

Beneath the Headlines

Dunkin' Restriction



New Course Requirement



Ravens Coming to OM



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OM Scheduled for Renovation in 2027

Students and Staff Perplexed at Redistricting Decision

Nomtai Kurmi
News Editor

The Board of Education has finally scheduled Oakland Mills for renovation in the summer of 2027; however, the renovation is expected to take longer than initially anticipated, leading the Board to decide that all Oakland Mills students and staff will be temporarily redistricted to other HCPSS schools until the renovations are finished.

The response from students and staff has been overwhelmingly positive regarding the renovation,

especially in light of some declining building conditions at the Mill. Still, some believe the renovations should have occurred sooner, with remarks like “it came too late” as “other schools in the county have already been renovated.” Junior Chelsy Aviles states, “This has been a prevalent issue since I was a freshman, and now I’m a junior. I wish the Board had taken notice earlier; they seem to have overlooked OM.” This sentiment is echoed by many in the student body, including Senior Zoe Smolinski, who notes, “I’m a little annoyed by it being so late. It feels

like there’s always some new problem every day, from pipe bursts to mold in the library.”

Staff seem skeptical about the renovations, like Physics teacher Mr. Retterer, who said, “I’ll believe it when I see it... I hope they don’t pull a Charlie Brown football on us, where they’ll tear down the school, and be like ‘you guys can stay at those other schools.’”

Redistricting raised concerns within the OM community, with many understandably unhappy about it and voicing worries about the transition. Ninth grader Lauren Rome expressed, “I’m kinda scared of being separated from my friends.”

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HCPSS Extends School Year

Seniors Making Up Snow Days and School Until July

Malia Edelson
Staff Writer

Due to the substantial amount of snow days used during this school year, the Howard County Board of Education ruled that the school year has officially been extended into July, and seniors now have to make up those snow days as well. July 3rd is the official last day of the school year,

from the board of directors. Howard County’s Chief of Snow Days stated, “Seniors are not fulfilling enough school days, therefore the board has decided to have them make up the snow days missed. Graduations will now take place June 9th-13th with the seniors’ last day being June 4th.” Graduation coordinators are now working quickly to rewrite plans to account for

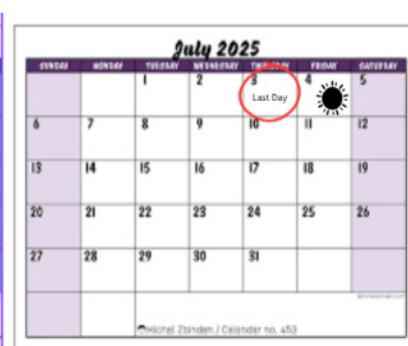
the date change, and many seniors are furious because they have already told their families the tentative week of graduation.

When asked her thoughts on the matter, Oakland Mills senior Lily Dowd replied, “I am just going to skip.” Many other seniors agreed with her statement as all of their credits are completed and teachers are not going to be giving out graded work

past May. Seniors may want to be careful about this idea, though, since the last days of school are final exams, which are the final grades that are sent to colleges.

As for underclassmen, they will now have to attend school into July, and to no surprise, there has been uproar. An Oakland Mills junior who wanted to remain anonymous said, “This is ridiculous! They cannot force

me to come to school until July! This is the final straw, I’m moving to Canada!” Many other students agreed it is extremely disappointing to make students go to school into July.



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Course Requirement Added

New Credits Required for 25-26 School Year

Kamari Shearin
Staff Writer

At the latest board meeting, the Howard County Board of Education decided to implement a few additional credits for all seniors to graduate high school. The new credits in physical education and health will be required for all students starting in the 2025-26 school year. This means that any student enrolled in HCPSS would have to complete an additional credit in both physical education and health to achieve the graduation requirements.

In recent years, we have seen the addition of Health II and the extra year of math for the 2021-

2022 freshmen. The Howard County Board of Education came out with this news on April 1st explaining in an HCPSS release that they had felt the need for “students to prioritize fitness” and to “expand their knowledge of health education.” Many OM students have mixed feelings on the matter, some are dissatisfied and others are indifferent towards it.

