

# THE ELKSTER EXAMINER

March 19, 2021

**School hours 9:45 am-4:15 pm**

## **Important Dates**

March

- 29 - PHASE 3: In-Person Hybrid Model Begins for Identified A-Day Students in Grades 3, 4, and 5

April

- 1 - PHASE 3: In-Person Hybrid Model Begins for Identified B-Day Students in Grades 3, 4, and 5
- 2 - Spring Break - Schools and Offices Closed
- 5 - Spring Break - Schools and Offices Closed
- 6 - Spring Break - Schools Closed
- 14 - End of 3rd Quarter Marking Period - Schools Close 3 Hours Early

## **From the Administrative Team-**



Greetings! This week marks the end of our first week with the addition of our K-2 students. Students are enjoying their time back in school and teachers are becoming more comfortable with concurrent teaching. We continue to be appreciative of our entire school community and your efforts to support what is truly a unique school year!

## **Front Office Procedures for Late Arrivals/Early Dismissals/Dropping items off**

**Drop off-of instruments, lunches, computers etc:**

- Parent/Guardian should come into the vestibule.
- Parent/Guardian should ring the intercom to notify the secretaries that they are dropping off an item.
- All items being dropped off need to be **clearly labeled by the parent/guardian** with:

- Child's name
- Grade
- Items will be left on the drop off table in vestibule for secretaries to retrieve.

### **Late Arrivals:**

- Parents should call the office at 410-313-5006.
- Students will come in the front vestibule and ring the intercom.
- A secretary will meet the student at the front doors
- Only the student will be allowed to enter the building.

### **Early Dismissals:**

- Parents/Guardian will call the front office at 410-313-5006.
- A secretary will walk the student to the front door to meet the parent.
- The parent will hold their driver's license up to the door for secretaries to see.
- Once secretaries confirm the parent/guardian is listed as a person authorized to pick up a student, the student will come out the front door.

## **Changes to the HCPSS Technology Support Center**

[Effective Monday, March 22](#), the HCPSS Technology Support Center site at the ARL will close for device exchanges, returns and support. A new support center will open at the nearby Old Cedar Lane building in Columbia.

At that time, devices may be exchanged or returned at any of the following Technology Support Centers:

- Old Bushy Park Elementary School, Room E2 (door to the left of the front entrance), 2690 Route 97, Glenwood (Building is between Glenwood Middle School and Bushy Park Elementary School)
- Old Cedar Lane, Gymnasium (door on the left side of the building; follow the signs), 5451 Beaverkill Road, Columbia (Building shares a parking lot with Harper's Choice Middle School)

Note! Both locations are in old school buildings that are not located at the same sites as the new schools with similar names. Anyone seeking assistance should go to the locations listed above and not go to or call the current schools regarding the Technology Support Center.

Hours of operation are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., and Tuesday and Thursday from 2-5 p.m. Please note that Technology Support Centers are closed any day that [HCPSS offices are closed](#).

## Visitor Protocol

New Visitor Protocols are in effect immediately that limit visitors responding to an emergency or for a previously scheduled appointment. These changes mean that volunteers and lunch dates are not permitted. We hope to resume these programs in the future and apologize in advance. Additionally, this means that no visitors will be permitted on a student's first day of class. Thank you for your cooperation as we implement new safety measures for the school community.

Visitors are not permitted under HCPSS Infectious Disease Plan. Exceptions are made for emergency services, contractors, and special situations. Facility special visitors will be limited and should occur by scheduled appointment only. No walk-in visitors are permitted. As much as possible, appointments to meet with parents and customers should be accommodated via telephone, video conference, or other suitable technology. When a face-to-face visit is necessary, the school or office must schedule an appointment time with the visitor and follow the following steps:

1) Once the visitor has arrived at the building and parked, they must call the school/office to check-in.

2) The administrator, or staff member admitting the visitor, must ask health screening questions. (see sample below)

- If visitors are suspected to be sick and/or have recently experienced COVID-19 symptoms, they are not permitted to enter the building and must reschedule.

3) Visitors who pass the health screening should be instructed to access the building through the front doors or appropriately designated entrance and be greeted by an employee, who will wear a mask, for escort to the appointment. Hand sanitizer will be available for visitor use.

- Visitors must wear a mask, enter the building alone, and follow social distancing guidelines. Any family members or friends accompanying the visitor will be asked to remain outside or in a vehicle unless otherwise approved by administration. (For ex. baby/small child, meeting with both parents/advocate)

- There will be a table or drop box in the vestibule or front entry hallway to allow parents or others to drop off items for students and/or staff. School administrative staff will provide signage to instruct visitors on the procedures to be followed.

### Health Screening Questions-SAMPLE

YES or NO, since your last day of school/work/visitation, have you experienced any of the following symptoms?

A fever of 100.4°F or higher?

Any use of fever reducing medication within the last 3 days?

A new cough that is not due to another health condition?

New shortness of breath or difficulty breathing that is not due to another health condition?

A new loss of taste or smell?

Have you had a positive test for the virus that causes COVID-19 disease within the past 10 days?

## New Student Meal Procedures

Effective March 1, meals for seven days per week will continue to be provided at no cost to families and students; however, the days and times meals will be provided will change. Meals will be available in most schools, including those that have been closed for construction and those closed due to inadequate staffing.

