



**August 18, 2023**

**Published Friday evening bi-weekly**

*Check out and "Like" the Official Howard Facebook page to see posts on the many activities taking place at Howard. Bookmark the Howard Web Page to keep up to date on the school calendar and other important information. Follow us on Instagram!*

**Instagram: [hmsacaarts](#)**



**[Howard Web Page](#)**



**[Howard Facebook Page](#)**



**[HMS PTSA Facebook Group](#)**



## A message from our Principal, Dr. W. John McHale

I am truly excited to be part of the Howard Family. Already in my short time here, I have seen creativity, enthusiasm and pure joy amongst our students and faculty. Although my own artistic abilities are still a work in progress, I continue to find inspiration and support from all the exceptional artists here at HMS.

As we emerge from the challenges of the last few years, I know that we will find hope in the culture already established. We will continue to build a school that is inclusive and a safe space for all. My goal is for every child to feel valued and respected, while given the space to grow as an artist and citizen.

With the new year comes even more opportunities. As I promised when I arrived a year ago, Piano is back. We have also added Debate, Photography and Musical Theatre classes. Finally, we will be the first middle school in Orange County to offer classes in E-Gaming!

I hope to see everyone at all the great events that Howard Middle School supports. Encourage your child to seek new opportunities and experiences. Finally, support them as they discover themselves here at Howard Middle School Academy of Arts.

I wish everyone a Rangeriffic year!

Dr. W. John McHale, Principal

## Howard News and Updates

### **Window For Students Requesting Changes in Class Schedule Has Closed-NEW**

Guidance is no longer accepting requests to change schedules. No more requests will be accepted.

Thank you-Howard Guidance Team.

#### **Howard Middle Guidance Team:**

- ❖ **6th Grade Guidance Counselor:** Christina Calvar  
Email: [Christina.Calvar2@ocps.net](mailto:Christina.Calvar2@ocps.net)
- ❖ **7th Grade Guidance Counselor:** Dawn Bugar  
Email: [Dawn.Bugar@ocps.net](mailto:Dawn.Bugar@ocps.net)
- ❖ **8th Grade Guidance Counselor:** Elisa Elder  
Email: [Elisa.Elder@ocps.net](mailto:Elisa.Elder@ocps.net)

## **Device Issues-NEW**

At this time all students should have a device. Any student having a tech issue needs to fill out an online tech request form, found on their launchpad.

Mr. Eion will call students down to the Media Center for Tech Time throughout the day.

## **Dance Troupe Auditions-NEW**

The Howard Elite Dance Troupe is an auditioned and selected group of dancers that meet during “Zero-Period Hour” every day before school (8 or 8:15am-9:20am) which means that **this is a graded course and daily attendance is required.**



Dance Troupe is considered an extension of the regular dance elective. Therefore, students are only able to audition if they are enrolled in one of the dance classes during the day. However, auditions are open to all dance class periods.

Students wishing to audition for Dance Troupe must sign up to attend **ONE** of the four audition days: Monday August 28th, Tuesday August 29th, Wednesday August 30th or Thursday August 31st. A sign up genius link will be sent to all students through Canvas on Tuesday, August 22nd at 4:15pm.

**All of the Audition Information was sent home with all dance students on Friday, August 18th and is also available in their Dance Canvas Course in their HMS Dance Info and Resources Module.**

## **2023 Soccer Schedule-NEW**

There will be a charge for entrance into all games. Adults will be charged \$5.00 and children \$2.00. The boys team will play first followed by the girls team in all contests. Wednesday games should begin by 5:00 p.m. and Monday games by 5:30 p.m. but IS dependent on transportation of teams and officials arrival time.

August 30	Wednesday	Conway	Away	5:00
September 6	Wednesday	Rob. Clem	Away	5:00
September 11	Monday	BYE	BYE	Bye
September 13	Wednesday	Liberty	Away	5:00
September 18	Monday	Lake Como	Home	5:30
September 20	Blankner	Home		5:00
September 27	Wednesday	Pershing	Home	5:00

### **Soccer Fest**

<b><u>Round 1</u></b>	<b><u>Round 2</u></b>	<b><u>QF</u></b>	<b><u>SF</u></b>	<b><u>Finals</u></b>
(M) Oct. 2	(W) Oct. 4	(M) Oct. 9	(W) Oct. 11	Week of October 16

