

Connections

Winter 2023

Welcome to Connections, Hopkins County Schools' parent/community newsletter!

Calendar Set for 2023-2024

Hopkins County Board of Education has approved the school calendar for the 2023-2024 school year. We plan to operate under the traditional calendar and will only use the variable calendar under an emergency situation.

www.hopkins.kyschools.us/schoolcalendar

Hopkins County Schools						
2023-2024 School Calendar						
TRADITIONAL CALENDAR--173 Days						
July 2023						
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September 2023						
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November 2023						
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December 2023						
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January 2024						
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February 2024						
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March 2024						
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April 2024						
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May 2024						
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June 2024						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						
<div><div></div>Holidays</div> <div><div></div>Regular Instructional Days</div> <div><div></div>Make-up Days</div> <div><div></div>Opening and Closing for Staff</div> <div><div></div>Professional Development</div> <div><div></div>Opening and Closing for Students</div> <div><div></div>No School Days</div> <div><div></div>Planning Day</div>						

*Calendar is subject to change pending legislation and/or statutes requirements.

Potential make-up days: May 22-24, 28-31; June 3-13- (If 10 or more days are missed, part or all of spring break may be used for make-up days).

Fifteen make-up days, required as part of our calendar, have been added to the of the year.

It is important to schedule vacations or other conflicting events after these planned make-up days.

Special Permission Request Window Opens Feb. 1

Hopkins County students are required to attend school in their assigned attendance school zone. As a reminder to parents, school attendance zones for the 2023-2024 school year have changed. The updated maps are available at [this link](https://www.hopkins.kyschools.us/SchoolZones). Parents may also visit www.hopkins.kyschools.us/SchoolZones to determine the school zone to which their address belongs.

Students wanting to attend outside of their assigned school zone may only do so if they are approved through a special permission transfer request during the specified window.

The district will accept Special Permission Transfer requests for schools operating at less than 90% student capacity. Families do not have to submit a new application for special permission students if their student has previously received special permission to attend the same school. A new application will be needed if the student will be transitioning to a new school.

Applications may be submitted for the following schools: Hanson Elementary School, Hopkins County Central High School, Jesse Stuart Elementary School, South Hopkins Middle School, and West Hopkins School. Current Madisonville North Hopkins students who are affected by the boundary changes and indicated during the survey that they wish to remain at MNHHS will also need to complete a special permission form. MNHHS is at capacity and, therefore, cannot accept additional requests.

Applications for schools with availability will only be accepted Feb. 1 through April 1, 2023. The form will be available Feb. 1 on the district website, www.hopkins.kyschools.us. Applications may also be picked up at the Board of Education's Central Office starting on that date. Completed applications must be mailed or hand delivered to the Central Office; applications will not be accepted at the school level.

They will be processed in the order received by the Central Office Department of Pupil Personnel, 320 S. Seminary St., Madisonville. Applications will be reviewed by the DPP Office and the requested school on an individual basis. Approval or denial letters will be mailed by May 1.

For more information, contact Hopkins County Schools Department of Pupil Personnel at (270) 825-6000.

School Board Recognition Month



*Thank You,
Board Members!*



Shannon Embry



Steve Faulk



Nicholas Foster



John Osborne



Kerri Scisney

School Board Recognition Month

January 2023

As Kentucky observes School Board Recognition Month in January, Hopkins County Schools is joining in the celebration! Hopkins County Board of Education members Shannon Embry, Steve Faulk (not pictured at right), Nicholas Foster, John Osborne, and Kerri Scisney are among the more than 850 school board members in the state's 171 local school districts being recognized this month.

We thank all of our board members for their service!



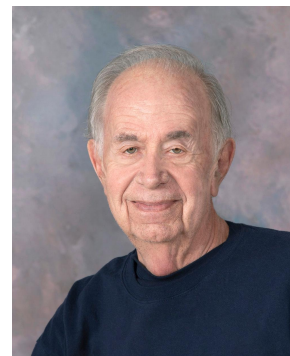
Oath of Office

Newly elected Hopkins County Board of Education member Nicholas Foster took the oath of office at the start of the Jan. 9 school board meeting. He is filling the Division 4 seat. Steve Faulk, who was re-elected to the Division 2 seat, also took the oath of office on Jan. 9. (Kerri Scisney was sworn in at the November meeting and featured in the last newsletter.)



