



**HIGHLAND FALLS-FORT MONTGOMERY  
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
Mr. Michael McElduff, Superintendent of Schools

The inquiries presented below were submitted to our designated email address, [capitalproject24-25@hffmcsd.org](mailto:capitalproject24-25@hffmcsd.org). Please direct any additional questions to that email address, and we will subsequently publish both questions and corresponding answers within this document.

*\*\* the newest questions and responses are in italics*

Question	Response
<i>Will 7th and 8th graders have the same food choices as the 9-12 grade students? Will they have the same breakfast choices as the 9-12 grade students?</i>	<i>The menu will be the same as the high school. The only difference is that the high school students will have more options - based on state regulations there are a few items we can only offer to high school students. If those items will be removed before the 7&amp;8th graders come in. The options available to them will be the same as what were offered last year.  Breakfast will be the same choice for 7-12.</i>
<i>Since they are eating last (lunch and breakfast), how does the cafeteria ensure that food will not run out for the 7th and 8th graders?</i>	<i>We will be batch cooking, which ensures that the food is fresh for each period and that there is enough.</i>
<i>What time is the 7th and 8th grade lunch period?</i>	<i>Building administrators will share this information.</i>
<i>What time is student drop off for students who aren't taking the bus and where is drop off?</i>	<i>Building administrators will share this information.</i>
<i>What time can 7th and 8th grade students enter the building and will they have time to eat breakfast?</i>	<i>Building administrators will share this information.</i>
<i>Since there will not be additional time for recess, do 7th and 8th graders have more P.E. time? How often do they have P.E.</i>	<i>Building administrators will share this information.</i>
<i>It was stated that the little kids would have to ride the bus with the older kids. There has to be some way that they are split. It's currently being done and should continue.</i>	<i>We are working with our transportation company, West Point Tours. We will have monitors on the bus with students. Students will be seated by grade level on the buses, younger students in the front, older students in the back.</i>



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<p>Is there a way that parents can tour the intermediate school before an orientation is scheduled?</p>	<p>The HFIS administration team is looking to set up tours during the summer. More information will come out in regards to this from the principals at FMES &amp; HFIS.</p>
<p>At the beginning of this school year there were several issues with kids at the intermediate school regarding behavior and threats, how are you going to keep the little kids from be affected by that? Currently there is security at the Elementary school, will there be security for the little kids wing at the intermediate school as well?</p>	<p>We will continue to partner with the Orange County Sheriff's Office to employ a Sheriff Deputy in our schools. There will be one assigned to each building, HFIS &amp; JIO. These deputies monitor the building, walk the hallways, perimeter of the building, maintain a presence during transitions (arrival and dismissal) and monitor during recess. Our administrators, school monitors, and school staff monitor hallways, assist students in moving to a location (i.e. nurse's office, main office, restroom, etc). Upper grade students will not be permitted to visit the lower floor without permission from an adult. I can assure you that the majority of these incidents were transient or non-threatening in nature. It is important to note that the district treats all threats seriously, whether they are students threatening each other or threats directed towards the entire school building. The administration follows the code-of conduct.</p>
<p>How are you going to keep the older kids from going to the floor the little kids are on?</p>	<p>Students in grades 1-6 will not have any reason to go to the PreK and Kindergarten wing at all. They will be on a completely different floor, with their own bathroom. If and when PreK and Kindergarten are going to the first or second floor they would be accompanied by a faculty or staff member.</p>
<p>Was Sacred Heart School ever looked at as a possibility to use instead of housing all our students in two buildings.</p>	<p>No. This was not something the district looked to explore.</p>
<p>Will there be enough teachers to monitor the bathrooms when the little kids need to be in the older kids population?</p>	<p>Each grade level will be assigned a bathroom in their hallway. PK and K students will use the restrooms on their level. PK students will eat lunch in their classrooms, which also means they will use the restroom downstairs, on their floor, when needed. During lunch, if a kindergartener needs to use the restroom, they will be accompanied by one of our lunch monitors.</p>
<p>What is the capacity of the cafeteria at JIO? How</p>	<p>The cafeteria at JIO has a capacity of 275 individuals.</p>



