

Peter Galasso
Highland School Principal

31 Highland Avenue
Midland Park, N.J. 07432

Highland School

"Committed to Excellence"

Dear Sixth Grade Parents/Guardians,

December 3, 2019

As discussed at Sixth Grade Orientation, our sixth grade students are provided with multiple events to make their last year at Highland School a memorable one. These include the *Sixth Grade Barbecue, Sixth Grade Dance, Promotion, Yearbook Signing, YMCA Field Trip, Field Day, Clap-Out, etc.* The PTA and school will be reaching out to you about these experiences as we come to the end of the year.

I am happy to say that this 6th grade class and the vast majority of students are doing the right thing day in and day out and we commend them for that. As a whole we are happy. However, each of these special end of year activities is a privilege that may be revoked in the event that a student is not meeting the most minimum of student expectations. To ensure student understanding, all sixth graders participated in an assembly focusing on individual accountability:

- *Accountability for effort;*
- *Accountability for attendance;*
- *Accountability for inappropriate behavior.*

I'm happy to say the presentation was very well-received because the overwhelming majority of students are doing the right thing each and every day, i.e., arriving to school on time, working hard, and demonstrating appropriate behavior. **Of course, these students will enjoy all the privileges afforded to them with no questions asked.** However, students with excessive absences, repeated and egregious behavior issues, and those who extend little or no effort, will not be entitled to these same end-of-year privileges as they are not fulfilling the most minimum of expectations. We feel this is only fair.

I'm sure you understand that revoking students privileges is not something my staff and I take lightly and is the last thing we want to do. However, **we are responsible for the message of expectations we send out to the entire student body as we seek to ensure a positive school climate and foster a strong work ethic.** We are confident these messages are best enforced when we hold students accountable for meeting minimum expectations.

Students may lose privileges for any of the following reasons;

- More than 13 **unexcused** absences in 1 year
- More than 12 **unexcused** tardies in the **2nd semester** (from February – June)
- Failed a subject for the year (loss of 1 privilege for each subject **failed for the year**)
 - Summer school is available for students who fail a subject for a year as well
 - Students who are failing subjects may not participate in clubs and the musical.
- Multiple and egregious discipline issues
- Students who forget to charge their Chromebook multiple times will keep their Chromebook in school.

Power School is a great source of information regarding your child's grades and attendance. Thank you for your understanding and should you have any questions – my door is always open.

Sincerely,

Peter Galasso

The student PowerPoint that was shown to the sixth graders is available on the Highland website, www.highland.mpsnj.org