**Principal: Dr. McHale**  
**Athletic Director: Mrs. Wallen**  
**Boy's Coach: Coach Richards**  
**Girl's Coach: Coach Ale & Coach Vincent**  
Please email questions/concerns to: [Kimberly.Wallen@ocps.net](mailto:Kimberly.Wallen@ocps.net)

See the “Forms & Policies/Procedures” Section below for details on Sports Physicals



## News from the Dean's Office-NEW



### OCPS Student Dress Code

The dress and grooming of OCPS students shall contribute to the health and safety of the individual, promote a positive educational environment, and not disrupt the educational activities and processes of the school. **These standards of dress and grooming apply to all students in the public schools of Orange County.**

- *Clothes shall be worn as they are designed.*
- *Clothing must cover the body from one armpit across to the other armpit and down to approximately mid-thigh. Tops must have straps. Undergarments must not be viewable. Rips, holes, or tears in clothing must be below mid-thigh.*
- *Shoes shall be worn at all times and should be safe for the school environment.*
- *Headgear shall not be worn on campus during the school day, unless the headgear is approved by the principal.*
- *See-through, revealing, or mesh garments must not be worn without appropriate coverage underneath that meet the minimum requirements of this dress code.*
- *Gang paraphernalia, garments and/or jewelry, tattoos, or other insignias, which display or suggest sexual, vulgar, drug, alcohol, or tobacco related wording/graphics or may tend to provoke violence or disruption in school, shall not be worn.*
- *Clothing must not state, imply, or depict hate speech or imagery targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected class.*

**Any student who violates this dress policy will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in Sections IV and V of the Code, Section 1006.07(2)(d), Florida Statutes, and below:**

- 1. For a first offense, a student shall be given a verbal warning and the school may call the student's parent/guardian.**
- 2. For the second offense, a student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for a period of time not to exceed 5 days and the school may meet with the student's parent/guardian.**
- 3. For a third or subsequent offense, a student shall receive an in-school suspension pursuant to Section 1003.01(5), Florida Statutes, for a period not to exceed 3 days, the student is ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for a period not to exceed 30 days, and the school may call the student's parent/guardian**



## OCPS Cell Phone Policy for Students

**A student may possess a cell phone on Board property, on school transportation and at school activities, provided that during school hours, the cell phone is silenced and concealed.** Pursuant to Section 1006.07, Florida Statutes, “a student may not use a wireless communications device during instructional time, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes. **A teacher shall designate an area for wireless communications devices during instructional time.**” For purposes of this section, the designated area will be in the student’s **backpack or purse, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes.** Violations of the cell phone policy will be handled in accordance with the Code and may result in confiscation of said device. If the cell phone is used in a criminal act (such as sexting as outlined in Florida Statutes and the Code), the cell phone will be provided to law enforcement and the student may face criminal penalties.

**The use of wireless communication devices is always prohibited during the school day (from the first morning bell to dismissal) unless expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes. Wireless communication devices include but are not limited to, cell**

**phones and/or auxiliary/ancillary devices such as watches and ear buds.** Students may not receive discipline if they use their cellphone and/or ancillary device(s) to monitor a health condition that is documented through medical records provided to the school including, but not limited to, an IEP, a Section 504 Plan or a Health Plan. **At no time shall OCPS be responsible for theft, loss or damage to cell phones or other electronic devices brought onto its property.**

These standards apply to all students in the public schools of Orange County.

## News From Howard’s Testing Office-**NEW**

Dear Parent/Guardians of Howard Middle School,

The Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) is a progress monitoring system that is administered three times per year to track your student’s progress in learning the Benchmarks of Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards throughout this school year. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that your student will participate in the first administration (PM1) of the Grade 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) ELA Reading and Mathematics assessments on August 22<sup>nd</sup> (Reading) and August 24<sup>th</sup> (Math). Your student’s results from PM1 are for informational purposes only, and you will be provided with information about how to access the results after testing is completed.

FAST assessments are computer-adaptive tests taken on a computer or tablet. The questions get easier or more difficult depending on how the student responds, and each student will see different questions from a common item bank. Students whose accommodation (per his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan) is PBT (paper-based test) will be administered on paper for FAST assessments. Each test attempt (PM1, PM2, and PM3) will present 35–40 items that will cover the entire test “blueprint,” meaning students will encounter items representative of the standards within the subject or grade level. For

more information on the test design, please visit

<https://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/best/>.