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many students can be served during a 30 minute period?	There are 110 7th & 8th graders. Each year the amount of students per lunch period varies. During the 2023-2024 school year, one period served 178 students.
Will parking for JIO seniors be impacted?	There are 59 parking spots identified for seniors. This has been the case since the completion of the last Capital Improvement Project. We cannot project if this will change. Any updates regarding student parking will come from the JIO administrative team.
Has there been serious consideration to a staggered start time for 7th & 8th grade at JIO?	The building administrators are working closely with their master schedule committees to present a master schedule that meets the needs of the students and teachers as well as logistics and transportation. An update will be shared when it is available.
Where will 6th graders be housed?	The building administrators are finalizing room assignments. They plan to share with faculty impacted by mid-June. Families will be informed after that.
Are restrooms accessible and up to code for our Pre-Kindergarten students?	Our team has measured toilets and sinks. They are accessible for our PK students. We plan to add a child's step stool to assist students in reaching the sink to wash their hands. NYSED does not mandate that toilet rooms must be present in early childhood classrooms.
Will specialists travel between classes at the elementary level?	Yes, similar to how they currently work at the FMES.
Will there be any impact on students who have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)?	No, we do not foresee any impact on students with IEPs, 504 Plans, or those that receive services like Academic Intervention (AIS) or English as a New Language (ENL).
Will transportation be available for 7th & 8th graders who would like to participate in the CONNECT program?	We are working with CONNECT and we will have a response to this answer before the start of the year.
Will the Healthy Kids Program be available at HFIS?	We are in communication with Healthy Kids. An update will be shared when it is available.
When will we be made aware of the decisions made regarding scheduling for 7th & 8th graders?	The building level master schedule committee is actively working on the schedule. The bell schedule will be made available by mid-July. Student individual schedules will be released later in the



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	summer as they have been in years past.
What will happen with modified sports teams if their day ends at 1:50 or 2:24? Games don't often begin until 4:15. Who will supervise my athlete?	The schedule has not yet been finalized. We will work with our Athletic Director and coaches to determine the best and safest course of action for our student athletes.
Our 7th & 8th graders will have emotional needs as they acclimate to their new building. They were once the "big fish" in the "little pond" and now they are the "little fish" in the "big pond". How will the counselors/social workers be shared? Will the school counselors travel between buildings?	Our 6-8 counselor will be stationed at JIO to assist with 7th & 8th graders. Our 3-5 counselor will work with 6th grade as well. In years past, the school psychologist assigned to the FMES was the primary source of support for the k-2 students. Additionally, the district has a shared social worker for K-8, she will work between the grade levels. Additionally, we have another social worker whose primary role is to support students using tier 2 & 3 restorative practices. She is a K-12 social worker who currently shares time. That will remain in place for the 2024-2025 school year.
Is there a contingency plan in place in the event of a delay with construction at the FMES?	The district leadership meets regularly with our architects, engineers, and construction management team. We made the decision to bring on Triton, our construction management team, to assist us in completing the project in a safe, efficient and timely way. We will continue to partner with them to plan for multiple scenarios.
Will there be a parent orientation to allow 7th & 8th grade parents to see the spaces at JIO as they may not be familiar with the building?	We will look to add this to the calendar for July. A specific date and time will be shared later this month.
What are the safety procedures in place?	Each school in NYS is required by law to submit a building level safety plan to the state police and NYSED. NY State law requires that these building level plans are kept confidential under Article 6 of the Public Officers Law or any other provision of law, in accordance with Education Law Section 2801-a. I can assure you that each building has a plan in the event of an emergency. School buildings are required to conduct drill exercises at least 12 times each school year. Drills include evacuation and lockdown.
What, if any, consideration has been given to students who will need to transition back to their 'home' building for one year (ie 7th graders & 1st graders)?	The administrative team as well as additional key stakeholders will engage in conversation regarding this after the start of the school year. We will update the community as the year progresses.



