

After announcements, bus riders will be dismissed to the gym where they will line up according to their designated bus color sign. Buses will be called by color and bus riders will exit the main lobby doors to their bus. Staff and safeties will assist students as they get on their buses.

• Dismissal Walkers & After Care

Walkers are dismissed to the outside through the classroom doors. Students are reminded to walk directly home and always use sidewalks and marked crosswalks. Students enrolled in the Open Door After Care program will be dismissed to the cafeteria.

• Dismissal Car Riders (see arrival and dismissal map on page 25)

After announcements and when hallways are clear, car riders are dismissed to the cafeteria. Parents picking up their child (ren) will enter the school driveway and stay to the right proceeding into the staff parking lot area. Parents are asked to remain in their cars in a single lane and move up to the pick up area next to the cafeteria doors. Staff and safeties will assist students getting into their cars.

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General reminder: We are aware of the inconvenience of parking away from the school when coming to pick up your child(ren) for an appointment. If you need to park your car and enter the school, some parking is permitted in the area between the signs around the circular driveway. Additional parking is available on Harford Hills Road.

- **Before & After School Care**

If you need before-school care services, two fee-based programs are available: the *Cardio Kids Fitness* program (formerly *Crunch Kids*) and the *Open Door* program, both beginning at 7:00 a.m. Please contact Ms. Newman for *Cardio Kids Fitness* at 443-520-1601 and *Open Door* at 410-825-6300.

After-school care services, run by the *Open Door* program, a private contractor, are held in the cafeteria daily. Please phone *Open Door* at 410-825-6300 to make arrangements for your child.

- **Bus Transport**

Children living a mile or more away from school are provided bus transportation by Baltimore County Public Schools. Bus routes are established every summer based on the number of children needing transportation. Bus transport forms, showing routes and stops, are available in the school office. These forms need to be completed to facilitate your child's transportation. Please note the following Baltimore County Transportation Department policies:

- > Have your child at the assigned stop five minutes early and be patient, especially at the beginning of the academic year when drivers are still learning their routes.
- > Children are permitted to ride **ONLY** on their assigned bus and may get off **ONLY** at their assigned stop.
- > Specific bus riding rules are posted on the bus. Parents and children should familiarize themselves with the following rules:

Bus Rules

1. Follow directions from the driver the first time they are given.
2. Stay in your seat at all times while the bus is in motion.
3. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
4. Keep hands, feet, legs, arms, personal property, and your voice to yourself.
5. No eating, smoking, drinking, or vulgar language at any time on the bus.

Crossing Procedures for Bus Riders (AM)

Baltimore County's student crossing procedures are unique in the state of Maryland. The crossing policy states: **Before the bus arrives, students are to be on the side of the road where the bus stops.** The student is NOT to wait until the bus stops and then cross the road to board the bus.

- **Early Closing Procedures**

In the event of an early school closing due to an emergency or for reasons as stated in the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) calendar, the following applies:

- > If school closes **three hours early**, lunch will be served to grades K-5. School dismissal time for all students is 12:10 p.m. All bus riders will go home on their assigned school bus. **Morning pre-kindergarten students will remain in elementary school until dismissal for students in grades K-5 and will travel home on the same buses with these students. Morning pre-kindergarten students will be fed a snack. Pre-kindergarten students will not be served full lunches.**

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- > If school closes **two hours early**, the same procedure as above applies except school dismissal time is 1:10 pm.
- > If school closes **one hour early**, lunch will be served as usual to grades K-5, and all bus students will ride home on their usual bus, except school dismissal time is 2:10 p.m. Please note morning pre-kindergarten student dismissal remains 11:10 a.m.

Please note: In cases of early school closings due to inclement weather, all planned use of the school facilities after school hours are automatically cancelled. This includes the *Open Door Program*.

- **Inclement Weather (or other school-wide emergency)**

Sometimes schools do not open, open late, or close early because of bad weather or unforeseen emergencies (e.g. power failure). Emergency changes to the schedule are announced over local TV and radio stations (e.g., WBAL at 1090 AM, WJHU at 88.1 FM, and the cable TV education channel). Listen for news concerning Baltimore **County** Public Schools before sending a child to school on inclement weather days (Note: Harford Hills is not in the Hereford Zone).

Please do not call the school for closing information. It is crucial that the phone lines remain open. The B.C.P.S. weather information number is 410-887-5555. Weather delays and closings are also posted on the **BCPS website, www.bcps.org**. The early closing procedures are listed above.

- **Emergencies**

In emergencies (e.g., picking up a sick child), vehicles may drive into the traffic circle at the front of the school and stop temporarily with flashers on. Cars should not be parked in the traffic circle at any other time.

