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****Breaking news: TOWN HALL/PARENT ORIENTATION AND Q&A ZOOM WITH PRINCIPAL HORNBECK: Wed., 8/25 at 4pm. The link will be posted on our website and FB page that morning.****

"Widen the path of opportunities and continue to leave a powerful and positive legacy in this world." Luis Fonsi, singer/songwriter

"Amplíe el camino de las oportunidades y continúe dejando un legado poderoso y positivo en este mundo". Luis Fonsi, cantautor

August 18, 2021

Dear Hampstead Hill Family,

Thank you for choosing to send your child to Hampstead Hill Academy (HHA)! We are proud to begin the 24th year of partnership with our charter operator, the Baltimore Curriculum Project (BCP). The staff of HHA and BCP welcomes you and your family to our great school. We are excited to be a part of the BCP network of neighborhood schools, which now includes City Springs Elementary/Middle, Frederick Elementary, Govans Elementary, Pimlico Elementary/Middle and Wolfe Street Academy.

For the first time in 17 months, we are back in-person every day with all students. That's definitely the right decision, but we need to make sure we do it right. While the positivity rate in Baltimore is just 2.6%, that is a significant increase over just four weeks ago. The Delta variant is very contagious so there are a number of important measures we are taking to make HHA as safe as possible for students and staff. Masks will be required for everyone inside the building. Please make sure your child has a clean, close-fitting mask that is as comfortable as possible each day. We have plenty of masks if any student needs one. Wellness screening questions will be visible to everyone who comes in the building. However, parents will monitor and screen the health and wellness of children at home. A signed "COVID Awareness Agreement" on orange paper will be required for each student. You will hear us talking about that orange paper a lot. Ms. Swann will coordinate the distribution and collection of this form. It requires an actual signature and can not be completed electronically.

There are two large stand-alone HEPA filters in each classroom, a smaller HEPA filter in each office, and HEPA filters in each of the built-in HVAC units throughout the building. HEPA filters scrub the air multiple times each hour and filter for common cold viruses, flu, and COVID.

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Morning routines will largely be the same. Parents will be permitted on the greentop to wait for entry with their child. However, we will temporarily close “the wall” where parents give high fives and say goodbye to students one last time. There is too much line crossing and congestion at that point. The wall may reopen later in the year. Breakfast will open at 7:40 but no parents will be permitted inside. If the numbers in the cafeteria need to be reduced, we will ask 4 through 8 grade students who are finished eating breakfast to exit and line up outside.

Parents are permitted in the building again. However, no parents will be permitted to observe student classes for now. Parents will be permitted in a classroom when meeting with a teacher after school or with a staff member during the school day in an office. Parents may request a virtual/remote/Zoom meeting as well.

95% of our staff and 100% of instructional staff are fully vaccinated. Unvaccinated students and the handful of staff who remain unvaccinated will be required to take weekly pooled PCR tests. Fully vaccinated staff and students will not have to take weekly PCR tests. If there is a positive pool, Health Suite staff, rather than the van you may remember from last spring, will conduct individual PCR tests. Positive cases will quarantine for 10 days. However, once other members of the pod test negative, they may return to in-person instruction. Fully vaccinated staff and students will not be required to quarantine. As a reminder, we have administered something like 5,000 total PCR tests at HHA since April and fewer than 6 have been positive. Again, all staff and students - vaccinated or not, will wear masks at all times other than when eating or drinking.

Remote instruction is not an option at HHA this school year. There were six students who requested to be a part of the district’s remote learning plan. The district will notify those families about how to enroll. The district’s remote program does not include HHA’s teachers, curriculum, or schedule. The district is no longer accepting applications. If you have not already applied, the deadline has passed. In the rare instance that a student is directed by school staff to quarantine due to COVID, a remote option may temporarily be made available for that student. If a parent chooses to keep a child at home or to travel or take vacation on school days, there is no remote option available. The student will be marked absent and asked to make up any missed work. If a parent suspects a child may have COVID, a positive rapid or PCR test is required before school staff would direct the student to quarantine and a remote learning option would be provided.