If you or your student would like to interact with the online testing platform or review FAST ELA Reading and Mathematics sample items at home, sample test materials are available at

<https://flfast.org/families.html>.

Please review the following policies with your student before testing:

- **Electronic Devices**—Students are not permitted to access any electronic devices, including, but not limited to, cell phones, smartphones, and smartwatches, at any time during testing or during breaks (e.g., restroom). If your student is found with an electronic device or is found using Bluetooth/wireless headphones/earbuds during testing, his or her test may be invalidated.
- **Calculator Policy**—For Grades 7–8 FAST Mathematics, approved handheld scientific calculators may be used. For Grade 6 FAST Mathematics, a handheld four-function calculator may be used.
- **Testing Rules Acknowledgment**— All tests include a Testing Rules Acknowledgment that reads: “I understand the testing rules that were just read to me. If I do not follow these rules, my test score may be invalidated.” Prior to testing, test administrators read the rules to students, and students acknowledge that they understand the testing rules by clicking the box in the secure browser indicating they understand the testing rules.
- **Discussing Test Content after Testing**— The last portion of the testing rules read to students before they click the box to accept the Testing Rules Acknowledgment states that because the content of all statewide assessments is secure, students may not discuss or reveal details about the test content (including test items and passages) after the test. This includes any type of electronic communication, such as texting, emailing, or posting to social media sites. Please make sure your student understands this policy prior to testing and remind them that “discussing” test content includes any kind of electronic communication, such as texting, emailing, posting to social media, or sharing online. While students may not share information about secure test content after testing, this policy is not intended to prevent students from discussing their testing experiences with their parents/families.
- **Working Independently**—Students are responsible for doing their own work during the test and for protecting their answers from being seen by others. If students are caught cheating during testing, their tests will be invalidated.
- **Testing Accommodations**—If your student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a Section 504 Plan, or is an English Language Learner (ELL) or a recently exited ELL, please contact the school to discuss any testing accommodations that will be provided for your student.

If you have any questions related to this test administration, you may contact Lydia Velazquez at [100959@ocps.net](mailto:100959@ocps.net).

For more information about the FAST program, please visit the portal at [FLFAST.org](http://FLFAST.org).

Thank you for supporting your student and encouraging him or her to do his or her best during this test administration.

Sincerely,  
Dr. McHale & Testing Office



## **Philharmonic Orchestra & Wind Ensemble Field Trip-NEW**

Philharmonic Orchestra and Wind Ensemble students are headed to Disney for our annual, "Music in the Parks," workshop and trip to Epcot. Students spend the morning working with a clinician learning about sight reading and having a high quality Disney music experience. Here is the schoolpay link for the event:

<https://www.schoolpay.com/pay/for/20232024-Wind-Ensemble--Philharmonic-Orc/SepxBfO>

## **Orchestra News-NEW**

Orchestra classes are off to a great start! Beginners will be getting instruments and other classes are starting to work on method books and new music. Handbooks were sent home on Monday and Tuesday, check with your child if you haven't seen it yet!

Fair Share Schoolpay Link:

<https://www.schoolpay.com/pay/for/20232024--Orchestra-Class-Fair-Share-Fee/ScrMy42>

School Instrument Rental Link:

<https://www.schoolpay.com/pay/for/20232024-Orchestra-Instrument-Rental-/SbyTVDP>



## **Chorus, Band, Guitar, Orchestra-NEW**

Students in these classes are required to wear our Performing Arts Uniform for concerts: Long, Formal Concert Black. Please consult your child's handbook. Links are provided to purchase the appropriate clothing, including dress black shoes (no tennis shoes!) Students who are in multiple performing arts classes only need one performing uniform as we all have the same expectation for concert dress.

## **Ranger RTV Crew Application (morning announcements)-NEW**

[Click Here to apply](#)

Any student interested in being on the morning announcements can fill out the google form. Please keep in mind this is a 0 period class. Students must be at school by 8:30 each morning. Students will need to be able to read/write scripts, work as a team, take direction from other students, create/modify their own packages to air, use studio equipment, and speak clearly on air. Mrs. Douglas will be interviewing students at the end of the week next week and will reach out to parents for those students who are chosen.

