

## **HMS Parents' Survival Guide (A few insider tips)**

*Welcome to HMS! If you are new to our school or new to our school community, you probably have a few questions about how things work at HMS. Have you been wondering....*

### **When does school actually start and end?**

The HMS school day runs from 7:55 a.m.-2:45 p.m. Most students try to arrive between 7:45 and 7:50 in order to get to their lockers and then to their advisory.

### **Is the school building open before school starts?**

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

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

YES! Our Quest Food Service team offers breakfast for students who arrive early at school. The menu ranges from bagels, cereal bars and Pop-Tarts to fruit & yogurt parfaits and hot breakfast sandwiches. Check out prices at [hmspto.org](http://hmspto.org)

### **What do we do if my child is late to school?**

After the tardy bell rings at 7:55 a.m., the north (downtown side) doors are locked for the day. Any student arriving after 7:55 a.m. will need to come into the main entrance doors, ring the buzzer to the office, and go through the main office. Students will go immediately over to the Student Services Office to sign in and receive a pass to class. Tardiness is considered unexcused unless a parent sends an email, voice mail or note to Mrs. Ording in Student Services: [mording@d181.org](mailto:mording@d181.org) or 887-1370 x103.

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

Being a downtown school means that we have limited parking. After school has started (after 8 a.m.), and after the end-of-school rush (after 3 p.m.), parents can park briefly along the drive near the main entrance (that is the entrance off Garfield St., near the flagpole, down the steps). That's ok if you are dropping off a lunch or picking up a student. If you're parking for a longer time, consider the metered parking spots on Washington Street, between Second and Third Streets.

Only the doors to the main entrance are open during the school day. The doors on the north side of the building, adjacent to the parking lot on Washington St., are locked.

### **What happens if my kid 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 his name and grade! Use the clipboard to sign in the items. Materials are not delivered to classrooms; students will be called up at lunchtime to pick up their items. If they realize they have forgotten something and know that, being an all-star parent, you probably saw it and got it to school, they may check on their own before lunchtime.

### **When is lunchtime at HMS?**

If you are dropping off a lunch for your student, make sure it arrives before lunch starts!

6<sup>th</sup> graders have lunch from approximately 11:55 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

7<sup>th</sup> graders have lunch from approximately 11:10-11:45 a.m.

8<sup>th</sup> graders have lunch from approximately 12:40-1:15 p.m.

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

There are eight class periods in 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 students also have two "encore" classes each day. One of those encore periods is daily P.E. or Health; the other encore period is divided between two different classes. For sixth graders, one of those is a music class—either band, orchestra or music exploratory, which they will have every other day. The music class alternates with another exploratory class, like Applied Technology, Art or Family Consumer Science. For instance, a member of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade band might have Band during 1<sup>st</sup> period on A days, and Applied Tech during 1<sup>st</sup> period on B days. Other than the encore, A & B days are identical.

(Don't worry. Your kid 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 or books on the bus, in hopes of reuniting them with their owners. So 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 do we do if my son forgets his homework/books/folders at school?**

Well....the best advice is to not forget! However, this is going to happen to you. If he has forgotten a textbook he needs to do his homework, there are two things you should know. First, many of the HMS textbooks are available online (teachers will give your student a user ID and password). Second, the Hinsdale Public Library has a copy of 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 his homework, it is a little more difficult. The HMS main entrance doors are locked after school, usually by 3:30 p.m. However, there are many after-school activities; if you drive to school, you may be able to catch the attention of a teacher or staff member who will let you in.

**I have to take my son to a doctor's appointment during the school day. What do I do?**

You can call or e-mail our Student Services secretary, Mrs. Ording, at [mording@d181.org](mailto:mording@d181.org) 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 him and show it to his teacher when it's time to leave. It's your child's responsibility to remember what time you are picking him up, and he must sign out of school at the Student Services Office.

**My 6<sup>th</sup> grader is excited to be at HMS and wants to see what clubs and activities are available. Where can we get this information?**

Come to the HMS Activities Fair on Tuesday, Sept. 13 from 3-4:30 p.m. Both students & parents are invited. Teacher sponsors and student members will be available to tell you what their groups are all about, how to join and when they meet.

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

Mr. Peña loves to talk to parents. Really. And we love talking to him. However, as principal of over 800 students and with a staff of 100, he is constantly on the move. He receives dozens of phone calls and e-mail messages every day. So our first advice is to consider whether there is someone closer to the situation or more appropriate who can answer the question—our assistant principal, Dr. Henrikson; our dean of students, Mr. May; one of our school secretaries or a teacher. Like Mr. Peña, they are all happy to help!