Masks will not be required outside. Depending on weather, your child’s teachers will plan outdoor mask breaks of less than 5 minutes once or twice a day. Students may remove their masks during outdoor recess. Although we are permitted to have the cafeteria at full capacity, we are going to limit it to 50% capacity and student seats will be assigned every other stool. Homerooms will sit at separate tables. This means only three homerooms at a time in the cafeteria. That is normally the way it works with one grade being at recess and the other in lunch, and then they switch. In the event of rain or other weather that prevents recess, one grade of classes will return to their classrooms to be supervised by a Coppermine Coach.

There will be procedures that we develop and update throughout this year. Don’t get too wed to any one way of doing things. I am usually reachable within a few minutes seven days a week, if you need to talk or text. I will always keep you informed.

There will be a special HHA Town Hall next week, Wednesday, August 25 at 4 p.m. where I will respond to questions and orient parents in terms of what to expect. The Zoom link will be posted on our website and Facebook page. You do not need a school email address to join the call. If you can’t make it, a recording of the call will be posted later that evening. Spanish language translation will be written in the chat feature for families to follow.

HHA is a safe, nurturing, diverse, family-friendly neighborhood school with rigorous, effective academic programs and exciting, engaging, extracurricular activities. We believe all parents want the same thing for their children: more

and better opportunities for college and career. We believe in the importance of the arts, and we want our students to be great communicators, listeners and writers. Our students will be leaders who are productive, persistent, responsible, caring, and healthy members of the greater community. As we return to in-person instruction, it is our strong community and great relationships with families and students that will sustain us.

As part of our recovery, there will be a state and school-specific assessments in reading and math this fall. This will help us gauge how to help students. In grades 4-8, the Maryland State Department of Education is administering the annual state assessment for the previous grade this fall (so 4th graders take the 3rd grade test and so on) and the annual state assessment for your child's current grade in the spring when it usually occurs. 3rd graders will not take a fall state assessment because that is the grade when state assessment's begin. HHA uses an assessment called the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). The assessment will be administered in the fall, winter, and spring to help us appropriately set and measure our schoolwide academic goals in reading and math. There will be an additional schoolwide goal for student attendance, which we take very seriously. Nothing is more important than attendance.

MAP offers pre- and post-test data in reading and math to help us measure student growth from the beginning to the middle and then to the end of the year. With MAP, we can see whether our programs add value to student learning. A celebration of the growth our students showed on MAP last year is in order. Our students showed statistically significant growth - even during the pandemic and remote learning period - and that achievement is directly connected to the quality of our staff and your support at home. You can learn more about this diagnostic assessment at: www.nwea.org. Fifty percent of students meeting their individual growth goal is the national average.

This year promises to be great as we set high expectations for learning and have a lot of fun at the same time. Test scores are not, to quote Shakespeare, "the end all and be all." Learning at our school means much more than a single number on a state test. We want our academic programs to come alive for students. Our students will move beyond the acquisition of knowledge to produce work that is unique and exciting such as projects and papers that justify, persuade and convince. Ultimately, we want HHA students to become the thinkers, innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders that our city and nation require. This year's entering kindergarten students are the future college class of 2038 – and we're glad to be an important part of their path.

Our school culture aims to be nurturing and consistent. As a Restorative Practices school, we build community in each classroom and promote good citizenship and respect. Our middle school Leaders Go Places (LGP) program is outstanding at building relationships. Most importantly, we are ready to motivate and engage your child in their learning. We know that helping students learn how to synthesize information, problem solve, think critically and organize their materials are essential lifelong skills. Teachers are busy planning project fairs, portfolios of student work and enrichment activities to expand our curriculum. There will be opportunities throughout the year to celebrate your child's progress.