## **Before/After School Programs**

Supervision for students occurs 30 minutes before the school day begins and 30 minutes after school ends. For students needing supervision before 9 am or after 4:30 pm, there are a few options available at Howard Middle School.

- ★ **The City of Orlando All Stars**, will be providing before/after school care on Howard's campus. All Stars representatives will be available at Meet the Teacher. Space is limited. If you have questions or concerns please email [asasadmin@orlando.gov](mailto:asasadmin@orlando.gov) or visit their website at [www.orlandoasas.org](http://www.orlandoasas.org). For online registration, go to [www.orlandoasas.org](http://www.orlandoasas.org), beginning in July 2023.
- ★ **The YMCA of Central Florida** is also an option for before/after school care. They are located off campus. at 433 N. Mills Ave. The cost is a YMCA membership, and options start at \$29/month. For more information and to register, contact the Youth Development Director, Jen Sagala at [jsagala@cfymca.org](mailto:jsagala@cfymca.org).
- ★ **Dramatic Education** is an educational arts company with over seventeen years of academic arts programming. The program is available on days school is in session on the school's campus, Monday-Friday, from Dismissal - 6:00 p.m. For more information, go to [DramaticEducation.com](http://DramaticEducation.com) or [ArtsintheSchool.com](http://ArtsintheSchool.com) Click the link below to register your student. <https://campscui.active>.

## Clubs & Organizatons

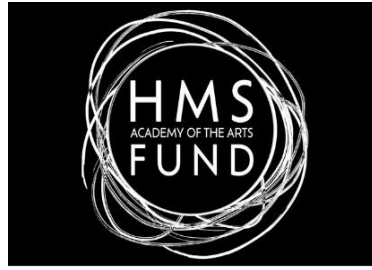
## **PTSA- 1st General Membership Meeting for 2023-24 & Spirit Store-NEW**

There will be a PTSA General Membership meeting on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. To become a Howard PTSA member or purchase Howard Academy of Arts Spirit wear/swag please click on the following link.

[Howard PTSA Membership & Spirit Store Hub](#)

**JOIN  
THE  
PTSA**





[Our Mission is to raise money and foster community relationships in support of Howard Middle School's unmet funding needs.](#)

## **Come support the Howard Middle School Fund on Friday, Aug.18, 6PM at Astro Skate Family Fun Center-**NEW****

The Howard Middle School Academy of Arts Fund raises dollars to address unmet needs at OCPS's first all-magnet performing and visual arts school.

The Fund raises money that goes directly to Howard Middle School programs and teachers in the form of new instruments and instrument repairs, classroom materials and school improvements.

### **Howard MS Fund Raffle: WIN an Xbox, PS5 or Nintendo Switch (est. \$500 Value)**



Enter the raffle for a chance to Win an Xbox Series X, PS5 or a Nintendo Switch. Each raffle ticket is a suggested donation of: 1 for \$20.00 or 2 for \$30. All proceeds will go directly to the Howard MS Fund to support our students and teachers!!

Winner will be announced on \*September 1, 2023.

\*Raffle will run until the minimum required participation is met.

Tickets can be purchased at the Astro Skate event Aug 18<sup>th</sup> or via a link from our Facebook page after the event.

## **Orlando Area Rowing Society-**NEW****

<b>AUG</b>		<b>JOIN THE CREW</b>
<b>OPEN BOATHOUSE</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>ATHLETES WANTED - NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED</b> We have rowing programs available for High School, Middle School & Adults! OARS rowers train throughout the school year to compete at the state, regional & national levels. <i>Are you ready to accept the challenge?</i>
	<b>OARSROWING.COM</b>	<b>Orlando Area Rowing Society</b> 2457 Maguire Rd, Windermere, FL <b>AUGUST 19th</b> 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM • Boathouse tours • Get on the water • Meet rowers & coaches
	<b>OARSROWING.COM</b>	

# Forms & Procedures/Policies

## Things students need to play sports this school year:- **NEW**

Athletics procedures have changed this year when it comes to sports physicals, as parents/legal guardians must now register students in the Aktivite Portal.

Instructions for creating an account and registering students for the sports activity is below:

### **CREATE A PARENT/GUARDIAN ACCOUNT:**

- On [www.aktivite.com](http://www.aktivite.com), click Login
- Click Create an Account
  - \* You only need ONE account, even if you have children in more than one high school and/or junior high
  - \* Do not create another account if you have used Register My Athlete/Aktivite in the past
- Fill in your personal account information. You will be using the site as a Parent/Guardian.
- Click **Create Account**
- Shortly after creating your account, you will receive an **email with a 6-digit Verification Code**.