Tribute to Bobby Fox

With love and appreciation, we recognize the many years of service that Bobby Fox gave to Hopkins County Schools. Mr. Fox passed away on Dec. 24, 2022. He was a school teacher, basketball coach, mentor, and member of the Board of Education. He leaves a lasting legacy of service to our community.



Tech Staff Honored with Stillwell Award

Hopkins County Schools' Technology Department staff members were honored with the 2020-2022 Stilwell Award during the Board of Education meeting on Dec. 12.



The Kentucky Department of Education recognized about 2,400 key education technology staff from the state's K-12 school districts with this award for the dedication and support of education technology during the Covid-19 pandemic. Recipients from HCS include Steven Vaught, Eric Stephens, Christy Hoagland, Melissa Taylor, Courtney Walker, Kimball Sellers, Steve Russell, Connor Garrett, Candace Wilson, and Drew Taylor.

The Bill Stilwell "red suspenders" award, which is the highest honor KDE provides in K-12 ed tech, goes to individuals or organizations that go above and beyond the call of duty. This year's recipients received a commemorative coin engraved with Stilwell's red suspenders. Congratulations to all our of Technology Department staff!

Remember Your Why



We welcome nominations from parents, students, and community members for the district's "Remember Your Why" Award. Hopkins County Schools gives this award to employees and students in recognition of outstanding service, good deeds, and kindness shown to others.

Submit your nomination at www.hopkins.kyschools.us/RememberYourWhy.

Dee Yates & Brittany Holmes

Hopkins County Schools bus driver Dee Yates and bus monitor Brittany Holmes received the Remember Your Why Award during the Board of Education meeting on Jan. 9.

They found some packages in the road while driving an afternoon route one day before Christmas. A community member let us know that these employees took the time that afternoon to take the packages to the Sheriff's Department. After finding out who the packages should have gone to, those people were contacted to let them know they could get their packages at the Sheriff's Department. Both of these employees demonstrated great kindness and went out of their way to help others during the Christmas season!



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Dee Yates expressed her "why" by saying, "I love kids and I love driving."

Brittany Holmes said, "I had my CDL and wasn't using it. I saw the desperate need for bus drivers, and thought I could help the community by taking some of the stress from parents and children in regards to transportation."

Katie Riggs

Katie Riggs, an art teacher at South Hopkins Middle School, received the Remember Your Why Award at

the Board of Education meeting on Dec. 12. She continually looks for activities that generate creative and engaging work from her students. She is patient, supportive and very nurturing to each and every one of her students. She teaches her students how art is part of their day-to-day lives, even when they do not realize it. Most recently, Ms. Riggs applied for and won a grant that covered the expenses of bringing in a professional videographer to help her students plan, develop, edit and create their own multimedia video. (This also included the use of a drone!) She continues to apply for other grants that will provide additional learning opportunities for our students. We are very fortunate to have her as part of the SHMS FAMILY!



Here is how Riggs explained her "why": "I teach because I want to be an influence and make a difference in the lives of my students. I hope to instill a belief in my students that they can achieve goals and create new things that they didn't think were possible before. Art is a wonderful outlet to show them that."



Save the Date!

Saturday, April 22, 2023
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

The community is invited
to a celebration of Earlington
Elementary and to take a "last
stroll" through the building.
More details coming soon!

Earlington T-shirt Orders

Orders are being taken now for



#OneLastTime Earlington Celebration T-shirts to commemorate our memories of Earlington Elementary and Earlington High School. Your \$25 order purchases a T-shirt for you and gifts a T-shirt (of a different design) to an Earlington student. Orders are due by March 24, 2023. Please complete this form to place an order.

[Order Form](#)



SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2023
1-4 P.M.

Come celebrate Hanson Elementary! Take a "last stroll" through the current building, view memorabilia displays, and more.

Additional details coming soon!



Celebrate FRYSC Week!

The week of Feb. 6-10 has been designed as FRYSC Coordinators Appreciation Week. FRYSC Day is Feb. 8. We want to thank the coordinators for the work they do serving students, families and communities! Others are encouraged to help celebrate FRYSCs during that week!