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<p>When can we expect to receive updates on the project?</p>	<p>The district will share regular updates during our BOE meetings. Additionally, there will be a dedicated space on our district website where community members can find updates on the project.</p>
<p>Will ClassDojo still be available for 7th &amp; 8th grade families?</p>	<p>Yes, we will continue to use ClassDojo as a way to communicate with our PK-8 families.</p>
<p>Are there enough physical classrooms at HFIS so the elementary school classes stay the same size for each grade? For instance, there are 3 kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade classes. Will that stay the same as the elementary school is absorbed by HFIS for the next school year?</p>	<p>There is enough space to maintain the current configuration of sections per grade level.</p>
<p>How does the district plan to accommodate our younger learners regarding bathroom use being that the bathrooms are in a separate location?</p>	<p>Bathrooms are shared in each hallway. Pre-k and Kindergarten have their own bathroom, which are not shared by other grade levels. 1st-3rd graders also have their own bathrooms in their wing.</p>
<p>How will HFIS be able to accommodate so many grades for lunch periods within a reasonable lunch time frame?</p>	<p>Pk students will eat lunch in their classrooms, which is not atypical for UPK. My own daughter who is in a UPK program has lunch in the classroom.</p> <p>K-6 students will eat in the cafeteria. The administrative team is exploring ways to add additional lunch periods to accommodate all grade levels.</p>
<p>Where will our young students play? The current playground is not suitable for our youngest children.</p>	<p>We will be purchasing age appropriate play equipment for younger children. This equipment is a temporary 1 year solution. Swings and large playground equipment will not be purchased for HFIS. Faculty, staff and Administrators will set rules and guidelines for who can use the equipment at HFIS.</p>
<p>What can we expect from class sizes? Currently, there are 3 sections of each grade level at the Fort, with the exception of pre k and self contained classes. Will that remain the case, or will sections be reduced? If there is a reduction in the number of classes, what happens to the teachers from those sections?</p>	<p>There is no plan to reduce sections, enlarge classes</p>
<p>Will FMES staff remain exclusive to FMES classes and services?</p>	<p>Yes. However, support staff is needed to support students throughout the building. This will be determined by building level administrators.</p>



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<p>Will grades K-6 be bussed together on the same busses? If so, can we have a monitor present on EACH bus to prevent any issues.</p>	<p>They will be bussed on the same bus. We are in communication with WPT to ensure a monitor is on buses for both K-6 students as well as 7-12 students. The younger grade levels will sit towards the front of the bus, similar to what other districts do with large grade bands on buses together.</p>
<p>Will grades 7 and 8 have their own bussing or will we be bussing them in the same busses as grades 9-12?</p>	<p>They will be bussed on the same bus. We are in communication with WPT to ensure a monitor is on buses for both K-6 students as well as 7-12 students.</p>
<p>We already have a lack of supervision and eyes on during recess/lunch time. What is the plan with supervising students during these times with more kids at HFIS? I will have a 1st grader and 5th grader.</p>	<p>All monitors from FMES will work at HFIS- one of their primary responsibilities is to monitor students during lunch/recess. If it is deemed necessary by administration to hire additional monitors for support they will communicate that with the Business Official.</p>
<p>Currently ALL students at FMES get a whole period of outdoor play. This is necessary for their little bodies and minds! Will all students, PreK-2nd grade still get an entire period to have recess? 20 minutes is not sufficient. It's already a shame our grades 3-5 get less than 20 minutes to play, we cannot take this away from our youngest students as well.</p>	<p>They do not have a full period of play- it is 20 minutes a day in addition to the lunch/recess time. K-2 currently receives about 40 minutes of recess a day.</p>
<p>The FAQ page states that 7th and 8th grade will have lunch together? Is that accurate?</p>	<p align="center">This is accurate</p>
<p>The FAQ page states that 7th and 8th grade will have a 30 minute lunch period and cannot leave the cafeteria except for using the restroom. Is there no outdoor space they can use during the nice weather to get some fresh air and a break from the building restrictions? I did not grow up in this district, I do understand that middle schoolers don't always get "recess" but there is often an outdoor space they can access to move around.. this seems extremely restrictive.</p>	<p>Students in JIO regularly have PE classes outdoors, this will be the same practice for 7th &amp; 8th grades. Recess for 7th and 8th graders is currently not being reviewed. The cafeteria will be supporting over 100 7th and 8th graders in a 30 minute period.</p>
<p>My child does not intend to take band next year. When will we know her options for classes?</p>	<p>This will be relayed in a timely manner by the buildings. This is similar to last year.</p>
<p>Will there be orientation or "visits" ahead of the summer, for my 1st grader to see where they will be going in September and my 7th grader to get a tour of the high school?</p>	<p>Yes, this will be coordinated by the buildings. Information will be shared once the dates are solidified. The building admin met to discuss potential dates for all transitioned grades to have student/parent orientations. This will be shared by</p>



