

The Highland Avenue Newsletter



Volume 1, Issue 3

March 2018

In the Newsletter:

- *Maintaining a balance between core classes and other types of learning in Highland.*
- *Quick profile of 2 veteran teachers at the Highland School*
- *Read Across America—celebrating Dr. Seuss with a week's long string of activities*

2018 PARCC Dates

ELA:
April 23-25

MATH
May 16-18

To search for any NJ school's performance report, including Highland, visit the following link.

<https://rc.doe.state.nj.us/SearchForSchool.aspx>

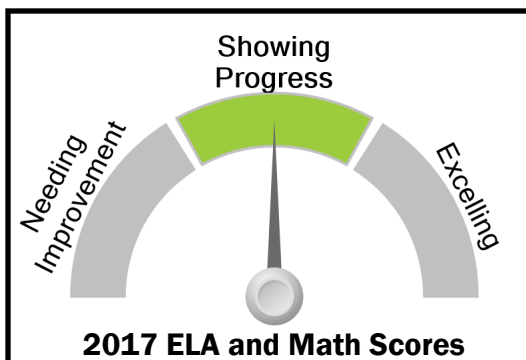
Making it Happen at Highland: *Students are excelling according to state tests*

We have a lot to be proud of at Highland School. In September's newsletter, we discussed all the upgrades to the Highland School in terms of facility; new gymnasium, new WiFi, new playground, smartboards, 1:1 chromebooks, etc. These things are nice and they compliment nicely what we do here, BUT we cannot forget that our primary goal is **education**—always education. And that can be hard to quantify. But for the rest of the article I am going to try and briefly portray how we focus on developing the whole child here at Highland.

We are a public school, so our students have to take the PARCC assessment and we will talk about how we are doing on the PARCC in a little bit, but it is important to understand that we are not wrapping our whole philosophy around state assessments. The proof is in how we educate the whole child here at Highland; always trying to make a child well rounded and expose them to different learning.

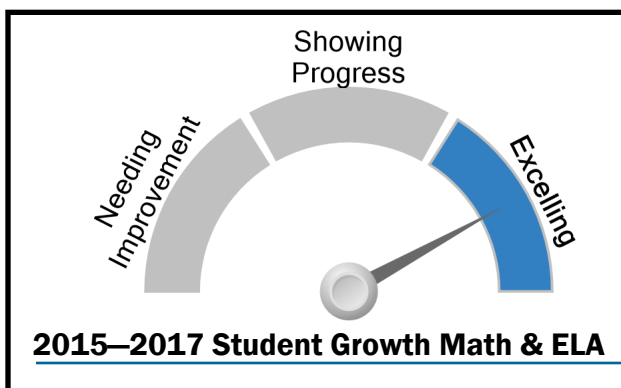
We boast a terrific specials program. In fact, our students go to just as many, if not more

specials than 85% of other elementary schools in the county. Our students have at least 8 specials courses a week, i.e. art, music, foreign language, computers, gym, health, interactive band and exploratories—we believe this type of learning is important. However, specials classes are actually counterintuitive when dealing with state assessments. Logic would dictate we should give more time to core subjects, especially Math and Language Arts as these are the tested areas. But that is not the case in Highland. We have maintained our specials programs along with assemblies once a month, guest speakers, Tic Toc, field day, the musical, cultural awareness, author visits, field trips and band lessons. Not to mention we implementing a maker space and new electives, once again, taking time to continually diversify learning experiences. And the best part is, **even with all the specials and other activities, our students are still meeting state mandates for progress and are growing faster relative to other students in their cohort.** (see graphics below)



Are students on track for success?

- ⇒ As a school, our student scores on the PARCC are meeting the yearly benchmarks established by the state.
- ⇒ We are showing progress every year and are on track for success in English/Language Arts and Math.



How much are our students growing?

- ⇒ As compared to other students around the state who had similar test scores in the past, our students are growing at a faster rate.
- ⇒ We are excelling in Student Growth for English/Language Arts and Math.

**THE HIGHLAND
SCHOOL**

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**Other Events for Read
Across America**

Cat in the Hat Day
Wear Red and white
or striped clothing

Dress Up Day
Wear something rep-
resenting a place you
visited

Wacky Wednesday
Dress as a teacher and
teachers dress like stu-
dents

Career Day
Dress up like what
you want to be when
you grow up

Grinchy Green Day
Wear Green to honor
this much loved villian

Meet some of Highland School's crafty veterans

"Experience is the teacher of all things." —Julius Caesar

Name: Mrs. Joan Brennan

Graduated: Syracuse University

Hometown: Ridgefield, NJ

Favorite Movie: *Yankee Doodle Dandy with James Cagney.*

Favorite Book: *In the Presence of the Enemy by Elizabeth George*

Hobby: Reading, Sewing, Cooking, Painting

Someone who inspires Mrs. Brennan:
Aunt Tess— she was kind, loving, and a great cook.



Name: Mrs. Debbie Lelinho

Graduated: William Paterson

Hometown: Midland Park

Favorite Movie: *It's a Wonderful Life*

Favorite Book: *Wonder*, by RJ Palacio

Hobby: Reading and watching the Seahawks

Someone who inspires Mrs. Lelinho: *Her daughters; Kate, Brianna, and Jackie*



D.E.A.R (Drop Everything and Read)

To honor Dr. Seuss, but also to find any excuse to make reading fun, Highland School participated in Read Across America Week. From February 26th—March 2nd all grade levels dropped everything and read as a school for 10-15 minutes each day. The times were a surprise for the students and they could read anything they wanted. The school was never quieter.

Another feature of Red Across America was the One School One Book kickoff, in which all students Grades K-4 are given the same book to read. The kickoff assembly this year, which is always themed after the book, even topped Mrs. Bache riding into school on a motorcycle. This year it was a live pig to announce *Adventures of a South Pole Pig*.



L. DeBlasio dressed up like Mr. Galasso for Wacky Wednesday as other students D.E.A.R.