

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.

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

Updated March 2020

Special Programs

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.

Special Programs

- Girls Empowerment and Community Service Group
- Beyond the 21 Post-secondary Program
- Partnership with HCPSS Career Academies at ARL since 2010
- Schoolwide use of and exemplar for Restorative Practices since 2012
- Extended Day program since 2012
- Schoolwide behavior support
- Group and individual counseling
- Credit Recovery since 2006
- After-school clubs
- Watershed Summit participation at the Howard County Conservancy
- We Step Program for workforce and social skills training and transition to adulthood
- Mindfulness for Staff and Students
- Ronald McDonald House Student Service Learning project since 2013
- Countywide PTA Partnerships for Staff Appreciation
- #HomewoodFamily Pantry
- Hour of Code

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