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	the building administration team once they are finalized.
My 7th grader is very concerned about drama club. She has actively participated at HFIS and hopes to continue her involvement for the remainder of her middle school years. Will there be a plan for the 7th and 8th graders to continue having access to clubs like drama club? The same question applies for student council.	There is a plan to keep the same clubs and extracurricular activities for our 7th/8th graders, similar to this year. This is also dependent on club advisors willing to take on the roles. More information will come from the buildings.
What will 7th and 8th graders do during off-schedule high school days like regents exams..	This will be determined at a later date and time.
I know the FAQ mentioned adding some younger play elements like slides and water tables.. can we have swings installed at HFIS?	This is not likely,
Will the 7th and 8th graders have access to the library at JIO?	Yes, but this will be through electives held by 7th and 8th grade teachers that revolve around research based classes. This will be developed along with the Master Schedule.
Will the 7th and 8th graders have access to the locker rooms and still be expected to change for gym? I have not been in many areas of the high school other than the gymnasium itself and the library. I'm not sure if there are enough lockers for the extra kids?	7th and 8th grades will have a set locker for the 24-25 school year. Currently 88 lockers are available for 7th and most of 8th grade on the first floor at JIO. The building admin team is looking to see where the best location is for the other 20 students who would not have a locker on the 1st floor.
Who will be the gym teacher for grades 7 and 8? Will they have gym together or separate?	7th and 8th grade P.E. will be held by an HFIS P.E. teacher. 7th and 8th grade will not have a gym with 9-12 students. We are working on master scheduling to make this more practical. There is potential for 7th and 8th graders to have gym together. They will not change in the locker rooms which is the current practice at HFIS.
Who will be the gym teachers for grades 3-5? The last few years there were two gym teachers for the lower grades (3-5) because of how many students were in gym together. My experience is that this is absolutely necessary. Having 50+ kids in gym at the same time requires a minimum of 2 adults.	Prek-6 will have two dedicated teachers at HFIS. Mr.Chet Grant, who currently teaches P.E. at FMES. The second HFIS p.e. Teacher will support 7th and 8th graders. Again, the master schedule will dictate programming.
Will the 7th and 8th graders get any stream or be able to benefit from any of the specials classes offered at JIO?	7th and 8th graders will not be enrolled in High School classes during the 24-25 school year, which includes computer/graphic courses,etc... 8th grade