OM sophomore Kailey Williams stated, “It’s dumb, I don’t know why they had to add more unnecessary classes that we will not need in the future.” OM senior Shawn Johnson felt differently saying, “I don’t care, I’m a senior so, either way, it won’t affect me.”

The student response varied based on grade level from what

I saw interviewing students. OM teachers also had thoughts on the matter, and many don’t feel that it will help overall student success. Many teachers expressed that the additional credit requirements will be an extra workload on both staff and students, and it may be difficult to staff the new courses.

This is the outcome of the new superintendent Bill Darnes. He has stated that he wants to broaden the learning horizon for the upcoming school year to better the education of the next generation of students. He plans to add more real world learning to his plan and he feels adding an extra credit of health and PE is the way to do that.

Overall, students and staff are not particularly excited about carrying on the extra workload of more classes. With every class requirement, students lose elective options to pursue courses of student interest. This may also affect seniors who were planning on taking a light schedule during their final year of high school.



Policy 8080 Moves to Include School-Issued Chromebooks

The End of Technology in the Classroom

them to search for loopholes in the policy.

One method students use to bypass the phone ban is by using school-issued Chromebooks. This shift to an increased use of Chromebooks has been noticed in the short time the ban has been in place. This has caused teachers to be frustrated and angry due to the distraction it causes from instruction. This has caught the attention of Howard County, causing the board to construct a new policy for school-issued Chromebooks.

This new policy is an amendment to Policy 8080, the personal device ban, and states that schools plan to collect

all school-issued Chromebooks. Beginning April 1st, the media center will remove the Chromebooks and start using school-based Chromebook Carts for tasks requiring computers. If this policy does not produce favorable results, the school will turn solely to paper activities and cut out any form of



March 3rd marked the start of a new personal device policy within Howard County. The policy requires all students to keep their cellphones, headphones, AirPods, and iPads off and away in classes, hallways, and lunch shifts during school hours and threatens confiscation if they’re seen. This has upset many students and caused

technology.

Several students have taken to a popular petition website, Change.org, to create a space for people to sign petitions advocating for removing the policy and sharing how it has been harmful.

The amendment will also impose fines on students who fail

to return their Chromebooks. The fines may range from a few dollars to hundreds, depending on how long students take to return the devices.

Only time will tell how this new policy will impact instruction and learning for both teachers and students.



04/01/2025

Sam's Mart To Close

Out With the Old, In With the New

Victoria Williams
Editor-in-Chief

The new 7-Eleven has officially opened its doors and they have not disappointed! The new addition has nailed the formula for success with their grand opening in January and free slushies in February. Every day, kids stop in for snacks, student drivers fuel up, and car owners can enjoy the on-site car wash. A convenient one-stop shop, 7-Eleven has been enjoyed by all community members, and with all eyes on them, it is clear they are here to stay! But as one empire rises, another is bound to fall.

For years, Sam's Mart has been the community's convenience store. However, on Friday, March 28th, it was announced that Sam's Mart will close by the end of the summer. The reasons for its closure have not been announced, but



many have speculated—was it the competition ten feet away? Has this been planned for a long time? One thing is certain: Sam's Mart marks the end of an era.

I asked a few community members what they thought about the closure, starting with Computer Science & Business Teacher Coach Browne, who said, "Well, it makes sense that they would be

closing. With a major franchise opening, of course, kids are going to choose the big-name location over the local one."

I then asked two students about their thoughts—were they happy or nostalgic? And what would they like to see replace Sam's Mart? Senior Willow Romack said, "I'm gonna miss them so much, particularly the two-person rule. It was

great and made things go really fast!" Senior Jayla Mapson added, "If Sam's Mart is leaving, then I want Little Caesars back!"

