

Homewood Center

PROFILE

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One Direction • One Voice • One Mission

Homewood Center is located on a wooded site directly behind the Howard County Department of Education in Ellicott City. Homewood differs from a conventional school setting in two ways. First, the center offers students in two programs—Gateway and Bridges—a dynamic family-oriented, educational setting specifically designed to meet their needs. The concept serves as a model for multi-agency collaboration and cooperation by bringing quality educational and community services together in support of students and their families. Secondly, Homewood Center provides a structured environment with a lower than average student-to-teacher ratio. The school vision is centered around empowering students to build skills and confidence while providing access and opportunity for all students to be successful after high school.

Interagency Collaboration

Meeting the needs of students who have experienced academic, social-emotional, and/or behavioral difficulties can be a complex undertaking that requires a well-coordinated approach. Interagency collaboration is a vital component of Homewood Center. The Gateway and Bridges programs receive support from a number of agencies including the Department of Social Services, the Health Department, the Juvenile Services Administration, the Police Department, and other community organizations that provide support services for students and families with a history of mental health, community, and/or family situations that may require this. Homewood Center provides onsite accommodations for this collaboration and serves a “community school” which a variety of service providers gather, meet, and coordinate services to children and their families.

Fast Facts

Facility opened: 2002

Total Enrollment: 131
Official count 9/30/23

Ethnicity FY24

American Indian/Alaskan	≤5.0%
Asian	≤5.0%
Black/African American	42.8%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	≤5.0%
Hispanic/Latino	13.0%
White	33.6%
Two or more races	≤5.0%

Students Receiving Special Services FY23

Free/Reduced Meals	58.0%
English Learners	≤5.0%
Special Education	61.1%

Administrators:

Dwayne Williams, Principal
Amie Jensen, Asst. Principal
Laura Peter, Asst. Principal
Stasha Swartz, Asst. Principal

Educational Partnerships:

Center for Children; Chick-Fil-A, Clarksville; Families First; Family and Children's Services of Central Maryland; Fidos for Freedom; Giant; Grace Community Church; Howard County Conservancy; Howard County Health Department; Howard County Library, Central Branch; Howard County Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee; Humanim, Inc.; Living Wellness Chiropractic of Columbia; Pets on Wheels; PTA Council of Howard County; Robinson Nature Center, Howard County Recreation and Parks; Ronald McDonald House Charities of Baltimore; Roving Radish; Salazar Catering Services/ Boardroom Café; Success In Style; The Choice Program at UMBC; We Are One; Y in Central Maryland, Dancel Family Center

Updated December 2023

Special Programs

Gateway

The Howard County Gateway Program is a county-wide alternative educational program for students who need a different and more individualized school environment. The program serves middle and high school students and provides intensive support and interventions.

Gateway will:

Provide time and space for students to recover from experiences that have negatively impacted their ability to learn.

Develop and rehearse remediation skills and strategies that will allow them to succeed within their traditional school environment.

Return students to their traditional school where they can benefit from the many social, emotional, and instructional opportunities when appropriate.

Bridges

The Bridges Program at the Homewood Center is a middle and high public separate day, therapeutic, special education program. It features small classes, specialized, differentiated instruction, increased focus and attention on SEL and executive function skill development, the provision of therapeutic and counseling services in multiple formats, clinically trained interventionists, and intensive staffing ratios. The program is designed for students whose most prominent struggles are understood to be the result of psychiatric conditions, internal psychological states like anxiety or depression, and/or neurochemical/neuroanatomical idiosyncrasies, such as Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Bridges will:

Provide small classes, specialized and differentiated instruction, the provision of therapeutic and counseling services in multiple formats, clinically trained interventionists, and intensive staffing ratios.

Work with a strong focus on special education services, SEL, executive function skills, social skills within our therapeutic structures and systems.

Special Programs

- Girls Empowerment and Community Service Group
- Beyond the 21 Post-secondary Career Exploration and Support Program
- Partnership with HCPSS Career Academies at ARL since 2010
- School-wide use of and exemplar for Restorative Practices since 2012
- Extended Day program since 2012
- School-wide behavior support
- Group and individual counseling
- Credit Recovery since 2006
- After-school clubs
- Hour of Code
- Parent Information and Workshops
- Recycled Treasure Sale
- Watershed Summit participation at the Howard County Conservancy
- We Step Program for workforce and social skills training and transition to adulthood
- Countywide PTA Partnerships for Staff Appreciation
- #HomewoodFamily Pantry
- Trauma Responsive, Restorative Justice, and Antiracist schoolwide professional learning plan

Accomplishments

- Patricia Hunter, Arts Council Teacher of the Year 2021 and 2020 HCPSS High School Art Teacher of the Year, Maryland High School Art Teacher of the Year
- Suzi Young, HCPSS Washington Post Teacher of the Year, 2020
- Matt Bachtel, Teacher of the Year semifinalist, 2019
- Emily Grieser, Teacher of the Year
- PBIS Gold School since 2007
- More than \$100K earned in Grants and Awards over the last 14 school years
- Maryland Green School Certification