Family Resource and Youth Services Centers remove the non-academic barriers to student achievement, bridge the gaps to needed resources, and collaborate the resources of schools and communities for the success of students, families, and communities. FRYSCs use strengthened community and school partnerships, which are critical in efforts on behalf of students to promote:

- Early learning and successful transition to school;
- Academic achievement and well-being; and
- Graduation and transition into adult life.

Superintendent's Student Advisory Council

Hopkins County Central students on the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council led council members from Madisonville North Hopkins on a tour of the building on Jan. 20. They were asked to showcase what they are most proud of at Central. During the next meeting, North students will do the same at their school. After the tour, the students gave input and discussed their ideas with Superintendent Amy Smith.



Independence Bank Supports Art Departments



Independence Bank presented donations of \$1,776 to the art departments at both Hopkins County Central and Madisonville North Hopkins high school before the holidays! The donation was a "thank you" for allowing our students to participate in the Horses of Hope Project.

Their horse, Fabric of Love, raised \$134,000 in donations, including \$100,000 from Casey's General Store in Dawson Springs and Gatorade. The donations will benefit the youth baseball and softball fields at the Dawson Springs City Park that were destroyed in the December 2021 tornado.

Stop by Independence Bank's 1776 N. Main St. office in Madisonville, to see the horse at its temporary home. It will eventually be located at the Dawson Springs park after the fields are rebuilt.

Realty Firm Gives to Backpack Program



A big "thank you" goes out to Keller Williams Elite Realty, which recently presented a \$3,000 donation to Hopkins County Schools Family Resource Youth Service Centers for the Backpack Blessings Program. The donation is from the KW Cares Team. We appreciate our community partners!

Hopkins United



The Hopkins United project brought a sense of unity to the North-Central rivalry basketball game in December. The Be-YOU-tiful Leaders group, made up of girls from both high schools, took inspiration from the sense of purpose they saw when the community came together after the Dec. 10, 2021, tornado to meet a common need.

Through the Hopkins United T-shirt project, these leaders raised funds to better our community through the Seeds of Hope beautification effort at Barnsley and installation of a communication board for the Rog Badgett All-Inclusive Play Park. They sold a total of 560 T-shirts for the project. Several

wore their shirts at last night's game to demonstrate that we are united as a community!

Middle Schoolers Take on KYA

Students from two of our middle schools participated in a mock state government last month during Kentucky Youth Assembly (KYA). James Madison and South Hopkins Middle schools both sent delegations. Students learned about writing bills, research, debate, parliamentary procedure, and voting while serving as either representatives or senators.

Both James Madison and South Hopkins were honored with the Premier Delegation award. This is the first year SHMS has participated, and they also won Best New KYA Delegation award. Outstanding Delegate awards were presented to Westyn Miles of JMMS and Reagan Blades-Utley of SHMS, and an Outstanding Speaker award was given to Brennan Neal of SHMS. This was an awesome experience for these students!



Gish: Bus Driver and Teacher



Jonna Gish has always enjoyed driving.

I remember when I was a little girl, I'd watch the school bus driver, and I'd be like, 'I want to do this someday,'" Gish said. "He was driving with the stick shift and I remember sitting there thinking that looks like fun."

She added with a laugh, "I'm glad it's not a stick shift now."

Gish became a driver for Hopkins County Schools in 1997. She had another job, but it didn't provide health insurance. Her boss let her drive so she would be provided coverage.

"When my kids were in school, I got to drive them to baseball games, to choir, to basketball," she said. "I was right there in the middle of it all and I loved it." After her kids graduated high school, she recalled another dream ... to

become a teacher. She learned about the Murray State University education program based in Madisonville and decided to earn her degree. She took the fast track, meaning she had to quit driving, and earned her degree in three years.

She's now a special education teacher at Madisonville North Hopkins and is in her 10th year teaching.

"Every time I'd see the bus, I'd think, 'Gosh, I miss driving that bus,'" Gish said. "I thought, 'They need drivers, so why not?'" She again earned her CDL and got back on the bus. Now, she is both a bus driver and a teacher. Gish said bus driving is a good option for parents of school-age kids, business owners who work in fields such as lawn care and painting, and early retirees. Other school employees may also want to consider taking on a dual role.