- **End Of Day Early Release**

Parents/guardians who are picking up a student(s) just prior to the scheduled dismissal time (3:10) are asked to park on Harford Hills Road. After signing your student(s) out of school in the main office, you will be able to depart the area, via Harford Hills Road and avoid the line of cars waiting to pick up students.

- **Parking**

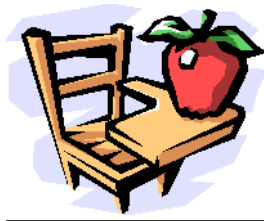
Please note that the school parking lot is for the use of faculty, staff, and visiting specialists. Parking is available on the roads adjoining the school property.

- **Recess**

Teachers provide at least one 15-20 minute recess period during the school day. They may provide more at their discretion.

- **Walkers**

Children living less than a mile from school are usually walkers. Crossing guards are posted at the intersections of Joppa Road and Old Harford Road, and Hillford Drive and Old Harford Road.



II. HEALTH AND SAFETY

• Behavior. Discipline. & Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Program

As stated in the school pledge/code of conduct, being respectful, responsible, and ready to learn are the expectations for student behavior in school, while traveling to and from home, and on field trips. At the beginning of each school year, every student receives the *Baltimore County Public Schools Student Handbook* and a brochure on sexual harassment. This handbook outlines BCPS policies and procedures for safety and expectations of student behavior. It also describes the disciplinary measures that may go into effect if students disobey the rules. During the first few weeks of school, children participate in a discussion of the *Student Handbook* with the teachers and administrators, along with our guidance counselor, who will be reviewing the brochure on sexual harassment. All parents/guardians and students are required to sign and return the form located in the back of the *Baltimore County Public Schools Student Handbook*, indicating their understanding of the behavior code.

The school is committed to using positive behavior interventions to teach students self-discipline. Classroom behavior expectations are explained, reviewed, and taught by the faculty and staff throughout the school year. A copy of Harford Hills' *Behavior Expectations* chart is attached. It shows how children should be respectful, responsible, and ready to learn in the classroom, halls, bathrooms, bus, cafeteria, and playground.

Please note that the administrative team, along with our guidance counselor, will repeat and review the *Student Handbook* and sexual harassment training periodically throughout the school year to ensure a safe, respectful, and orderly environment. We encourage families to review these documents with your children and keep them available for reference.

• School Emergency Plan / Crisis Management

In the event of an emergency or crisis, a well-organized and rehearsed safety action plan goes into effect. In addition, there is a crisis management team comprised of administrators and staff members that meet regularly to review the Baltimore County Public Schools guidelines and modify our procedures as needed. The goal of our plan is the safety of your children and the ability to account for all students and staff during any emergency. Our plan includes the following drills: fire drills, lockdown drills, evacuation drills, and severe weather safe area drills. In the event of an emergency, we want you to have the following information.

- > If we have EVACUATED THE BUILDING BUT HAVE REMAINED ON SCHOOL GROUNDS, you may pick up your children at the rear corner of the building closest to Harford Hills Drive. A staff member will direct you to the area where your child is standing. Another staff member will assure that each child is released to the correct adult.
- > If a LOCKDOWN EMERGENCY occurs, no one will be allowed into or out of the building during the emergency. Once the emergency has passed, parents, guardians, or designated individuals will be able to go to the main office to sign out their children.
- > If there is an event that requires us to EVACUATE OUR BUILDING AND MOVE TO A TEMPORARY LOCATION, we will walk up Old Harford Road to Pine Grove Middle School (first choice) or Saint Isaac Jogues Church (second choice), depending upon the conditions necessitating the move. If we need to evacuate the immediate area, we will be transported to the campus of Essex Community College by school system buses. BCPS WILL USE THE MEDIA TO INFORM PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF WHERE THEY NEED TO GO TO PICK UP THEIR CHILDREN.
- > All individuals who are picking up children must have proper identification.

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- **Emergency Information Cards & Additional Emergency Release Form** At the beginning of the school year, every student brings home two cards, which must be completed, signed, and returned, by parents or guardians immediately. These cards provide the office and school nurse with your address, home and work phone numbers, places of employment, and other emergency information. **Each child in your family must have two emergency information cards on file at school.** It is vital that these cards be **UPDATED** as needed. There are times during the school year when children become ill or are injured and parents, guardians, or another responsible adult **must** be contacted. The standard emergency information card will be used for all day-to-day situations such as illness. For families with custody issues, the school office needs to be advised of the details and be given written legal documentation.