All in all, Sam's Mart was more than just a convenience store—it was a part of the community. It was a familiar spot for teachers, students, and all residents. While 7-Eleven has brought excitement, variety, and greater convenience, it is also a testament to the ever-changing nature of business.

While there are still plenty of unanswered questions—why Sam's Mart is closing, what will replace it, and whether it will be a good fit for the community—one thing is certain: though it may be gone, it won't be forgotten. It was a go-to spot for quick stops, last-minute snacks, and familiar faces. As the neighborhood moves forward, all that's left to do is wait and see what comes next.

Redistricting

...Continued from page 1

One major worry was preserving the sense of community at OM, a concern also shared by Dr. Fink. He commented, "I really hate the idea of separating our school. I get it; we have nowhere else to go, but man." He further noted, "This isn't the first time this [redistricting] has happened. There was an instance with River Hill and Wilde Lake. River Hill was just built while Wilde Lake was undergoing renovations, so they sent all the students to River Hill. That worked out nicely because they kept everyone together." He concluded with, "Our primary focus when we return will definitely be rebuilding our community."

On the flip side, some students and staff were excited about the temporary relocation. Mr. Retterer

exclaimed, "I guess we'll spread some of our energy there!" Ninth grader Jonathan McCoy exclaimed, "Bro, I would love to go to Guilford and see my friends." Another student, sophomore Aubréé Davis, remarked, "Senior year would be the best time to hang out with some of my best friends; I hope I get to go to Atholton."

The maps of where students will be redistricted have not yet been solidified or made public. We eagerly anticipate the renovations, which will enhance our learning environment and elevate our school spirit. While temporary redistricting may present challenges, it's essential to stay connected with our school community wherever you are. Remember, we are OM and we are strongest together, even when we're not together.

OMHS ROCKETRY CLUB

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ONE OF THEM
COULD BE YOU!
THREE SLOTS
AVAILABLE!



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04/01/2025

Dunkin Restrictions

Board of Education Declares War on Dunkin

Antoine Hodges
Staff Writer

Though many topics were discussed at the latest meeting of the Board of Education, the issue of student safety arose frequently. Specifically, many parents and other community members are concerned about students leaving campus during the school day. For us here at OM, this may look like going to Dunkin Donuts during the lunch period.

The Board of Education had planned tough restrictions on students leaving campus citing safety concerns as the main issue. The plan is for HCPSS to provide additional security for all exterior doors of the 13 high schools. At OM, there will be administrators at the doors near the front office, by the gym doors, the doors by the health room, and the doors near

the math and science hallways during all lunch shifts starting on April 1st.

OM administration has expressed concerns in the past that going off-campus and walking to Dunkin is a safety concern. Students could get hurt or need assistance without anyone knowing where they are. Because of these concerns and the new support from the

Board of Education, breaking the rule will not be taken lightly.

Despite the overwhelming opposition, the administration remains firm on the policy. "This

policy is for the students' good, they need to stay on campus, focus on learning within a class, and stop spending \$6 on sugar milk," said one of our OM administrators.

Though the policy is not new, the stronger enforcement of it has many students concerned. "This is one of the worst things

that happened in OM, first the phone ban and now this. I need a coffee from Dunkin just to function and go through the day. How am I supposed to function without

it?" said Junior Samantha Smith.

On the other hand, some students see the benefit of enforcing this rule. "I think the policy is a good idea, it would be a lot easier for students to stay in school during the lunch period," said Senior Robert Harris.

Sources report that a spike in caffeine withdrawals has already begun to affect the student body. Teachers have noted a sharp increase in students falling asleep in class, as well as, reports of underground homemade coffee rumored among students.

The students of Oakland Mills High School aren't backing down on this policy. There are reports of a "Free the Coffee" protest already planned with posters, banners, cameras, and megaphones, with participants promising to have the protest on the path to Dunkin' near the field by the school.