The metrics used to measure our performance include: (1) School effectiveness review (SER) conducted by outside experts; (2) in-house instructional coaching recommendations; (3) state and district standardized testing in reading, math and science; (4) PARCC scores; (5) NWEA's Measures of Academic Performance (MAP); (6) promotion, cohort retention, attendance/lateness, suspension, detention, office referral data; (7) student, parent, and teacher climate surveys; (8) capital planning to accommodate our growing enrollment; (9) budgeting for the short and long term; and (10) the charter renewal process. We are at the end of our current five-year charter contract cycle. We hope to be renewed for the longest term possible, which is now eight years.

The SER consists of an extensive document review and a two-day site visit where about a dozen reviewers, many of whom are former teachers, look at our practice and tell us what is working and what is not. There will be

unannounced classroom observations by SER team members and panels of randomly selected teachers, students, and parents to answer key questions about teaching and learning at HHA.

City Schools has a rigorous Instructional Framework (IF) that is focused on best practices in teaching and learning. You can see the framework at <https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/instructional-framework>. The framework complements good teaching and greatly helps in the implementation of the Common Core. You should make certain to review in detail the Common Core standards for your child's grade. The standards can be found at <http://www.corestandards.org/>.

At HHA, students must show their work and explain how they developed their thinking. They write across content areas and have the opportunity to discuss and analyze their thinking and reasoning, especially in upper elementary and middle grades. As HHA's Student Outcomes Committee (SOC) states, our students should have the literacy and communication skills, analytical skills, practical life skills and social skills necessary to succeed in high school, college and their chosen career.

To meet this goal, teachers will develop individual portfolios that include at least nine exemplary products demonstrating an opportunity for higher order thinking, creative choice, and the editing and revision process. The definition of higher order thinking is informed by the Common Core but defined in the classroom by teachers. Feel free to ask your child's teacher what will be included in portfolios and why. Also, students in grades 1-8 will participate in at least one project fair this year, including science fairs and, for middle school students, the rigorous National History Day project.

I hope you are finding time to enjoy summer – reading, spending time with family and friends, traveling and doing the things you like to do. See you soon!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew Hornbeck". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'M' and 'H'.

Matthew Hornbeck
Principal

P.s. If you still have not gotten the shot, everyone who is eligible should get vaccinated! Unvaccinated people account for 90% of hospitalizations. Talk with your doctor today!

Meet Your Teacher! - Staggered start based on your child's last name!!

You and your child are invited to "MEET YOUR TEACHER DAY" Friday, August 27th from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m. If your child's last name starts with a letter between A and K, your family will be invited to this open house between 9-9:55. If your child's last name starts with a letter between J and Z, your family will be invited to this open house between 10 and 10:55. Come join us for an informal, get-acquainted morning with your child's new teacher(s). There will be a surprise special guest (local mascot!) ready to take pictures. The Food for Life program will provide light refreshments. Various community organizations will have tables to share information and there will be a school supply giveaway. A parent or guardian should accompany children attending the event. There will be an opportunity to purchase HHA uniform shirts for just \$12. Cash only for uniforms.

Switching to Class Dojo

Based on our parent survey and participation rates, HHA will move from Bloomz to Class Dojo as the primary communication tool between teachers and parents. We have years of positive experience with Dojo in a number of grades and this year we are going schoolwide with it. Learn more about Class Dojo at <https://www.classdojo.com/>. Your child's homeroom teacher will have information about how to connect to HHA with this app.

Instrumental Music Recruitment

Our Director of Instrumental Music is Mairead Alexander. Ms. Alexander is excited to work with our talented and budding musicians. Returning band and orchestra members and any 4-8 grade student interested in playing an instrument will have the chance to play. Ms. Alexander will offer small group lessons to each student at least twice a week. Most lessons will be scheduled during a regular resource time so that students will not need to be pulled out of core content classes for practice, although that is unavoidable just before performances. Some lessons may be remote to start the year. For more information, please email Ms. Alexander at mairead1@umbc.edu.