Because parents/guardians may want the school to release children to other family members, neighbors, or friends during an emergency/crisis other than those listed on the standard “emergency information card,” we are asking every family to complete the “Additional Emergency Release Form” and return it to your child’s homeroom teacher. **THIS FORM WILL GIVE US AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE YOUR CHILDREN TO THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHOM YOU HAVE DESIGNATED.** These authorization forms will be placed in our “emergency tool box” and used **ONLY** in case of emergency/crisis situations.

- **Health Services**

A full-time school nurse provides first aid and can be reached at 410-882-3476. The following **required** health forms are available from the nurse or the school office:

- ≥ **Immunization Forms**

Records of immunizations are legally required by the state of Maryland and are necessary for every child to start school. Contact the school office for details.

- ≥ **Health Inventory Forms** One page is to be completed by parents and one page by the child’s doctor.

- ≥ **Consent For Discretionary Medication**

At the beginning of the school year, parents receive a form listing medications supplied by the BCPS Department of Health, which are available for occasional use at the nurse’s discretion (e.g. Tylenol for headache, throat lozenges, Tums, etc.). In order for a child to receive over-the-counter medications, parents must signify consent by signing and returning this form.

- ≥ **Prescription Medication**

The prescribing physician must complete a doctor’s order if any medicine sent from home has to be administered at school. This applies to both prescription and over-the-counter medications.

All medication must be brought to school by an adult and given to the nurse in the original pharmacy package. No child may carry medication during the day or bring medication in a lunch bag.

Please remember, students should not be sent to school if they have any signs of illness (fever, sore throat, inflamed eyes, rash, nausea etc.). Please call the nurse if you expect your child to be absent more than three days.

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- **Hearing and Vision Screening**

Once a year, a technician comes to school to administer hearing and vision screening tests. Students new to Baltimore County Public Schools, as well as kindergarten, third, and fifth-grade students are routinely screened. (This schedule is subject to change.) At the request of parents, guardians, or teachers, other students can also be tested at this time.

- **School Grounds**

The school grounds are open to the public outside of school hours. All school playground equipment is open for use with adequate adult supervision. Please do not allow children to play unsupervised anywhere on school property.

- **School Insurance**

Information is sent out in September concerning optional accidental insurance policies for children. Two kinds of policies exist: the first covers the child at school only, and the second provides twenty-four (24) hour coverage.

- **Visitors**

We welcome and encourage parent visitors. Visitors requesting conferences are to schedule conferences with an administrator and/or the teacher prior to coming to the school.

For security purposes, **ALL** visitors must register in the school office and obtain a **VISITOR BADGE**. **State law requires all visitors to register at the school office before visiting other areas of the building.** If you are coming in to drop off materials that your child left at home, we ask that you leave them in the main office and the office staff will notify your child.

Also, be aware that the school and school grounds are considered smoke-free zones. Please do not smoke in the school or on school grounds.

III. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

- **Calendars**

Baltimore County Public Schools distributes a countywide calendar and information booklet at the beginning of the school year that outlines the academic year. Updates are published with the school newsletters as necessary.

- > A yearly schedule, combining Baltimore County Public Schools dates and calendar information specific to Harford Hills Elementary, is sent home early in the school year.
- > Each monthly newsletter has a calendar of Harford Hills Elementary's current month's events and activities.
- > All calendars, events, and activities are posted on our school website: <http://harfordhillses.bcps.org>.

- **Monthly Newsletters**

Our newsletter, the *Chanticleer*, is sent home monthly in the PTA Thursday packet. Please check your child's take home bag for the newsletter. It is your information lifeline to the school. Newsletters are the primary source of up-to-date information about the school and community as well as important events, school closings, and activities. Monthly newsletters and other school information can be accessed on our school website: <http://harfordhillses.bcps.org>.

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Report Cards

Report cards are sent home four times a year (three times for first grade). The instructional code used on the report cards varies with the grade level of the child; intermediate students receive letter grades, and primary students receive grades of independent, progressing, or emerging. (See calendar or newsletter for report card distribution dates.)

Report card grades are comprised of the following components based on BCPS Board Policy/Rules and guidelines set by the Department of Elementary Programs:

	Grades 1 & 2	Grades 3, 4, & 5
· class work	70%	60%
· tests	20%	25%
· homework	10%	15%

Homework

Homework is an important extension of student learning and provides the following benefits for students:

- encourages the development of independent study habits, skills, and responsibilities.
- reinforces, enriches, and extends learning by providing a variety of educational opportunities outside the classroom.
- provides an additional opportunity for family involvement in the child's education.

Children will be assigned homework on Monday through Thursday. The following times are recommended by BCPS Board Policy/Rules as an average amount of homework to be given at the various grade levels:

· **Grades 1-3** Time: An average of 30 minutes per day for all subjects combined.