Students returning to school buildings will have the option of receiving school meals any day they are at school. In addition, meals will be available for pickup from 7:45 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. at elementary school locations and 9 a.m. - 10 a.m. at middle and high school locations on the following weekdays:

- **Mondays** – Students in Group V and/or non-HCPSS students age 18 and under
- **Wednesdays** – Students in Groups E, A, or B
- **Thursdays** – Students in Group V and/or non-HCPSS students age 18 and under

**There will be no pickups on Tuesdays and Fridays.**

Pick-up times/locations are subject to change based on individual school needs and/or staffing. Full [details on student meals](#) for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year are available online.

## Student Chromebooks for In-person Instruction -

Students attending school in-person should bring their fully charged HCPSS assigned Chromebook and power adapter to school on their assigned days. Families should review the [Chromebook Care \(Links to an external site.\)](#) web page for information on how to best care for the device. All elementary and middle schools, and many high schools will have distributed Chromebooks prior to students return to school. Schools will be communicating directions to families who do not have HCPSS Chromebooks to bring to school.

## Ensuring Students Can Log In

For students returning to in-person instruction, especially those in primary grades, we ask that you [work with your child to learn their login](#) and password. This will ensure a smooth transition from virtual to hybrid. Have your child [prepare for logging in with this practice sheet](#). For privacy purposes, please do not attach login credentials to a student device. We suggest filling out this [Student Tip Sheet](#), which students may bring to school.

## From the EES Counselors

Review the included Counseling Connection Newsletter for resources and strategies to support your child's social-emotional development at home. Please reach out to your child's counselor with any questions or additional support.

[The School Counseling Connection](#)

[Ms. Stephanie Dean](#) - grades k, 1, 3, 4

[Ms. Angie Szalecki](#) - grades 2, 5

## **EES Staff Spotlight - Hero of the Week**

Every Wednesday, EES staff members nominate their colleagues for being a hero. A hero can be defined as someone who is admired or honored for their courage, outstanding achievements, or willingness to help others. Read below for the "Hero of the Week" and to learn more about our amazing EES educators!



**Name:** Mrs. Petry

**Role:** 2nd grade Teacher

**Why she's a hero:** Mrs. Petry is an excellent teacher, and she always has a positive attitude!

**Biography:** Mrs. Petry has enjoyed teaching at Elkridge Elementary School for the last 14 years. She also enjoys spending time with her family, reading by her pool, and painting.

**Fun facts:**

1. I have 4 dogs and 3 cats!
2. Before I was a teacher I was a firefighter and a paramedic.
3. I practice Krav Maga self-defense.

### **The HoCo Rainbow Conference**

The HoCo Rainbow Conference Committee is planning the second HoCo Rainbow Conference which is scheduled to take place virtually on Saturday, May 15, 2021 from 8:45 am - 5:00 pm. This conference is to raise visibility and awareness of LGBTQ+ issues and provide education and support to our HCPSS community.

This conference is for HCPSS High School Students, all HCPSS staff, Howard County parents (who may bring their middle school aged children), Howard County community members, and anyone who wants to learn more about being supportive of the LGBTQ+ community. All participants must register. Participants can choose to attend only one session or as many sessions as their schedule will allow. Registration will open on Friday, April 2nd.

Our keynote speaker is Mikah Meyer (learn more about him [here](#)), who was rescheduled from last year and will be presenting twice so that all attendees have the opportunity to hear him speak. Our concurrent sessions are tailored to different audiences, and there is a wide variety of sessions from which to choose. We currently have 24 concurrent sessions being offered. These sessions, as well as the conference schedule, can be viewed on our website (Click [here](#)).

We have received funding again this year to keep our conference FREE of charge to all attendees. If your school's PTSA and/or Boosters would like to make a donation, please have them visit the 2021 Sponsors page of our website for more information (Click [here](#)).

### **PTA News:**

#### **ELKSTER'S BIRTHDAY**

This Wednesday March 24th the PTA will be celebrating Elkster's birthday with a virtual birthday party and visit from Elkster! Starting at 6:00 you can log into the virtual party for fun and games.

As the party goes on Elkster will be visiting various locations throughout Elkridge to say hello and give students a surprise treat. Please wear your masks and practice social distancing so that everyone stays safe. A list of stops and approximate arrival times and the zoom link for the virtual party will be sent out as soon as details are finalized.

## **Yearbook Information**

If your child did not have their photo taken by Strawbridge in February we are requesting that you upload a portrait of your child to be included in the yearbook. Each homeroom has a link for uploading their individual portraits. ***Please note that the name you type in when uploading your photo will be how it will be spelled in the yearbook.*** Once you type in your child's name, you can close the window by clicking the "X" at the corner. You will not receive confirmation that your picture was received or uploaded- but rest assured if you were able to enter in your child's information your picture was successfully uploaded.

The links for each homeroom can be found

here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AGBMs1LRiXKDCySQH20oxg8Pe7gTGsaLgUQP5rDJfq0/edit?usp=sharing>

Tips for how to take a good picture and uploading can be found here:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1H0cY7640bahrAp2r7u203aMA54ya-exWVdy\\_7SU6-\\_c/e/dit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1H0cY7640bahrAp2r7u203aMA54ya-exWVdy_7SU6-_c/e/dit?usp=sharing)