PreK and K Begin Gradually the First Week

Incoming PreK and K families should plan for the first day of K and the first few days of PreK to be small group meetings with students and parents. Teachers will distribute exact first week schedules asap. PreK's schedule for week of 8/30 will be: Mon - parent/student cubby conferences, Tues and Wed. - ½ days, Thurs. and Fri. - full days. K's schedule for week of 8/30 will be - Mon - parent/student cubby conferences and Tuesday-Friday - full days.

Information about Kindergarten Homeroom Assignments

Kindergarten homeroom assignments are made based on the brief assessments conducted over the summer. Thank you to everyone who scheduled an appointment and came in. If your kindergarten child has not taken the assessment, do not be concerned. He or she will have a placeholder homeroom assignment until assessed and assigned, which will happen in the first few days of school.

Homeroom Assignments

Homeroom teacher assignments for all grades will be posted at school beginning Thursday, August 26th. Homeroom assignments will be simultaneously posted on our website at www.hha47.org. Based on the assessment of skills in the first few weeks, a few students may change homerooms.

Transition to 5th Grade

Parents of incoming 5th graders should know that instead of 45 minutes of lunch/recess and 45 minutes of resource class (PE, art, drama, etc.) each day, the schedule for our older students includes 30 minutes for lunch/recess and 60 minutes for resource classes each day. Many middle schools do not offer recess but we believe being active is important. 30 minutes provides enough time to eat and play. If you have individual concerns about your child, please see an administrator.

Attendance is critical

Good attendance is missing four or fewer days of schools for the year. If your child misses time, especially unexcused time early in the year, you will be contacted. Students succeed when they attend school and are on time. All students who are absent receive a phone call home. Students who are signed out before 10:30 a.m. will be marked absent for the day. The district monitors the attendance of your child. If there are too many days missed, you will receive a letter from City Schools asking you to attend a hearing. Hearing Officers have the authority to levy fines of up to \$50 per absence. Again, attendance is required by law. More importantly, we can only teach students who come to school.

Monthly HHA Parent News Magazine

Look for an important parent news magazine to be sent home with your child Thurs., Sept. 2. It will contain useful information for you and your family. Newsletters are posted monthly the first school day of each month. A Spanish language version is published within a few days. Archived newsletters are available online at www.hha47.org.

Aftercare with Fitness, Fun and Games

Fitness Fun & Games at Hampstead Hill is enrolling for before and after school programming. Registration and payment are due two weeks prior to starting the program. Please email the site director, Portia Price, at HampsteadHill@FitnessFunandGames.org or call 410-732-8778 (school) or (443) 977-4671 (cell) for more information. There is currently a waiting list. Spaces will be added as FFG hires more staff.

Want a Job with Fitness Fun & Games

FFG has job openings at Hampstead Hill. Log onto www.FitnessFunandGames.org and click on "Jobs." Hours are 6:15-8 am and/or 2-6:30 pm. Staff may bring children, ages 4-14, to work. To view additional opportunities at HHA, visit our website at www.hha47.org.

Breakfast and Lunch Program

Thanks to a federal initiative called the Community Eligibility Program (CEP), breakfast AND lunch are free for all City Schools students regardless of income. Meals begin the first day of school for students, Monday, August 30th. All students coming to breakfast must enter the cafeteria using the Streeper Street entrance between 7:40-7:55. Please do not send your child to school before 7:40 unless they are signed up to participate with FFG.