· **Grades 4-5** Time: An average of 60 minutes per day for all subjects combined.
Independent, long-term projects may be assigned as well.

A desirable environment for study includes:

- A place free from distraction
- A comfortable work space
- Adequate lighting, temperature, and ventilation

Desirable work habits include:

- Having the necessary materials and beginning work promptly
- Concentrating on the task at hand and remaining persistent
- Returning completed assignments to school

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- **Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)**

The national PTA acts as an advocate for all children and strives to foster closer relations between the home, the community, and school. The Harford Hills PTA supports these ideals and funds supplementary enrichment programs and activities, some of which are listed below:

- ≥ **Dads & Donuts and Moms & Munchkins** : These are annual early morning events for children and their parents/guardians to have breakfast treats and time together at school.
- ≥ **Ice Cream Social/Silent Auction**: Usually held in the spring, this social event is planned with the annual Harford Hills Elementary School Science Fair.
- ≥ **Cultural Assemblies**: These are a variety of plays, science demonstrations, musical productions, etc. presented by professionals to enhance the students' educational experiences. They are held periodically throughout the academic year.
- ≥ **Classroom Residencies**: These are enrichment programs where an artist, writer, or poet works with children in the classroom for several days, (e.g., Poet-in-Residence).
- ≥ **Field Trips**: PTA provides financial support for field trips for grades prekindergarten-5.

The above activities and programs are made possible by donations and fund-raising events. The PTA fund-raisers, programs, events, and activities are reviewed annually by the PTA executive board and may vary from year to year.

- ≥ **PTA Membership**

The Harford Hills PTA encourages all families to join the association and participate in some aspect of its activities. A membership drive is conducted every fall. (See the PTA newsletter for more information). Membership is open to everyone for a nominal annual fee. All members are invited to attend the monthly PTA meetings. Details of meetings and all other PTA events are listed in newsletters and in the Harford Hills Elementary calendar.

- ≥ **PTA Display** The PTA maintains a lobby showcase for display of PTA events, activities, and programs.

- **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Communication between parents and teachers is critical. During the year, there will be at least one conference day scheduled for parents to discuss their child's progress and to share samples of their child's work with teachers. However, at any time during the school year, parents may call or send a note to the teacher to arrange an appointment for a conference to discuss progress and address any concerns. Scheduling an appointment is the best way to ensure there is adequate time for both teacher and parent to address school performance.

We cannot stress strongly enough our belief in the importance of good parent-teacher communication and hope that parents will plan on attending many conferences in order to discuss their child's progress with our staff.

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- **Visiting Classrooms**

We welcome visitors to our school. Several structured opportunities to visit classrooms are available. Watch newsletters for more details about the following:

- **Back-to-School-Night:** Early in the school year, parents are invited to visit their child's classroom for a curriculum presentation by the homeroom teacher. This is an adult-oriented presentation. Parents of ESOL students are encouraged to visit the classroom of their ESOL teacher as well as their regular classroom teacher.
- **American Education Week:** Held in November, American Education Week is an excellent opportunity for parents to visit and observe classes in progress. A classroom visitation schedule will be sent home early in November.
- **Volunteering:** There may be opportunities to volunteer in your child's classroom or elsewhere in the school. Some opportunities are directly curriculum-related; others, depending on teachers' needs, may be of a social or clerical nature. (See section on Volunteers.)

IV. SCHOOL SERVICES

- **Cafeteria**

Children may bring a packed lunch from home or purchase lunch or snacks in the cafeteria. Rules and procedures in the cafeteria are reviewed with students at the beginning of the year. However, the following information should be read carefully:

- > Hot lunches may be purchased. Snacks, ice cream, and bottled water are available at extra cost. When students buy a hot lunch, they must choose a minimum of 2 items or a maximum of 4 different items. One must be an entrée and one must be milk. For example, a student may choose a hot entrée plus 1 milk, 1 juice, and 1 vegetable. Or, a student may choose a hot entrée plus 1 milk, 1 juice, 1 fruit, etc.)
- > A pre-paid debit card is available to all children to buy food in the cafeteria. This eliminates their need to carry cash. The cafeteria manager sends out debit card request forms at the beginning of the school year and reminders for replenishing the debit account as needed. The cards are kept in the cafeteria. If parents wish to send cash (rather than a check) for their child's debit card, either they or the child must give the money directly to the cafeteria manager. The student is not to give the cash to the teacher.
- > The cafeteria procedures for credit extended for insufficient funds are as follows:
 - The credit limit is equivalent to one day's meal (a breakfast and a lunch). The card system is set up to allow charging only up to this limit.
 - If a student's limit is reached, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian requesting reimbursement.
 - Students at the credit limit will receive an alternative meal (cereal, milk, and graham crackers) until the credit extended is repaid.
- > If a child's packed lunch is left at home, it can be dropped off at the office, and it will be given to the child.
- > As cafeteria space is very limited, we are not able to accommodate visitors during lunchtime.