Extended School Year ...Continued from page 1

Other students were more concerned about the length of the summer break. Howard High sophomore Peter Alsop shared, "We are going from two and a half months of summer break to less than two months. Is this even allowed?" Many families' vacation time is being affected by the lengthened school year, with many parents going to the board and complaining about having to cancel trips. "We had to cancel our trip to Mexico because my son can't miss his finals during the last week of school," said an angered Atholton parent.

While the lack of summer break is a concern, what is more of a concern is that nine of these extra days were not snow days this year. Howard County's Chief of Snow Days shared,

"There have been too many unaccounted snow days in the past couple of years, so we are taking this year to make them up. We will do better in the future." Parents and students are outraged by this decision, but perhaps no one more so than teachers. OM English teacher Mr. Williams stated, "I am going to quit." Many teachers from around the county agree with his sentiment.

Will this change in the school year cause attendance issues and leave the county understaffed? We will have to see in the coming weeks what direction the county takes? If you feel strongly about the extension of the school year, reach out to Howard County's Chief of Snow Days at chiefofsnowdays@hcps.org.



UPCOMING SCHOOL EVENTS!

- 4/9 - National Sports Day Pep-Rally
- 4/11 - How to Do Taxes 101 Work Shop
after school in the Media Center
- 4/22 - Earth Day - OMMS Visit,
Activities During Lunch to Celebrate
- 4/17 - SAT Make-ups
- 5/5 - No School, Cinco de Mayo
- 5/6 & 5/7 - Professional Work Days



Baltimore Ravens to Visit OM

A Special NFL Surprise

Maryland high schools whose football programs were successful during the 2024-2025 season for a special visit. The NFL team will distribute official team gear and engage with the students and athletes at a special assembly.

allowing Oakland Mills' own a chance to feel like part of the team.

Football coach, Mark Johnson, commented on the NFL team planning to make a stop at Oakland Mills and was thrilled saying "I mean this is my Alma Mater, I played football here at Oakland Mills, I'm a diehard Ravens fan, so this is huge, not just for us coaches, but the players too."

In addition to the gear distribution, select Ravens players will be taking time to share advice, tell personal stories, and answer questions from the community. The overarching theme of the event plan is the importance of hard work, dedication, and teamwork, aiming to inspire young athletes to pursue their dreams both on and

off the field.

Mr. Williams, a long-time Ravens fan, is hoping to be able to take part in the event, saying, "I hope us non-football players get a chance to join in on the fun too!"

Most notably, Beau Brade, Howard County native and alumnus of the River Hill Varsity football team, who is now a Baltimore Raven, will be coming to Oakland Mills to assist with the distribution of new gear.

This visit from the Baltimore Ravens is more than just an opportunity to receive gear, it's a chance for the students at Oakland Mills High School to connect with professional athletes and gain valuable wisdom that could shape their futures.



The event, eagerly anticipated by students and staff alike, promises to be a memorable experience. Ravens players will be handing out jerseys, cleats, signed footballs, and new helmets,