"The kids here just think it's so fascinating that I drive," she said. "Right now, you can work as much as you want to. The schools really work well to accommodate me driving. The other teachers are also very supportive. They are very happy I do it."



Faulk Family Donates to Baby Doll Project



Hopkins County Board of Education member Steve Faulk and family gave a donation of baby dolls and other toys to the Hopkins County Schools Family Resource Centers Friday at Grapevine Elementary School. The donation was in memory of his sister, Karen Wilson. This is an annual donation for the Karen's Christmas Baby Dolls toy drive project. These toys will be distributed through the FRYSCs at our elementary schools. Thanks to Mr. Faulk and everyone involved in making this generous gift for our kids!

Fischer Recognized by KDE

Gretchen Fischer was recognized by Kentucky Department of Education for 25 years of service to children and youth with disabilities at the 2022 Kentucky Exceptional Children's Conference on Nov. 21. She is the building coach at West Broadway

Elementary and Southside Elementary.



Athletic Celebrations

2A Sectional Champs

Hopkins County Central High School Lady Storm basketball team won the 2A Sectional Championship! This qualified the team to advance to the 2A State Tournament. Congratulations to the Lady Storm!!





Chris Price

Madisonville North Hopkins High School

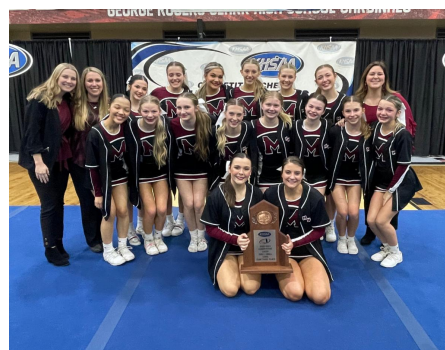
**KENTUCKY FOOTBALL
COACHES ASSOCIATION**

**4A District 1
Coach of the Year**

KHSAA State Competitions



Hopkins County Central High School High Voltage dance team placed 3rd in the state in Hip Hop in the KHSAA State Competition! Twenty-four teams competed in that division. Congratulations!!



Madisonville North Hopkins High School cheer team placed 3rd in the state in the KHSAA Competitive Cheer state competition! MNHHS competed in the all-girls small division. Congratulations!!

KDCO Regional Champs

Several of our dance teams were big winners at the KDCO Regional Championship!

Hopkins County Central High School won 1st place in both large hip hop and large game day and the Best Choreography Award. They were also named Grand Champions for the highest average score in the high school division.

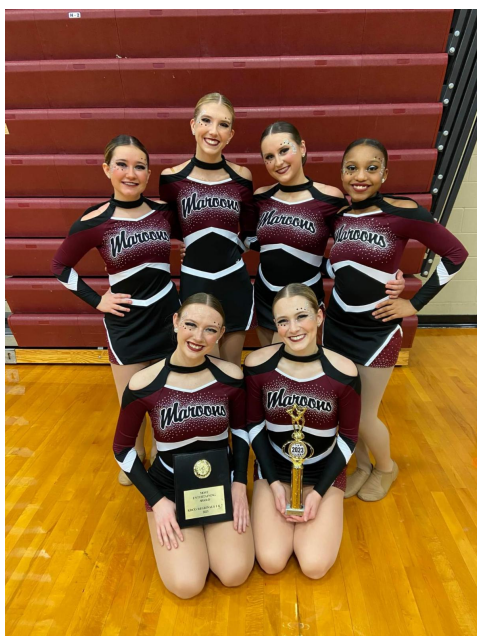
Madisonville North Hopkins High School Maroon Magic won 1st place in small varsity pom and also received the Most Entertaining Performance Award.

James Madison Middle School Stars won 1st place in both medium middle school pom and medium middle

school hip hop. They also received "Best of the Best" for the highest average score in the middle school division.

South Hopkins Middle School Dance Cats won 1st place in both small middle school pom and small middle school hip hop.

All of the teams will advance to the KDCO State Championship on Feb. 25-26 at Eminence High School. Congratulations to all the team members and their coaches!



[Visit our Website](#)



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