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- **Office**

The office is open from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. on all school days. If the office is closed, you may leave a voice mail message. We will return your calls as soon as possible. The office phone number is 410-887-5236.

Please note the following:

- > The information cards with **emergency information** for your child must be returned to the school on the second day of classes. Teachers usually collect these and send them to the office. One copy is kept there and the other goes to the school nurse.
- > If your child is to **leave school early** for any reason, you must go to the school office to meet him/her and NOT to the classroom.
- > If your child **forgets something** necessary for the school day, it should be dropped off in the office and NOT in the classroom. (Please make sure items are clearly marked with your child's name.)
- > **Urgent messages** for children can be called in to the office, preferably between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Please do not leave a message for a child except in extreme emergencies.

- **Transfer of Students**

If you are relocating from our school or school district, please contact the office with your new address, the name of the new school your child will be attending, and your child's last day of expected attendance at Harford Hills Elementary. A transfer form will be sent home with your child on the last day of attendance. This form will contain all of the information necessary to enroll your child in his/her new school. Official school records will be mailed directly to the new school upon their request.

Please be sure to return all Harford Hills' books and materials prior to your child's last day.

- **Support Programs** Harford Hills has several support professionals on staff:

- > **Library Media Specialist**

- Students visit the library weekly for a scheduled 50-minute class. At that time, they receive instruction and sign out books. Books are expected to be returned the following week. Please check with your child to determine the day of the week on which his/her library period falls and make certain that the child brings the books to class on the assigned day. If the book is not returned, a new one may not be signed out. Lost books should be paid for in a timely manner.

- > **Nurse**

- A full-time nurse is on duty in the school. When students feel ill, they are sent, with a pass from their classroom teacher, to visit the nurse. She will listen to each child's complaint and assess each child's condition. If a child's condition is deemed serious, the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. If the child's ailment is a minor one, a letter may be sent home to the parents/guardians advising them of the visit. Any medication that needs to be taken at school must be given to the nurse in the original prescription bottle with the doctor's order. (See Health Services, page 10.)

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ESOL Teacher

- An ESOL teacher is available to assist students whose native language is not English. This ESOL teacher will also help parents to understand the child's assignments and any papers that are sent home for the child. Parents of ESOL students are encouraged to visit the ESOL classroom at Back-to-School Night to learn how they can help their child. They are also encouraged to check their child's folder every day to see if there is ESOL homework, to practice English at home, and to contact the ESOL teacher to discuss their child's problems and progress. ESOL students are tested twice each year, in February and in June, to determine their English proficiency. At these times, the ESOL teacher meets with the parents to discuss the child's placement. A letter is sent home by the ESOL teacher explaining the testing and meetings.

Guidance Counselor

- Guidance services are available every day for students who are having difficulties with school or personal situations. Students may make an appointment with the counselor by writing her a note or by seeing her in person. The counselor is also available to meet with parents to discuss a variety of issues related to their children.

Reading Specialist

- A reading specialist is available to assist students who are having difficulty mastering basic reading skills. The reading specialist works very closely with the classroom teachers to identify students in need of service and to provide support.

Technology Integration Teacher

- The technology integration teacher plans instructional activities utilizing technology across all curricular subjects. Students are provided weekly opportunities with their classroom teacher and the technology integration teacher to work on classroom curriculum projects. The technology integration teacher is the web master of the Harford Hills Elementary website.

Special Educators

- Special education teachers work with students who have diagnosed learning disabilities. Students are identified through the IEP team process and services are provided based on the student's IEP.

Speech and Language Therapist

- A speech and language clinician works directly with students who have been identified as needing speech therapy. Students are identified through the IEP team process, and services are provided based on the student's IEP.

Occupational Therapist

- An occupational therapist works directly with students who have been identified as needing occupational therapy. Students are identified through the IEP team process, and services are provided based on the student's IEP.

For additional information about support programs, please inquire in the school office.