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	<p>students who are slated to take Algebra 1 and Living Environment will continue to do so at JIO. This has been something the district has done for the past 10+ years. The master schedule will look to incorporate research based electives run by 7th and 8th grade teachers. Currently the HFIS students in grades 7th and 8th grade do not have dedicated STEM classes.</p>
<p>Does this violate the DODEA contract? (I don't think it does, but this has been asked several times and I believe that some parents have already contacted DODEA and the Garrison School Liaison officer.</p>	<p>The district has conducted a comprehensive review of the DoDEA contract and has determined that this action is not in violation of it. The DoDEA contract pertains exclusively to students at West Point in grades 9-12. The temporary adjustment being made does not impact the availability of classes for students in grades 9-12. Teachers responsible for grades 9-12 will continue to provide education as usual, with the exception of 8th grade Algebra and L.E. students from HFIS. It is important to note that this arrangement has been in place for 8th grade students for a number of years. Additionally, JIO is looking to add 2-3 more AP classes for High School students. It appears we may actually be able to offer more to our 9-12 students next year. The master schedule will ultimately dictate this.</p>
<p>As per the post, there doesn't seem to be any effect on the the Dodea contract, were they notified of the change ?  Was DODEA notified of this change prior to making this decision?</p>	<p>DoDEA has not received official notification of the change, as it does not impact the current contract. DoDEA does not have authority over the education of students from Highland Falls or Fort Montgomery Pre-K-12. The contract pertains specifically to WP students. The district is accommodating additional students from the district at JIO, with the provision of faculty, staff, and administrators to support those in 7th and 8th grade.</p>
<p>Were any parents consulted in their concerns prior to the decision being made?</p>	<p>Prior to the decision, parental input was not sought due to limited alternatives. In March of 2023, a Capital Project was approved by voters to benefit all three schools. As part of this initiative, improvements were planned for FMES. However, unexpected delays in SED approval, totaling over 28 weeks from, led to a dilemma for the district. The only feasible solution was to temporarily close FMES for one year in order to commence and efficiently complete the majority of the project within budget constraints, avoiding a cost overrun of over \$750,000 by waiting until the 2025-2026 school year.</p>





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<p>I am concerned about too much overlap with younger students during arrival and school departure: Why isn't the school doing a staggered schedule for arrival and departure of 7th/8th graders and high school students?</p>	<p>To ensure consistency within the school's programming for grades 9-12, it was decided that staggered start times would not be implemented. The presence of multiple bells throughout the day for different grade levels would have led to confusion among faculty, staff, and students. It was important to maintain alignment with the school's operations in order to minimize disruptions. While this decision may result in increased morning traffic, maintaining a uniform start and end time for the school day was deemed the most effective solution. Additionally, finding substitute teachers to support two different bell schedules was also a challenge. Furthermore, it was determined that the potential for 9-12 and 7-8 student movement throughout the day would be difficult to maintain if there were multiple bell systems.</p>
<p>What protocols are going to be in place to ensure that high school students and 7th/8th grade students don't have inappropriate romantic contact at school - namely, are there going to be more hallway monitors or security at the school?</p>	<p>JIO is implementing staggered transition times for 7th and 8th grade students in order to reduce interactions with high school students throughout the day. The new procedure involves 7th and 8th graders waiting for the late bell before moving to their next class. Furthermore, these students will have separate lunch times and will not be able to participate in high school activities such as clubs, classes, assemblies, presentations, and field trips. The staffing levels, including monitors, aides, and additional support, will be evaluated to ensure the building is adequately covered.</p>
<p>Will there still be a senior lounge or will space be turned into a classroom or office space?</p>	<p>The Senior Lounge has been utilized as a classroom since COVID, that includes the 23-24 school year. The building will continue to use the room for a classroom for the 24-25 school year.</p>
<p>Where there alternative options discussed? If so, what were they?</p>	<p>The simple answer is no. The district collaborated with the architect team and construction management to come up with viable options, but each idea did not come to fruition to even bring it to the next step of having additional stakeholders input. Again the only two options were to either wait till 25-26 to begin the project, which would have necessitated the closure of FMES to stop the project from going over by more than a year, and would have cost the project a minimum of \$750,000 or do what we are intending to do now.</p>



