Homewood Center
PROFILE

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Relationships • Resilience • Responsibility

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 more structured environment with a much lower than average student-to-teacher ratio.

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 as the “hub” around which a variety of service providers gather, meet, and coordinate services to children and their families.

Updated March 2020

Fast Facts

- Facility opened: 2002
- Total Enrollment: 122
- Official count 9/30/19
- Ethnicity FY20
  - American Indian/Alaskan ≤5.0%
  - Asian ≤5.0%
  - Black/African American 57.4%
  - Hawaiian/Pacific Islander ≤5.0%
  - Hispanic/Latino 11.5%
  - White 24.6%
  - Two or more races ≤5.0%
- Students Receiving Special Services (based on end of FY19 attendance)
  - Free/Reduced Meals 56.7%
  - English Learners ≤5.0%
  - Special Education 49.6%
- Administrators:
  - Christina Krabitz, Principal
  - Amie Jensen, Assistant Principal, Gateway
  - Laura Peter, Assistant Principal, Bridges
  - Dwayne Williams, Assistant Principal, Gateway
- Educational Partnerships:
  - Abrakadoodle-Howard County; Bridgeway Community Church; Center for Children; Families First; Family and Children’s Services of Central Maryland; 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; Press Box; PTA Council of Howard County; Robinson Nature Center, Howard County Recreation and Parks; Ronald McDonald House Charities of Baltimore; Salazar Catering Services/Boardroom Café; Success In Style; The Choice Program at UMBC; Y in Central Maryland, Dancel Family Center
Gateway
The Howard County Gateway Program is a countywide alternative educational program for middle and high school students who need a different and more individualized school environment. The program provides more intensive supports and interventions than are available at their comprehensive home schools.

Gateway provides academic instruction, enrichment, and remediation, trauma-informed counseling and therapeutic support, and a positive behavior management system designed to help students be more successful throughout the school day. Students work with case managers on a regular basis to discuss successes and barriers with regards to academics and behaviors. In addition, the Gateway Program focuses on post-secondary goals, working with each student on an individualized plan for success after high school. Some students transition back to comprehensive schools, while many students remain at Gateway until graduation.

Bridges
The Bridges Program at the Homewood Center is a middle and high separate day school therapeutic special education program. It features small classes, specialized, differentiated instruction, the provision of counseling services in multiple formats, 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.

Students who attend the Bridges Program are those whose conditions have resulted in problematic scholastic behaviors in comprehensive middle and high school settings. Typically, students have deficits in social skills and underdeveloped scholastic and interpersonal coping strategies, which adversely impact educational and functional performance. Curriculum, supports and activities designed to assist students with executive functioning deficits and atypical sensory needs are specifically integrated into the school environment and throughout the school day through universal design. Within a consistent and comprehensive therapeutically focused environment, students receive individualized instruction to support their IEPs and BIPs. Data collection is maintained throughout the day to assess behavioral and academic progress.

Accomplishments
- Suzi Young, Teacher of the Year finalist, 2020
- Patty Hunter, 2020 HCPSS High School Art Teacher of the Year, Maryland High School Art Teacher of the Year
- Matt Bachtel, Teacher of the Year semifinalist, 2019
- Emily Grieser, Teacher of the Year nominee, 2019
- 2019 Senior Class Teachers of the Year: Mark Lam and Jenna Largent
- PBIS Gold School since 2007
- More than $75,000 earned in Grants and Awards since 2007, including Center for Dispute Resolution at the University of Maryland Law School Grants, Bright Minds Foundation Teacher Grants, Education First SEL Grants, Achieve 24/7 Howard County Government Grants, AdCap Challenge Grants, BGE Bright Ideas Grant, Donors Choose Projects
- Maryland Green School Certification