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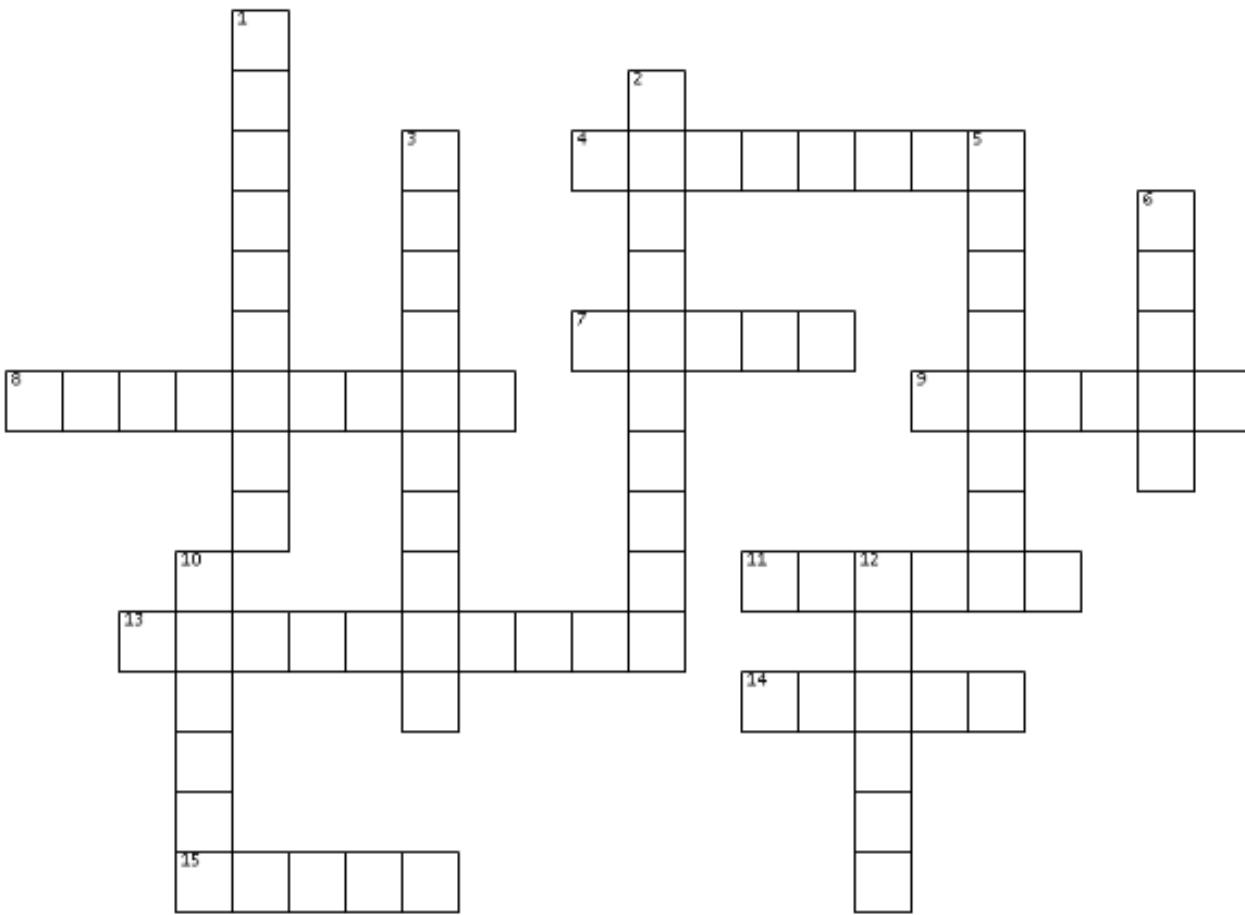




Free Pizza and Slushie with OM Student ID

Minimum purchase of \$1. Available only at the 7-Eleven on Stevens Forest road Columbia, MD.

This is not an actual coupon for 7-Eleven in any way, it will not work when used. Please DO NOT attempt to use since this Coupon is NOT REAL.



DOWN

1. The oldest organized sport in North America
2. A Christian holiday that falls on April 20th this year
3. A ball game played on a field with a diamond-shape
4. A bean-shaped candy with a gelatinous center and a firm sugar coating
5. The season that began on March 20th
6. OM just broke the record with their 11th state title in this sport
10. OM Spring musical
12. The OM just broke the record with their 11th state title in this sport

ACROSS

4. The month after March
7. A spring allergen that comes from flowers and other plants
8. Bright yellow flowers, usually one of the first signs of Spring
9. A chick-shaped marshmallow treat
11. Traditionally, kids search for these in a hunt on Easter (2 words)
13. A nectar-feeding insect with two pairs of large, typically brightly colored wings
14. A trick or hoax on April 1 (2 words)
15. A plant-eating mammal with long ears, often associated with Easter



We hope you've enjoyed our April Fools Edition of *The Scroll*.

Disclaimer: Every article in this edition is satire and not real.

As always, we had so much fun putting this together for you and stay tuned for the next edition of *The Scroll*

-The Staff of *The Scroll*