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<p>Where will 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> graders have PE? If they are having it in the same location as the 9-12 graders, then won't that result in fewer periods when PE and labs are offered for the 9-12 grade students, which will impact the master schedule and create more conflicts/less flexibility for student schedules?</p>	<p>7 and 8 will have P.E. separately from the rest of 9-12. However, the gym also has the ability to be split in half if needed allowing for classes to continue to function and allow for more classes to take place. We don't believe the amount of classes being offered at JIO for 9-12 students next year will be impacted.</p>
<p>Will there be fewer classes offered because PE classes won't run every period for JIO?</p>	<p>We don't believe 9-12 P.E. will be impacted.</p>
<p>Will PE classes still be offered every period to alternate with labs?</p>	<p>We don't believe there will be any impact.</p>
<p>Since there were teachers allowed on the master schedule committee during the last time that JIO combined 7-12 grade - can the BOE/district and JIO principal please call the three teachers back onto the master schedule committee (like it was prior to Mrs Brand)?</p>	<p>JIO admin and counselors receive input from the department chairs for JIO. Feedback from the departments is typically collected starting in April, subsequent to meetings with students and presentations to the grade levels. It is the responsibility of the department coordinator to gather feedback from the remaining faculty members. This feedback is then shared with the administration and the guidance team. The school staff will be working diligently to develop a comprehensive schedule for students in grades 9-12 for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year.</p>
<p>I want to make sure that the department head educators of the high school are involved in the educational decisions, and that they are not just being made by administrators: why aren't teachers allowed to be on the Master Schedule Committee like they were when Mr. Trombetta was here?</p>	<p>JIO admin and counselors receive input from the department chairs for JIO. Feedback from the departments is typically collected starting in April, subsequent to meetings with students and presentations to the grade levels. It is the responsibility of the department coordinator to gather feedback from the remaining faculty members. This feedback is then shared with the administration and the guidance team. The school staff will be working diligently to develop a comprehensive schedule for students in grades 9-12 for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year.</p>
<p>Did the school district and school board know about this delay and option prior to the budget vote? And, if so, why weren't the voters alerted?</p>	<p>The community had been made aware of delays with SED as early as December/January. The superintendent wrote a letter to Senator Skoufis, Senator Shumer, Senator Gilliabran as well as</p>



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	<p>connected with Congressman Ryan and Assemblymember Eachus about our growing concerns with SED delays. They were all supportive and some wrote letters on our behalf or called SED with the concerns. SED stated that unless it is an emergency project, it could not move the project up.</p> <p>The district investigated the possibility of making FMES an emergency project, but was shut down by SED. On April 18th the Triton and BCA presented to the boE and community about increasing concerns about the delays and stated they would need to look at alternative options.</p> <p>Ultimately, the Capital Project was voted on by the community in March of 2023. This project has no impact on the recent budget vote that took place on May 21st. This option was not brought to the community as it was not finalized until Thursday after the boe meeting. The district received financial analysis and this ultimately led to the district moving forward. I will also state, the district had an additional meeting with Triton and BCA on Wednesday May 29th to confirm that this was the only viable option and to make sure it could be completed over the next 11 months.</p>
<p>Was this capital improvement project included in the budget we just voted on?</p>	<p>The Capital Project was approved by the voters in March 2023. This temporary closure did not need a vote.</p>
<p>Can you explain if this is related to the earthquake? It was confusing to see this along with the letter.</p>	<p>The district was simultaneously planning for the repairs to the damages at HFIS while also trying to finalize for the FMES Capital Project. While these decisions don't appear to have anything to do with each other, they ultimately did. If the district was not able to put together a resolution to create a safe gymnasium at HFIS on or around the start of the 24-25 school year, the district would not have been able to close the FMES building.</p>
<p>How and where will the 7th/8th graders eat their lunch v. the upper 9-12th graders? And, how will the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> graders get their lunch? Will the 7th and 8th graders get their lunch in the same cafeteria line as the 9-12th graders, and then go eat in a different dining area? Asking because there is hardly enough time for all of the students to get through the lunch</p>	<p>7th and 8th grade will eat their lunch together in the cafeteria. 9-12 will not have lunch with 7th and 8th grade. This will be finalized for the master schedule.</p>