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V. GENERAL INFORMATION

Attendance

In accordance with state laws, students are required to attend school 180 days as outlined on the Baltimore County Public Schools Calendar. Please note the following absence/tardy information:

- > Our school doors open for students at 8:40 a.m. The school day begins at 8:50 a.m. After the morning announcements have ended, students are considered tardy.
- > To obtain a late pass, **students will need to be escorted to the office by a parent or guardian and present a note explaining the reason for the lateness.**
- > State law requires attendance each day of school. Personal illness, religious holidays, and death in the immediate family are considered legal or excused absences.
- > When a child is absent from school, he/she must bring a note, signed by a parent/guardian, on the day he/she returns to school. The note should indicate the date(s) and reason for the absence. If we do not receive a note, we must mark the absence as unexcused.
- > If you expect that your child will be absent two or more days due to illness, please call our school nurse, Mrs. O'Neill (410-882-3476), and inform her of your child's illness.
- > Please call the school office if you need to discuss a prolonged absence with a teacher and/or an administrator.
- > Please note that Harford Hills Elementary School utilizes the automated NTI communication phone system to call parents when students are absent.

• **Baltimore County Public Schools Cancelled Check Policy**

Issuers of dishonored checks presented to Baltimore County Public Schools will be given ten (10) days to submit full payment by means of a money order, cashier's check, or cash of the check amount plus bank charges incurred by BCPS. If this is not received by the end of ten (10) days, the issuer will need to submit full payment of the check amount plus an additional \$35.00. If payment is not received at the end of the 20-day period, BCPS will turn over the dishonored check, and all other available information related to this check, to the State's Attorney for criminal prosecution. If the dishonored check is turned over to the State's Attorney for collection, the school will not accept restitution from the check issuer. The funds will be remitted to the school by the State's Attorney's Office.

• **Books**

Students are issued various school textbooks and novels during the year. Once issued, these books are the responsibility of the student. It is expected that the student will return the book in the same condition as it was in when issued. If books are lost or damaged, parents or guardians are expected to reimburse the school for the replacement cost of the book.

In order to protect the books, teachers ask that parents or guardians cover the books with book covers. Please do not tape the covers to the book or use contact paper (either clear or opaque) to cover them. Also, please write your child's name on the front cover of the book so that it can be easily identified if lost.

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Curriculum

The BCPS Board of Education sets the CORE CURRICULUM. A copy of the curriculum for each grade level is provided and discussed with the homeroom teacher at “Back-To-School Night” and can also be located on the BCPS website, www.bcps.org. Important information and ideas on ways to help your child at home is also available at www.bcps.org and our school website.

Specials are scheduled for kindergarten through fifth grades, with instructors certified in their fields. The specials at Harford Hills Elementary are:

- **Art:** At every grade level different themes and techniques are taught in weekly art lessons by the art teacher.
- **Library/Media Studies:** Children are taught how to use the library, computers, and the Internet as they work on special topics each week. Lessons end with checking out books for a one-week period.
- **Music:** All children in grades kindergarten through five have vocal music to introduce them to the basic elements of music. In grade four, they explore different musical instruments. In grade five, students have the opportunity to learn how to play an instrument (instrument to be provided by parents). Grades four and five may participate in the school chorus. Two annual concerts are held, where band and chorus members demonstrate their skills.
- **Physical Education:** All children have Physical Education once a week. Instruction utilizes a variety of equipment and skills, and includes health awareness. Check your child’s schedule to be sure appropriate footwear and clothing are worn on Physical Education days.

Dress Code

Children should be dressed appropriately for safety, modesty, personal hygiene, climate, and consideration of others. Please note the following dress code guidelines:

- Shorts should not be too short or too tight.
- Shirts should cover the entire torso. Halter-tops, and bare midriff tops should not be worn.
- Undergarments should not show.
- Tennis shoes or rubber sole shoes are recommended for safety reasons since they protect feet from injury and insect stings. This is essential for taking physical education classes and for playing on our playground equipment. Sandals, flip-flops, and other open shoes are not recommended for school.
- Shirts and clothing advertising alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or inappropriate language should not be worn to school.
- Hats are to be removed in the building.

Together, if we set clear and consistent expectations for student dress and behavior, we will continue to maintain a positive learning environment for all of our children.

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- **Early Dismissal**

In the event of an unavoidable appointment during school hours, please send a note stating the reason, date, and time you will be picking up your child. In such an event, the student will be called to the main office to meet the parent or guardian. The parent/guardian will be required to sign the early dismissal book. If someone other than the parent is picking up a child, he or she will be asked to provide a note from the parent/guardian and identification.

- **Field Trips**

Every grade level has several field trips planned during the year. On each occasion, a permission slip will be sent home for a parent or guardian signature. The slip must be signed and returned if your child is to go on the trip. Parents of ESOL students may contact the ESOL teacher if they do not understand any details in the note sent by the classroom teacher. Please send in any money required as soon as possible. Due to BCPS Board Policy 6104, money cannot be refunded if you have paid for a field trip and your child is then unable to go. Adult chaperones often accompany classes on field trips. Teachers will ask volunteers to chaperone as needed. Parking on the school lot is restricted to teachers and staff. **Parking for field trip chaperones is available on the roads adjoining the school property.**

- **Lost and Found**

Please mark all of your child's belongings clearly and check the lost and found box frequently. This is located in the cafeteria. All unclaimed items are donated quarterly to the homeless or to a charitable organization.