Arrival and dismissal procedures

The 2021-2022 school year begins Monday, August 30 at 8:00 a.m. Once school begins, we expect students to get back into a routine for learning - plenty of sleep on school nights, a good breakfast each morning, and coming to school on time ready to learn. Being on time means entering the building promptly at 8:00 a.m. Students will line up by numbered homeroom on the blacktop. Depending on the grade, your child should enter school as follows:

- | | |
|------|---|
| PreK | line up by the PreK classroom doors on the courtyard |
| K-4 | line up on the greentop and enter through the stairwell entrance by main office.
(Note: "The Wall" will be closed to goodbyes for now due to line crossing and congestion) |
| 5-8 | gather in front of the building, north of the ramp and enter through the Eastern and Linwood stairwell doors. |

School will dismiss each day at 2:40 p.m. For safety's sake, teachers of our youngest children will walk their classes onto the greentop for dismissal. PreK will dismiss from their rooms. Parents must wait until students line up and check in with the teacher before leaving with their child. Be sure your child follows dismissal procedures outlined by his/her teacher. Please make certain your child knows where and when he/she will be picked up after school. If your child walks, he/she should go directly home at dismissal. Please note that unless there is an emergency, the office

will not sign out students from 2:15 until 2:40. Parents arriving early for pickup should let their children finish the school day.

Dismissal of 4th Graders

Fourth graders are dismissed directly outside from the stairwell door by the main office. They are no longer passed off directly to parents as is the case with PreK-3 grade students. Please plan to be on time and arrange for a place to meet your child.

Uniform Policy

HHA is a uniform school. ALL STUDENTS MUST WEAR A COLLARED NAVY TOP WITH KHAKI BOTTOM. No other color of blue is acceptable, only navy blue. Official HHA T-shirts are appropriate to wear as a uniform as well. We sell high quality polo shirts embroidered with our logo for \$12 each, but you are welcome to purchase different brands. It is not necessary to have a logo. Uniforms may be purchased at Meet Your Teacher and cash is the only form of payment accepted. We are working on getting an ordering system set up to buy HHA uniform shirts online. Stay tuned. Students out of uniform will be asked to call home for a change of clothes. Please make sure your child is in uniform every day.

Supply list

Supply lists are available for all grades at the main office and online at <https://hha47.org/school-supply-lists> . Please clearly label all supplies, clothing, lunch boxes, etc. with the name of your child. Please note that all book bags must fit inside a locker. Rolling-style backpacks do not fit. Teachers may add a few items to this supply list during the first days of school.

Playground Rules

Our wonderful playground is available to the community whenever school is not in session. Please note that the playground is closed in the morning before school starts. Students supervised by a parent or adult family member may play on our playground after school. Only supervised children up to age 10 are allowed on the playground. Littering or misuse of the playground will result in the loss of playground privileges. Please let the office know if you see anyone misusing the playground. Our security cameras keep a watchful eye on the playground as well. Absolutely no dogs or pets are permitted on school property, which includes the sidewalks around our building.

Leadership Team

Your 2020-2021 HHA Leadership Team includes Matt Hornbeck (Principal), John Paz (Assistant Principal), Cassandra Bailey (Assistant Principal), Geri Swann (Director of Community Outreach), Rosalia Castelan (Director of Latino Outreach), Steven Plunk (Director of Restorative Practices, Wellness Co-Chair), Nancy Gonzalez (Director of Talent Development and Equity and DEIC Chair), Jackie Clary (PLC Chair and Emergency Planning Chair), Kirby Conrad (SOC Chair), Sarah Hohman (SFC Chair), Katie Vincent (Co-Chair, Wellness Committee), Laura Guitian (GAL Director), Katie Johnson (Academic Coach, PreK-2), Megan Tyson (Academic Coach, 3-5), Mike Lucas (Academic Coach, 6-8 and LGP Chair), Carey Fetting-Smith (Academic Coach, 6-8), Ashley Wallis (PreK/K Team Leader), Reza Bonner (1/2 Team Leader), Liz Kaplan (3/4 Team Leader), Hayley Ruppenthal (5/6 Team Leader), Stephen Lohrman (7/8 Team Leader), Sonya Kannam (Enrichment Team Leader), Colleen Hicks (ESOL Team Leader), and Jennifer Shaffer (Special Education Team Leader/IEP Chair, Testing Coordinator)