Use this code to verify your account when prompted.

\* **Do not close your current tab**. You will need to open your email in another tab and find the verification

email in your email inbox (it may take a few minutes to appear, so be patient).

### **REGISTER YOUR STUDENT FOR AN ACTIVITY:**

- Login with your email address and password
- Under the **Parents** header, click the button labeled **Click here to start/complete athlete registrations**
- Click **Start/Complete Registrations** under "What would you like to do?"
- Click the **New Registration +** button in the upper right hand corner
- Start by clicking the red **Select School** bar and follow the directions as they appear
- Continue following the steps presented in the red bars
- Once your registration is complete, you'll receive a confirmation email from us

Need Help? For a live chat, click the orange Help button on the lower left side of the screen or email [support@aktivite.com](mailto:support@aktivite.com) for assistance.

Student must have and maintain at least a 2.0 GPA or higher (NO exceptions)

- a. For soccer and volleyball, students last year's semester GPA **MUST** be a 2.0
- b. For basketball and track, students first semester's GPA this school year must be a 2.0

If you have any questions or concerns please email:

Mrs. Kimberly Wallen  
Howard Middle School Activities Coordinator  
[Kimberly.Wallen@ocps.net](mailto:Kimberly.Wallen@ocps.net)

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## **7Parent Portal-NEW**

If you are currently experiencing issues with registering for an OCPS Parent Portal account or are having an issue with an OCPS Parent Portal app(i.e.Skyward Family access, Canvas parent), then please complete the form below and submit. It will then get forwarded to the registrar and she will review your child’s Skyward account and email you when the error is resolved.

Once the form is submitted, please allow a week for the process to be completed. In the meantime, log into your child’s account to view their assignments and grades.

[https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/70b745b937a1406b8bb770d7a911e8c1?utm\\_source=smartsheet](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/70b745b937a1406b8bb770d7a911e8c1?utm_source=smartsheet)

## **Parent Consent Forms**

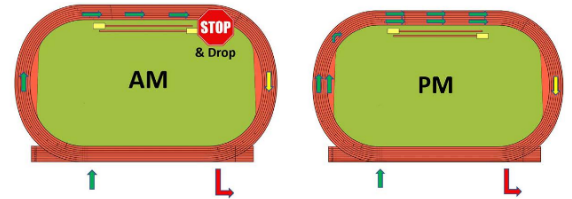
Parents, click [Here](#) to access the OCPS Parent Portal which will also give you access to Canvas Observer and Skyward. It is important to complete the following consents, waivers or release forms also found in the Parent Portal.

- 2024 Health Services Consent Form
- 2024 Library Access Form
- 2024 Model Release Form- Consent, Waiver, and Release
- 2024 Public Notice of Parent Rights – Student Records
- 2024 Student Technology Acceptable & Responsible Use Agreement
- Medicaid Release Consent

To access these forms on the OCPS Parent Portal you will need to login or click on “setup” to create an account. Once you login to Parent Portal click on Skyward, then click on “Online Forms” at the top of the list on the left side of the page to access the forms. <https://parents.classlink.com/ocps>

## **Arrival and Dismissal (Car Loop)**

We use the track (across the street on Robinson) as our car loop. Cars must enter on the West side, closest to Summerlin, and then will exit on the other side. Students should arrive between 9:00am and 9:25am as there is no supervision available before 9:00 am.



Afternoons tend to be more hectic in the beginning than it will be once everyone learns the process. We appreciate your patience and willingness to follow our procedures for our students’ safety.

After school, all students must exit through the front doors, and car riders then cross the street to the track. Staff members assist students crossing the street and finding their cars. Also present is a School Resource Officer (SRO) and a Crossing Guard to help students safely across Robinson. We ask students to wait on the field until their car has pulled up closer to the front of the line, so as to help keep traffic moving. We appreciate everyone’s efforts at helping students to understand the importance of waiting for their car instead of loading in at the back of the line.

Howard Academy of Arts is a beacon for arts education in Central Florida and a home where creative minds thrive. We thank you for being a part of this innovative community where all students’ lives are made richer through a combination of rigorous academics and an intense focus in the arts.