- **Personal Property**

It is a Harford Hills Elementary rule/procedure that students **not** bring any toys, games, sports equipment, trading cards, etc. to school. These items sometimes get broken or lost. They also interfere with student learning by causing disagreements between students. Students should **only** bring the items listed on the school supply lists distributed by their classroom teachers. Also, please note that Baltimore County Public Schools does not accept responsibility for students' personal property, as stated in the *BCPS Student Handbook* distributed at the beginning of the school year.

- **School Pictures**

Twice during the school year, usually in fall and spring, a photographer comes to school to take individual and class photographs. A make-up day is scheduled for children who are sick on the day the **individual** pictures are taken. Purchase of school pictures is optional. Look in the newsletters for more information.

- **School Supplies**

The school provides all textbooks and instructional materials. A list of supplemental school supplies each child will need for the following year (paper, pencils, scissors, pocket folders, glue, notebooks, etc.) is sent home at the end of each academic year. The list is also available in the school office and the school website <http://harfordhillses.bcps.org> for incoming students.

- **Sports**

Extra-curricular sports are organized through the Parkville Recreation Council (PRC). You may reach them by phone at 410-887-5300. Please call Parkville Recreation Council for information regarding recreation activities. Fliers announcing activities and registration information are sent home in the PTA Thursday packets.

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Testing

County reading and mathematics assessments are administered during the year. In addition, standardized county-mandated and state-mandated tests are administered once a year, depending on grade level. Please watch the school newsletter for your child's testing schedule.

Volunteers

Harford Hills School has a strong tradition of volunteerism. This is one of its underlying strengths. There are many opportunities to volunteer, some just for a few hours a year, other requiring more time. These include, but are not limited to:

- Volunteering to help with a PTA organized event.
- Donating goods, services, or time to school activities.
- Helping teachers with curriculum-related activities in the classroom. (These vary depending on grade level and the individual teacher.)
- Helping at class special events (e.g., picnics, parties, field day).
- Being a Room Parent: organizing class parties, making phone calls, coordinating parent volunteers from the class for PTA events.
- Clerical/administrative work for teachers, or in the office (photo-copying, etc.).
- Chaperoning field trips.
- Working on the school grounds.
- Helping cafeteria assistants and students during lunch.
- Tutoring under a teacher's guidance in reading, writing, or math.

The PTA distributes a sign-up form listing volunteer opportunities early in the year. If you need further information about how you can be more involved in your child's school life, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator. If you plan to volunteer at any time, it is important to attend a Volunteer Orientation meeting. (See the *Chanticleer Newsletters* and school calendar for dates). Before volunteering in any *Baltimore County Public School*, or being able to chaperon a field trip, each volunteer candidate must complete a *BCPS Application for Volunteer Services Form*. Volunteer screening helps ensure that students and staff work in safe environments. **PLEASE REMEMBER:** All volunteers are required to register in the school office and pick up a visitor badge each time they come to work in the building.

Earn **FREE MONEY** For Harford Hills Elementary!

Raise fund\$ for **HARFORD HILLS ELEMENTARY** by clipping & saving items you use in your every day life and by shopping at your favorite stores!

SHOP-CLIP-SAVE

SHOP

Safeway
Giant
Office Depot
Target

CLIP

Boxtops
Labels for Education

SAVE

Used Ink Cartridges
Used Cell Phones

Ask neighbors, grandparents, aunts & uncles to put Harford Hills Elementary on Their Shopping Lists!

SHOP

Use your store Club or Bonus cards and designate Harford Hills Elementary as your school of choice. Harford Hills Elementary will receive credit!

Note the Harford Hills' ID # is different for each store!

SAFeway Grocery Store- Harford Hills ID # 500018758 (this is a *new ID #*)

Do you shop at Safeway? Sometimes? All the time? Register your **Safeway Club card** online with www.escrip.com This is such an easy way to give \$\$ to our school! You must designate Harford Hills every year!

GIANT Food- Harford Hills ID #01626

A+ BonusBucks Register at any Giant/Super Giant or www.giantfood.com/aplus Sign-up is in the fall. You must designate Harford Hills every year.

OFFICE DEPOT- Harford Hills ID # 7004-6125

5% Back to Schools Program Help our school get credit for **FREE SUPPLIES!** When you shop at Office Depot, remember to give our school ID **#7004-61 25 every time** you make a purchase.