New Staff

We have a stellar group of new staff joining our talented ranks. We welcome Juliana Villa (Kindergarten Teacher), Brianna Billups (Grade 3 Sci/SS/Language Teacher), Annikki Murray (Grade 4 Math Teacher), Queen Bentil (Grade 6 Math Teacher), Benyka Mitchell (Food for Life Teacher), Molly Hyatt (ESOL Teacher), Marissa Lightkep (Guidance

Counselor), Jose Hallmen (Social Worker), Paula Ziemba (Intervention Teacher, 5-8), Yessica Gonzalez (Office Assistant), and Emily Aoki (Urban Teacher Resident, 8th Grade Math).

Staff in New Roles

Congratulations to the following members of our talented staff as they transition into new roles: Rosalia Castelan (Director of Latino Outreach), Nancy Gonzalez (Director of Talent Development and Equity), Meagan VW (Intervention Teacher), Marybeth Smith (Intervention Teacher), Brandon Pratta (Grade 8 Pre-Algebra and Algebra), Katja Kleine (Special Education Teacher), Julia Graston (Grade 2 Teacher) and Cameron Tulloch (Substitute Teacher).

Thank you to our Super Summer Team!

We all owe a debt to Ms. Chris, Mr. Lee, Ms. Melanie, Ms. Rasheed, Ms. Davis, Ms. Olivia, Ms. Flora, Ms. Carmen, and Jalen Lee for their commitment to getting the building ready and making everything sparkle. And to our neighbor and former HHA parent, Victor Malabayabas, for being our new groundskeeper and making our block beautiful.

Please note these important dates on your calendar

- Monday, August 23, 2021 Teachers Return
- Friday, August 27, 2021 Meet Your Teacher 9 am – 11 am
- Monday, August 30, 2021 First Day for Students
- Monday, August 30, 2021 Quarter 1 Begins
- Monday, September 6, 2021 Labor Day - School Closed
- Thursday, September 23, 2021 Back to School Night 5:30pm - 7:30pm
- Friday, September 24, 2021 Staff PD School Closed
- Wednesday, October 6, 2021 Early Release Day - Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Friday, October 15, 2021 Staff PD - School Closed
- Wednesday, November 3, 2021 Quarter 1 Ends
- Thursday, November 4, 2021 Quarter 2 Begins
- Friday November 5, 2021 Tentative - Staff PD - School Closed
- Sunday, November 7, 2021 Daylight Savings Time Ends
- Wednesday, November 24, 2021 Tentative - School Closed
- Thursday, November 25 and 26, 2021 Thanksgiving Holiday - School Closed
- Thurs., December 16, 2021 Student Celebration Night/Parent-Teacher Conferences 5:30pm - 7:30pm
- Friday, December 24 - 31, 2021 Winter Break - School Closed
- Monday, January 3, 2022 School Reopens
- Monday, January 17, Martin Luther King Day - School Closed
- Wednesday January 19, 2022 Quarter 2 Ends
- Thursday, January 20, 2022 Quarter 3 Begins
- Friday, February 18, 2022 Staff PD - School Closed
- Monday, February 21, 2022 President's Day - School Closed
- Wednesday, March 2, 2022 Early Release Day - Parent Teacher Conferences
- Sunday, March 13, 2022 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- Friday, March 25, 2022 Quarter 3 Ends
- Monday, March 28, 2022 Quarter 4 Begins
- Monday, April 11-18, 2022 Spring Break
- Thursday, May 5, 2022 Student Celebration Night/Parent-Teacher Conferences 5:30pm - 7:30pm

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- Friday, May 13, 2022 Staff PD - School Closed
- Monday, May 30, 2022 Memorial Day - School Closed
- Wednesday, June 8, 2022 Last Day of School