



August 30, 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians:

**The 2022-23 school year begins for students Tuesday, September 6.** Information from schools and our transportation department has been sent. There is a great deal to share, and we ask that you bear with us as we seek to meet New York State parent notification requirements and make sure you have the information needed as we begin this school year.

### ***Health protocols***

As we prepare for the opening of the 2022-23 school year, we continue to follow state and county health protocols for COVID and other health matters. Our plan is to open schools as normal, and we wish to remind everyone of the importance of the health protocols of staying home when ill, testing for COVID, and washing hands thoroughly and frequently. If your student tests positive for COVID, please follow state and county protocols for isolation before returning to school. As was the case at the end of last year, masks are optional for students and staff. Those wishing to wear masks are welcome to do so, and we ask everyone to respect this personal choice. For information from the Department of Health on COVID-19, click [here](#).

### ***Safety***

In the coming school year, our buildings will be strengthening some of our safety protocols. As a result, procedures at the school may be less convenient than in the past. We are currently reviewing our visitor identification process as well as working to minimize the number of entrances open during arrival and dismissal times at all school buildings. Also, in our continued collaboration with the Village of Horseheads, the district will be adding additional school resource officers, with the goal of having one in each of our educational complexes. The recruitment process is currently underway, and the district will bring these new SROs to service as soon as possible. Further safety upgrades and processes will be shared as they are implemented.

As we strengthen our protocols, we would like to remind everyone that if you have a safety issue to report or if you hear a rumor, we ask that you contact us directly. Contact your child's school or a district office or call our **Safe Schools Line at 607-795-2044 or 1-800-305-4984**. We ask that you provide as much detail as possible. Additionally, so that we may fully research issues of concern, we ask that you provide us with your name and phone number when you call. This will help in any investigation that the district and/or law enforcement conduct. The information will be kept as confidential as possible under the law. Sharing your contact information allows the district to respond to you directly for more information.

### ***School Meals***

Last year, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provided subsidies to school districts in order to offer free school meals to all students. The USDA has discontinued this program beginning this school year. **The district will resume our regular meal pricing program**, but please be aware that the free/reduced program is still in effect. Lunches in 2022-23 will be \$2.10 for grades PreK-6 and \$2.35 for grades 7-12. Breakfast is \$1.25 for PK-12. For information on Food Service programs, including free/reduced meal eligibility, please visit the Food Services link on our website: <https://horseheadscafeteria.gstboces.org/>. For the free/reduced meals application, [please click here](#). For information and the link to the PaySchools prepayment system, [click here](#). If you have questions regarding school meals or payment, please contact the Food Services Office at 607-739-6360 or [rocole@gstboces.org](mailto:rocole@gstboces.org).

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### ***Bus Information***

The Transportation Department has mailed bus information to parents/guardians of students riding the bus to and/or from school this year. Please keep in mind that the listed pickup and drop-off times are preliminary at this point until we can establish ridership on each bus.

If your child is riding the bus and you do not receive bus information in the postal mail by this Thursday, please contact the Transportation Department as soon as possible at 607-739-6338 or email [LBONCIROSPLOCK@horseheadsdistrict.com](mailto:LBONCIROSPLOCK@horseheadsdistrict.com). The Transportation Department will also be available to answer questions this Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon. The number again is 607-739-6338.

We thank you for your patience as we work to finalize times and routes during the first weeks of school.

### ***Schooltool and Student Schedules***

Schedules for students in grades 7-12 will be available on the Schooltool Parent Portal beginning Wednesday, August 31. If you have a Parent Portal account, [click here to sign in](#). If you do not have a Parent Portal account and would like to register for an account, [click here](#). **Please note: students are unable to log on to Schooltool until school begins and they sign in on a district device and agree to the Acceptable Use Policy.**

### ***Calendar***

To view events happening at your child's school along with districtwide events, please go to your school's web page and click on the Calendar link. If looking at the page from a device, the calendar icon is at the bottom of the page, second from left. On a desktop, the school's calendar is on the right side of the page. Events are on the calendar days, and upcoming events are also listed underneath the calendar. The calendar on the main page of the district website will show you evening activities districtwide, including concerts, plays, Board of Education and PTO meetings, along with school holidays and conference days. The district calendar will not show individual school calendar items such as picture days and makeups, specific school fundraisers, and other daytime events. Please check your appropriate building pages for activities for specific school functions.