TARGET- Harford Hills ID # 57677

Do you have a Target REDcard? Take Charge of Education will donate an amount equal to 1% of your Target Visa **REDcard** purchase at any Target store or www.target.com. You can sign up for Take Charge of Education by calling 1-800-316-6142 or visiting www.target.com.

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CLIP

Use the **Fill Me Up!** baggie to collect valuable **BOXTOPS for EDUCATION** and **LABELS for EDUCATION** EVERY little bit counts! Once it's full, send in the contents to school and keep refilling the baggie!

BOXTOPS for EDUCATION- These little itty bitty jewels are worth .10 . Keep on the look out for them! They are found on most General Mills products. Just clip and save!

LABELS for EDUCATION Just clip the UPC code and save! Products includes Campbell Soup, Pepperidge Farm, Prego, V8, etc...

SAVE

By donating your used computer ink & toner cartridges and cell phones to Harford Hills Elementary, you're keeping these useful items out of the **Landfills** and putting money back into our school!

What does your employer or IT department do with used ink cartridges?

The Harford Hills PTA is very excited to launch this **SHOP-CLIP-SAVE** Campaign. It's FREE MONEY for our children's school! Please look for more opportunities in the near future.

If you have any questions about the program, please contact Chris Angin or Amy Simon.

Chris Angin
410-663-4744
chrisbmr@comcast.net

Amy Simon
410-668-4781
amyskipper@hotmail.com

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August

Friday	21	Administrative & Supervisory Personnel Meeting
Monday	24	Teachers on Duty
Wednesday	26	Systemwide professional development
Monday	31	Opening Day for Students
	Pupil Days	1
	Teacher Days	6

September

Monday	7	Labor Day—Schools and Offices Closed
Monday	28	Yom Kippur – Schools and Offices Closed
	Pupil Days	20
	Teacher Days	20

October

Monday	12	Columbus Day*
Friday	16	Professional Development Day/MSTA Convention—Schools Closed for Students
	Pupil Days	21
	Teacher Days	22

November

Thursday	5	First Marking Period Ends
Friday	6	Assessment Day for All Schools*** and/or Professional Development Day for All Schools —Schools Closed for all Students
Wednesday	11	Veterans Day*
Thursday	19	Distribution of Report Cards
Monday - Friday	16-20	American Education Week
Monday	23	Elementary Conference Day—Schools Closed for Elementary Students
Thursday - Friday	26-27	Thanksgiving Holiday—Schools and Offices Closed
	Pupil Days	18
	Teacher Days	19

December

Tuesday	15	Bill of Rights Day*
Wednesday	23	Christmas/Winter Break Begins at End of School Day

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	Pupil Days	17
	Teacher Days	17

January

Monday	4	Schools Reopen
Friday	15	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday *
Monday	18	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday Observed—Schools and Offices Closed
Thursday	28	Second Marking Period Ends
Friday	29	Assessment Day for All Schools*** and/or Professional Development Day for All Schools —Schools Closed for all Students

	Pupil Days	18
	Teacher Days	19

February

Thursday	11	Distribution of Report Cards
Friday	12	Lincoln's Birthday*
Monday	15	Presidents' Day—Schools and Offices Closed
Monday	22	Washington's Birthday*

	Pupil Days	19
	Teacher Days	19

March

Thursday	25	Maryland Day*
Friday	26	Easter/Spring Break Begins at the End of the School Day
	Pupil Days	20
	Teacher Days	20

April

Tuesday	6	Schools Reopen
Friday	16	Third Marking Period Ends—Assessment Day for Elementary and Middle Schools**—Schools Close 3 Hours Early for Elementary Middle School Students
	Pupil Days	19
	Teacher Days	19

May

Monday	3	Distribution of Report Cards
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Monday	17	PreK/K Conference Day—no Pre-K or Kindergarten sessions
Friday	28	Last Day for Seniors
Monday	31	Memorial Day Observed—Schools and Offices Closed
	Pupil Days	20
	Teacher Days	20

June

Tuesday - Thursday	1-10	Commencement Exercises
Monday	14	Flag Day*
Wednesday, Thursday	16-17	Assessment Days****: Schools close 3 Hours Early for High School Students; Teachers on Duty
Thursday	17	Assessment Day**: Schools Close 3 Hours Early for Elementary and Middle School Students; Teachers on Duty
Friday	18	Last Day of Classes for Students; Schools Close 3 Hours Early for Students; Teachers on Duty
	Pupil Days	14
	Teacher Days	14

Total Pupil Days: 187

Total Teacher Days: 195

July

Friday	2	Summer School teachers on duty
Monday	5	Independence Day Observed – Schools and Offices Closed
Tuesday	6	Summer School begins

August

Friday	6	Summer School ends
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Arrival & Dismissal Map