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<p>line and eat in lunch.</p>	
<p>The high school hardly ever gets alerts or shut down due to threats or disciplinary issues, but the HFIS often does (as JIO parents receive messages when this happens at the HFIS). I am concerned about those disciplinary problems being brought from 7/8<sup>th</sup> grade students to the high school. Question: with the increase of the student population, will there be additional security measures?</p>	<p>JIO will be welcoming approximately 100 new students to the building for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. The district has determined that it is not necessary to add a second sheriff to the building at this time. While I am unable to disclose specific details regarding incidents at HFIS, I can assure you that the majority of these incidents were transient or non-threatening in nature. It is important to note that the district treats all threats seriously, whether they are students threatening each other or threats directed towards the entire school building. The administration follows the code-of conduct.</p>
<p>I am concerned that all 7/8 graders will try to play on the high school sports teams - are there still going to be modified sports and will they take place at the HFIS?</p>	<p>The district will continue to offer modified sports for 7th and 8th-grade students. Historically, 7th and 8th graders who have demonstrated athletic ability are able to try out for Jv/V sports. This will continue to be the case. This selection process remains consistent with current protocol. The presence of 7th and 8th graders at the high school will not adversely affect JV and Varsity athletics, as younger students have historically been given opportunities to compete at a higher level.</p>
<p>Where will modified sports take place?  Will Varsity sports still have priority for practice times at JIO or will modified now be using those facilities more? Already there is difficulty scheduling enough practice times for all of the 9-12 teams at JIO.</p>	<p>Modified sports will continue to be held at their current locations. If feasible, there may be the opportunity for modified sports to utilize the high school facilities more frequently, however, priority will be given to JV and Varsity practices and games as per our current protocol. Additionally, the completion of the FMES new gymnasium will provide additional space for modified, JV, and varsity sports to hold practices if needed.</p>
<p>Since there is no staggered start time, does this mean that 7-12 will be riding the busses together ?</p>	<p>Yes, 7-12 will have the same bus routes. However, the transportation department and West Point tours will work on seating so that 7th and 8th graders will be sitting towards the front of the bus. We are also looking to add monitors to those buses.</p>
<p>Will the WP Buses run on the same schedule, or will those buses have to leave earlier next</p>	<p>At this time, we do not have an answer to that question as bus runs have not been completed yet. This is typically finalized in August each year. More</p>



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<p align="center">year?</p>	<p align="center">information will be provided at a later date. Thank you for your understanding.</p>
<p align="center">Will the district be able to afford additional buses since they currently use many of the same buses for the staggered HFIS and JIO high school start schedules?</p>	<p align="center">The district is exploring the impact of the changes with the bus schedule and can not give an answer as of yet.</p>
<p>What SERIOUS consideration has been given to reopening HFES? I realize the condition it is in, but focusing on getting it in usable condition, instead of all of the machinations and adjustments for moving 7 grades of students, opening this building and relocating the Fort school population there seems like a more feasible solution.</p>	<p>The district thoroughly explored the option of renovating the HFES as part of the Capital Project that was approved in March of 2023. Through working with our Architect, Construction Management team, or financial advisors (RGT) and having discussion with SED it was not deemed a viable or fiscally responsible direction for the district to go. Temporarily moving grade levels around for one school year is the most economical solution. The Condition of the HFES is beyond minimal repair and it would not have been a viable option to try and open it up for one year as it would have cost a significant amount of money.</p>
<p>We seem to have a plethora of administrators and consultants for a district that educates less than 1200 students.</p> <p>If we close a building, are all administrators and consultants remaining? And if so, justify that please with only 2 operational buildings.</p>	<p>The district has a limited number of consultants they bring in each year and recently reduced funding for consultants prior to the budget approval. The decision to temporarily close FMES for one year was made with consideration for the well-being of the faculty, staff, administration, and students. It was determined that removing administrators and educators for a year, only to rehire them the following year, was not in the best interest of all parties involved.</p>
<p>What is the plan when/if SED does not approve the capital project for FMES?</p>	<p>SED has picked up the FMES project for review. Our architect and construction management team are confident that this should be approved in the next 2 weeks. This will put the FMES project on schedule to begin in late August or early September.</p>
<p>Are 7/8 JIO students? Or HFIS students? Will parents be part of PTP or PTSC? Who will plan activities for 7/8 that are typically planned by PTP? What opportunities will be available for 7/8 students to feel connected to their school? What is “their” school?</p>	<p>The PTSC has typically supported our 9-12 students. I can’t dictate who will support 7-8, but the PTP currently supports prek-8 in two different buildings. This would be something the PTP and PTSC would need to collaborate on with the help of building administration.</p>



