

MPIA Request

BBMS Newsletter Communication:

August 8, 2025

- **UPDATED BBMS BACKPACK EXPECTATIONS-** Students will be expected to store their backpacks and belongings in their lockers during the school day. Students will be able to access their lockers during arrival and dismissal and before and after their lunch shift. If a student chooses to visit their locker during a transition between classes, they are still expected to arrive to class prior to the late bell ringing (transitions are 3 minutes long).

BBMS lockers are about 11 inches wide and 13 inches deep, so please keep this in mind when purchasing backpacks and supplies. In addition, if you are purchasing a "zipper binder" for your student, it should be no more than 2.5 inches wide so that it can fit inside a student desk; all supplies should fit inside student desks so that we can keep walkways clear and safe.

As your student is preparing to return to school, we encourage you to help them organize their supplies based on their morning and afternoon classes so that they do not carry all of their materials around all day. Here two strategies for helping your child organize their materials:

- Color-coding items based on morning and afternoon classes
- Organizing binders for AM and PM classes.

Finally, students are permitted to carry a small purse, fanny pack, or belt bag with them throughout the day for small personal items. The bag should be small enough to fit inside of a student desk. We do ask that students not use string bags/cinch bags as they can present a tripping hazard.

August 20, 2025

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The decision to adjust our backpack expectations was made after discussions with the BBMS Administrative Team, the BBMS Leadership Team and other HCPSS middle school principals. After a lot of consideration, the overall consensus was that backpacks in the classroom have the tendency to create a safety issue. Our class sizes can go up to 33 students and can have anywhere from 1-4 adults in the room; the inclusion of backpacks in the classrooms present issues with clear walkways in classrooms. Additionally, we have found that oftentimes students keep items in their backpacks that are unnecessary for instruction, and those items sometimes become a distraction to the classroom environment. We also anticipate that since students' hands will be occupied during transitions to class, that we will notice a decrease in horseplay in the hallways. That said, we know that any change in procedure can raise questions and create challenges, especially when students have multiple items to carry throughout the day.

I know that this change will take some adjusting for all. Please know that the administrative and leadership team will review the practice before the end of November to determine if we need to make any changes.

August 26, 2025

Finally, I want to thank all of the families who are working with their students to help them adjust to our new backpack expectations at BBMS. We have definitely seen a positive impact both in our hallways and in our classrooms. Just as a reminder, the following information was shared in a previous communication:

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