



June 5, 2020

To: Users of HCPSS Facilities

From: Scott W. Washington, Chief Operating Officer

Subject: Update on Community Use of School Facilities

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, HCPSS Superintendent, Dr. Michael J. Martirano has decided to keep all school facilities closed for community use through the remainder of the current academic school year, summer recess and fall time periods until January 2021. Dr. Karen Salmon, Maryland Superintendent of Schools announced on May 6, 2020, that schools will remain closed for the duration of the 2019-2020 school year. This decision was not easy, however, it was made due to the uncertainty around what the beginning of the next school year may look like and pending any state directives regarding the status of school facilities.

The rationale for this decision was based on the following criteria:

- Community use programs begin their planning of programs many months before implementation. Currently schools are closed for the year, and the impact on the 2020-2021 school year is under evaluation.
- When schools reopen, specific guidelines, parameters or restrictions may apply that could limit availability of school space for outside use.

This decision aligns with current health and safety guidelines issued by the Maryland Department of Health and Howard County Health Department and takes into account the uncertainty of how the pandemic will unfold.

Please note that this decision is based on where we find ourselves at this time. While we understand that restrictions are continuing to be relaxed statewide, the uncertainty of how schools will look in the fall and the flexibility needed to address those unknowns is the driver of this decision to remain closed. We will continue to monitor the conditions of the pandemic and advise the community of any adjustments or modifications to this decision as updated guidance from the State is received. Thank you for understanding the challenges we are all facing.

If you have any questions, please contact Scott W. Washington, Chief Operating Officer.

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Board of Education Office