

HMS Parent Survival Guide

2016-2017

When does the school day start and end?

The HMS school day runs from 7:55 a.m.-2:45 p.m. There is a 7:47 a.m. bell that allows students to go to their lockers and classrooms. Before that, students must stay in the Commons area, unless they are seeing a teacher. Most students arrive between 7:45 a.m. and 7:50 a.m. to have time to get to their lockers and then to their advisory. You must be in your advisory when the 7:55 a.m. bell rings or you are marked tardy.

Is the school building open before school starts?

The building opens to students at 7:15 a.m. If your child arrives early, he must check in with a staff supervisor before he will be allowed to go to his locker or classroom. If he is meeting a teacher, the supervisor will call to make sure the teacher is present. Unless they are meeting a teacher, students who arrive early should stay in the Commons area.

What to do if my child is late to school?

The north (downtown side) doors to the school are locked after the tardy bell rings at 7:55 a.m. Any student arriving after 7:55 a.m. will need to enter through the main entrance doors (down the steps off of Garfield St), ring the buzzer to the office and walk through the main office. Students will go immediately to the Student Services Office to sign in and receive a pass to class. Tardiness is considered unexcused unless a parent sends an email, voicemail or note to Mrs. Galandak in Student Services: lgalandak@d181.org or 630-887-1370 ext. 103.

Where do I park if I have to come into the school building during the day?

Being a downtown school means that there is limited parking. After school has started (after 8 a.m.) and after the end-of-school rush (after 3 p.m.), parents may briefly park along the circle drive near the main entrance (that is the entrance off Garfield Street) with their hazard lights flashing. It's fine to park here if you are dropping off a lunch or picking up a student. However, if you are parking for a longer time, please park in the metered parking spots on Washington Street, between Second and Third streets or in the lot with the paybox behind the school as the police are starting to ticket cars in the circle drive. Only the doors to the main entrance off of Garfield Street are open during the school day.

What happens if my child forgets to bring his lunch/instrument/homework to school?

You can use the drop-off center just inside the HMS main entrance. There are three cabinets, one for each grade level. Place your child's lunch or books in the appropriate drawer. Make sure whatever you drop off is labeled with your child's first and last name and grade. Use the clipboard to sign in the items. Materials are not delivered to classrooms. Students' names will be read off the clipboard at lunchtime to pick up their items. If your child realizes they have forgotten something, they may check the drop-off center on their own before lunchtime. If you are dropping off something valuable such as a cell phone or money, you can leave it with the secretary in the office and she will keep it for your child to pick up.

When is lunchtime at HMS?

If you are dropping off a lunch for your student, make sure it arrives before lunch starts! Lunch times for this school year 2016-2017 are as follows:

Short Advisory Lunch Times: Monday, Thursday & Friday

6th Grade: 11:10 - 11:40
7th Grade: 11:56 - 12:26
8th Grade: 12:42 - 1:12

Long Advisory Lunch Times: Tuesday & Wednesday

6th Grade: 11:19 - 11:49
7th Grade: 12:03 - 12:33
8th Grade: 12:47 - 1:17

How do I put money on my child's school I.D. card so she can buy hot lunch?

Take advantage of Quest Food Service's pre-paid meal system by sending in a check made out to Quest Food Management the first day your student plans to buy lunch. Clearly print your student's first and last name as well as HMS on the check. Have your student give the check to the cashier. Alternatively, you may log in to www.myschoolbucks.com to create an account that will allow you to add money to your child's account at any time for a small service fee. At the end of the year, your child's balance will roll over to the next year or you may roll the balance to a sibling. Unused balance refunds are available for a service fee.

If we are in a rush, can my child get something for breakfast at school?

Yes! The Quest Food Service team offers breakfast for students who arrive early. The menu ranges from bagels and Pop-Tarts to fruit and yogurt parfaits and hot breakfast sandwiches.

I am looking at my child's class schedule. What is an "A Day" and a "B Day"?

There are eight class periods every school day, plus advisory and lunch. Most students will have "core" classes for six periods every day (social studies, math, science, foreign language plus a double period of language arts). Most 6th grade students also have two "encore" classes each day. One of those encore periods is daily P.E. or health; the other encore class is band, orchestra or music exploratory, which they will have every other day. The music class alternates with another exploratory class such as Middle School Skills, Applied Technology, Art or Family Consumer Science. For instance, a student in 6th grade band might have Band during first period on A days, and Applied Tech during first period on B days. Other than encore, A & B days are identical. And don't worry, your child will get the hang of this immediately!

What do we do if my daughter forgets something on the bus?

Most of the time, the bus driver will try to keep lost items like lunch bags on the bus, in hopes of reuniting them with their owners. Your first step is to have your child check with the bus driver the following day. If the lost item is not on the bus, you can call the bus company directly; they have a lost and found. Call First Student at 630-964-2500.

What to do if my son forgets his homework/books/folders at school?

If he has forgotten a textbook needed for homework, there are two things you should know. First, many of the HMS textbooks are available online (teachers will give each student a user ID and password). Second, the Hinsdale Public Library has a copy of the HMS textbooks at the main desk in the Youth Services Department. You can't take these home, but you can make copies of needed pages, or use them at the library. If your child has forgotten folders or paperwork needed to finish the homework, it is more difficult. The HMS main entrance doors are locked after school, usually by 3:30 p.m. However, there are many after-school activities and you may be able to catch the attention of a staff member who will let you in.

I have to take my daughter to a doctor's appointment during school? What do I do?

You can call or e-mail the Student Services secretary, Mrs. Galandak, to report that you will be picking up your child during the school day. Or you can send in a written, signed note. Your child should keep that note with her and show it to her teacher when it's time to leave. It's your child's responsibility to remember what time you are picking her up, and she must sign out of school at the Student Services Office. You do not need to enter the school or sign out your child. Just wait in your car in the circle outside the Garfield Street main entrance for your child to exit the school.

My 6th grader is excited to be at HMS. What clubs and activities are available?

There are a number of clubs and organization for your 6th grader to join. Look for information about the HMS Activities Fair which will be held on Wednesday, September 21st after school. Both students and parents are invited to attend. Teacher sponsors and students members of all the extracurricular options will be there and available for questions. The only sport for 6th graders is cross country which takes place in the fall.

When are gym locks and gym uniforms issued?

Pre-ordered gym uniforms and locks are typically distributed at Back to School Day, which usually takes place the week before school starts. If your student is unable to attend Back to School Day, she can get her uniform and lock on the first day of PE class. During the school year, additional uniforms are available for purchase in the main office.

I have a question. Can I call or e-mail Mr. Peña?

Mr. Peña loves to talk to parents. Really. However, as principal of more than 800 students and a staff of 100, he is constantly on the move. He receives dozens of phone calls and email messages daily. Consider whether there is someone closer to the situation or more appropriate who can answer the question---the assistant principal, Mr. May; one of the secretaries or a teacher. Like Mr. Peña, they are all happy to help.

***** The first day of school for D181 students will be Tuesday, August 23, 2016***