Links to our school web pages are below:

[Big Flats Elementary \(horseheadsdistrict.com\)](http://horseheadsdistrict.com)

[Center Street Elementary \(horseheadsdistrict.com\)](http://horseheadsdistrict.com)

[Gardner Road Elementary \(horseheadsdistrict.com\)](http://horseheadsdistrict.com)

[Ridge Road Elementary \(horseheadsdistrict.com\)](http://horseheadsdistrict.com)

[Horseheads Intermediate \(horseheadsdistrict.com\)](http://horseheadsdistrict.com)

[Horseheads Middle \(horseheadsdistrict.com\)](http://horseheadsdistrict.com)

[Horseheads High School \(horseheadsdistrict.com\)](http://horseheadsdistrict.com)

Districtwide calendar: [HCSD District Calendar \(horseheadsdistrict.com\)](http://horseheadsdistrict.com).

### ***School Physicals and Immunizations***

New York State has resumed the requirements for physicals and immunizations for the 2022-23 school year. This means that students must have all state-required immunizations within 14 days of the start of school. For a list of the required immunizations, click here: [2022-23 School Year New York State Immunization Requirements for School Entrance/Attendance](#).

Additionally, parents/guardians must submit a school health examination (or physical) within 30 days of the start of school. School physicals are required for grades PK or K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11. The state's Health Examination Form can be found here: [Required New York State School Health Examination Form](#).

If you have questions regarding requirements for your child, please contact the school nurse.

### ***Board of Education***

Board of Education meetings are open to the public. For more information including the 2022-23 board calendar, agendas, minutes, please go to this link: <https://go.boarddocs.com/ny/horse/Board.nsf/Public>. Board meetings are live streamed at <http://ideas.gstbooces.org/hhds/>. Additionally, please follow the district on Twitter (@HhdsSchools) and/or Instagram (hhdschools) for monthly announcements of Board of Education meetings.

### ***Census***

Each year, we are required to take a census of our community. You may have completed this form in past years, and we thank you. This year, the district will be doing a formal census in order to revise our elementary boundary lines to prepare for the move to three elementary schools in the 2025-26 school year. This process will begin later in the school year, and we ask that every resident complete this census so that the district can establish balanced attendance boundaries for our new elementary zones.

### ***Required notifications***

The district is required to share certain policies and other information with parents and guardians. You may have already received this information from your school, so this is simply a reminder of these policies and information. If you have questions, please feel free to contact your school or email [hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com](mailto:hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com). Click on each item to read the information:

- [Policy 4526: Network and Internet Acceptable Use](#)
- [Policy 4526.2: Email Acceptable Use for Students](#)
- [Regulation 4526.2R: Email Acceptable Use for Students/Regulation](#)
- [Policy 4750: Promotion and Retention of Students](#)
- [Policy 5100: Comprehensive Student Attendance](#)
- [Exhibit 5300E: Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct—required plan language version](#)
- [Policy 5500: Student Records](#)
- [Notification of Rights Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)
- [Free/Reduced Meals Application](#)
- [Policy 8505: Charging School Meals](#)
- [Exhibit 8635-E: Parents' Bill of Rights for Student Data Privacy and Security](#)
- [Important Notifications \(APPR, Teacher Qualification Requests, DASA, Child Find Notice, Non-Discrimination Notice, Section 504 Notice, Homeless Student/Students in Temporary Housing Notice\)](#)
- [Emergency School Closings/Delays](#) (This link includes information on opting in to text messaging for closings/delays.)
- [Pesticide Application Notification](#)
- Please [click here](#) for the public notice regarding [asbestos](#), and [here](#) for the public notice regarding [fire inspections](#).

If you have questions on this or any school information, please contact your school's main office, or email the district at [hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com](mailto:hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com). We are looking forward to the start of the new school year, and we hope you and your family are as well. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Dr. Thomas J. Douglas  
Superintendent of Schools