**HIGHLAND FALLS-FORT MONTGOMERY  
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<p>What intentional planning will be done to include next year's 8th grade in the JIO community? JIO will be their school for the next 5 years and it needs to begin on a positive note to set them up for a successful HS experience. While logistically it may seem sensical to run a "school within a school" model- that will be extremely difficult to do and doesn't make sense for our 8th graders who will not be transitioning back to HFIS.</p>	<p>Eighth graders will have the same opportunities available to them as if they were at HFIS building. As part of our transition plan to JIO, 8th grade students will have an orientation meeting with the JIO counselor and an individualized parent meeting with the counselor. Other opportunities that will be maximized by being at JIO next year include familiarity with the building, increased athletic opportunities, and familiarity with the faculty and staff.</p>
<p>Can something be done this year to celebrate and acknowledge the 7th graders and their last year at HFIS? This is an important question for many students!</p>	<p>This is a great question. I think it is important to acknowledge the students who are currently in 7th grade. This would be something that our building administration and faculty and staff discuss further. I am fully supportive of this idea.</p>
<p>Will there be a JIO orientation for 7th and 8th grade?</p>	<p>Yes, this was previously answered. This will take place in August. More information to come.</p>
<p>Students were notified of this drastic changes by? Teachers who were upset? Parents? No one yet? How can student emotional safety and welfare be prioritized for this to be remedied-to acknowledge student grief but also more importantly- set a resilient tone and mindset that offers hope in potential opportunities for growth?</p>	<p>The HFIS building admin team met to discuss ways to connect and hear the students and their concerns. I am confident that this will take place in the near future.</p>
<p>What will be done NOW to support the superintendent's 5 year goal of having all seniors take college/AP courses? Being at JIO will undoubtedly allow access to resources not available at HFIS. Please don't let this be a missed opportunity to begin this work.</p>	<p>The district remains dedicated to achieving this objective by collaborating with the National Math and Science Institute. Currently, we have four teachers from JIO and two teachers from HFIS, along with a guidance counselor and various school and district leaders, registered to participate in summer learning sessions. We plan to promote the professional development opportunities and community resources available through NMSI.</p>



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	<p>The district has worked closely with NMSI to ensure that our HFIS faculty, staff and administrators have an opportunity to partner with them and enhance their skills to support and push our students to excel.</p>
<p>What administrator is in charge of the academic planning and programming for next year's 8th graders?</p>	<p>We have a unique opportunity to get feedback and support from both JIO and HFIS administration.</p>
<p>Is it possible for 7/8 to still follow the 8-3 school day? 7:20 is early for a middle school start.</p>	<p>As of now, we have decided to proceed with the 7:20-2:24 schedule. Currently, half of our 8th graders attend school from 7:20 am to 3:00pm. We conducted a review of neighboring districts and found that many middle schools start before 7:40am. We often compare ourselves to Chester and Florida due to similarities in student enrollment. Both districts have only an elementary school and a combined 6-12 middle/high school configuration. One of the schools allows 6-12 grade students to have common lunch periods.</p>
<p>Is it possible for recess and/or daily PE to be considered for 7/8 students. They will need intentional, planned movement breaks if not.</p>	<p>We are currently working on the master schedule for 7-12. We are looking at P.E. carefully on how to accommodate our student needs.</p>
<p>Will taxpayers receive money back from the school district since they closed a building?</p>	<p>The district has not downsized its workforce due to the temporary closing of FMES. The students are still going to receive all the same services and educational experiences regardless of what building they are housed in. Additionally, FMES will continue to be operational as the construction workers will be conducting work in and around the building for the next 12 months. This will require that lights and the heat are still on throughout the year.</p>