



HIGHLAND FALLS-FORT MONTGOMERY CSD

THE HIGHLANDER - NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 28, 2026



The Work Behind the Welcome Back

Building Principals

Building principals are leading the way into a successful new school year preparing schedules and opening-day plans, welcoming new staff, reviewing student needs, and coordinating with teachers, support staff, and families to ensure their buildings are ready for a strong start.

PPS TEAM

The PPS team is making sure student supports are ready for the new school year coordinating programs and services, preparing for CSE/CPSE needs, scheduling meetings and evaluations, maintaining student records, and working closely with families, staff, and outside providers.

Health Offices

Our school nurses are preparing to keep students healthy and safe by reviewing health records and requirements, updating health plans and documentation, coordinating with families and healthcare providers, and ensuring medications, resources, and health offices are ready for the first day of school.

Social Workers

Social workers are preparing to support the whole student by developing support plans, connecting families with resources, collaborating with school teams, preparing social-emotional supports, and planning for individual student needs and successful transitions into the new school year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Sept. 2nd First Day of School
- Sept. 3rd Public Hearing/BOE Meeting
- Sept. 7th Labor Day- No School
- Sept. 10th Remembrance Bowl

Behind the Scenes: Preparing for a Great School Year

While our students have been enjoying summer, our schools have been anything but quiet. Across HFFMCSD, principals, PPS staff, guidance counselors, social workers, school nurses, secretaries, and food service staff have been working behind the scenes to prepare for the return of our students. From planning schedules and student supports to preparing health services, responding to families, and getting our meal programs ready, their work helps ensure that our schools are prepared to welcome students back for a successful new school year.

Fort Montgomery Elementary School

This past week we welcomed incoming Pre-K students and families to visit the building. Students were able to take their first bus ride, meet their teachers and play on the playground.

Ms. Thomas from the district transportation office and representatives from West Point Tours were on site to introduce themselves and speak about bus safety.

Highland Falls Intermediate School

HFIS was happy to accept the extremely generous donation of school supplies, backpacks from the Ambulance Corps this week and we had another successful backpack distribution. We're excited to welcome our new school nurse and 7/8 Special Education teacher (0.4), and hopeful to soon add a 4th Grade Special Education teacher!

James I. O'Neill High School

James I. O'Neill High School is excited to welcome our incoming ninth graders and more than 30 transfer students who enrolled over the summer! New students attended orientation on August 25 and are getting settled into their new school and classes.

The 2026 Fall athletic season is also underway, with football beginning August 17 and all other fall sports starting August 24. Go Raiders!

District Office

Dr. Waterman and her team worked throughout the summer to prepare for New Teacher Orientation on August 27-28, with support from Mr. Patsch and Mrs. Susskind. We are excited to welcome our newest educators to the HFFMCSD community.

Dr. Waterman has also developed a robust professional learning program for August 31 and September 1. During Superintendent's Conference Day, Mr. McElduff will introduce key goals and initiatives for the 2026-2027 school year, with a more detailed update to be shared at the September 17 Board of Education meeting.

Mr. McElduff is proud of the tremendous work completed across the district this summer to prepare for opening day. We look forward to welcoming students back on September 2 for an exciting new school year.

Main Office & Guidance Secretaries

Main office and guidance secretaries are working behind the scenes to keep schools moving, preparing student records, supporting registration and scheduling, assisting families, coordinating appointments and meetings, and making sure essential information, communications, and materials are ready for a smooth start to the school year.

Guidance Counselors

Guidance counselors are helping students start the year on the right path by preparing schedules and course placements, supporting students as they transition to middle and high school, reviewing academic progress and graduation requirements, assisting with new student registrations, and providing academic, social-emotional, college, and career guidance throughout the school year.

Food Services

Our Food Services team is getting ready to fuel a great start to the school year; planning menus, stocking supplies, preparing kitchens and serving areas, and organizing breakfast and lunch operations so our students are ready to enjoy nutritious meals from day one!

Information Technology Department

Our IT Department is making sure our schools are connected and ready for day one—preparing devices, systems, accounts, and technology to support staff and students from the start of the school year.

HFFMCSD ENROLLMENT AT A GLANCE

FMES • 151 | HFIS • 332
JIOHS • 389
TOTAL STUDENTS: 872

