

# The Highland Avenue Newsletter



## In the Newsletter:

- A new champion in spelling.
- A highlight on tech in classrooms.
- Teacher profiles—

## Past Spelling Champs

2017  
Wilson Dhalwani

2018  
Grace Pagano

## Common Texting Abbreviations

ttyl =  
Talk to you later

ttys=  
Talk to you soon

brt =  
Be right there

jk=  
Just kidding

btw =  
By the way

rents =  
Parents

ly =  
Love you

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## Spelling takes center stage at Highland - students compete in the 3rd annual Scripps Spelling Bee

Since 1925 the Scripps National Spelling Bee has enticed students to make a run for the national championships in Washington DC. All students have to do is spell some words correctly—easier said than done. Over 11 million children across the country compete in this spelling challenge and Highland School is no different.

Highland School began participating in the National Bee 3 years ago when Mrs. Steel, the Highland School enrichment teacher, gathered all the information, fulfilled the application process, and then came up with a method for declaring a Highland School champion.

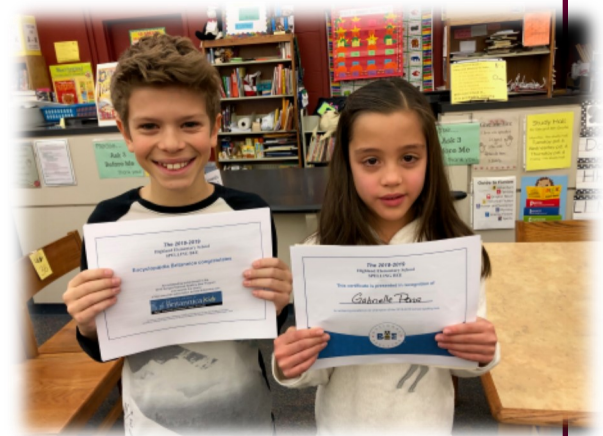
The first step in finding a spelling champion is distributing a lengthy spelling list that students are allowed to study from. Then a spelling test is conducted in every homeroom so all students have an opportunity to compete, which ends up narrowing down the field significantly as only the 2 top scores from each homeroom qualify for the next stage. Finally, the qualifying students from each homeroom square off in the media center in a formal spell-off with 3 judges and ample pressure, excitement, and suspense. Students go around and around spelling words like 'miscreant,' and 'chilblains.' One by one students fall to the complex and at times nonsensical rules of the English Language until the field is narrowed to 3, then 2, then 1— a champion of Highland School.

This year Gabby Pena (4th grade) ended up squaring off against Caleb Hosier (6th grade). The spelling duel went back and

forth, impressing their peers, the judges, and themselves. Eventually after about 7 volleys back and forth between the two students, Gabby Pena spelled- 'gondolier' to take home the title. Both students will get a year long subscription to Encyclopedia Britannica.

Gabby will now represent Highland School in the North Jersey Championship where she will square off against the winners from other Bergen and Passaic County schools with a wordlist of over 1,100 words. This will take place at Bergen Community College on March 14th. The winner moves on to the National Championship in Washington D.C..

We are proud of all the competitors for their efforts and are very glad this healthy competition can take place annually at the Highland School. After all, spelling is somewhat of a dying art as spellcheck, emoji's, abbreviated text language like LOL (*laugh out loud*), POS (*Parent over shoulder*), LMK (*Let me know*), etc. have taken over every day language. It is nice to offer a little traditional spelling opportunities that can be fun and rewarding. Who knew spelling could actually be fun!



Caleb Hosier (Left) & Gabby Pena (Right) posing with their winner certificate's after the bee

Photo by Mrs. Steel

## THE HIGHLAND SCHOOL

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Highlighting  
assessment



Kahoot!

FLIPGRID

## Some of the men on the Highland Special's Team

"If we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow."— J.Dewey

**Name:** Mr. Dave Hershberger

**Courses:** Robotics 6 & Computers (1-6)

**Graduated:** University of Rhone Island

**Hometown:** Ridgewood

**Favorite Movie:** Christmas Vacation & Star Wars-Empire Strikes Back (1980)

**Favorite Book:** Perfect Storm by Junger

**Hobby:** Surfing, Fishing, Snowboarding

**Someone who inspired Me:** Mom



**Name:** Mr. Jeff Peters

**Courses:** Band Elective (4-6) & Interactive Band 6

**Graduated:** West Chester University of PA and Masters Degree from Boston University

**Hometown:** Midland Park

**Favorite Movie:** Star Wars- a New Hope (1977)

**Favorite Book:** Lord of the Rings by Tolkien

**Hobby:** Rock Climbing, Hiking, Surfing

**Someone who inspired Me:** Daughter Jocelyn



## Tech infused assessment

Making use of smart technology to help teachers help students

Software and smart technology have changed the face of education. Here are just three of the many examples of technology that we use to assess students and help our teachers guide student learning:

**Plickers**- a smart device app that allows teachers to assess students with a swipe of the classroom from their smartphone. How does it work? A teacher posts a question on the smartboard and students respond via a barcode held in a certain direction that logs their answers. All data is then charted (anonymously for the students view) on the smartboard so teachers can instantly identify gaps in learning.

**Kahoot** is similar and has been being used by most every teacher in the school for quite some time. It relies on students responding on their chromebook to multiple choice questions posted on the smartboard. There is embedded competition as students get points for how quickly and accurately they respond.

**Flip Grid**- A very personal way to assess students as they actually film themselves using the Chromebook to describe what they are learning or have learned. The teachers can listen/watch the self created student responses to qualitatively assess students and respond.



A Plickers Assessment in Mrs. Lelinho's 4th Grade

Photo by Mrs. Mullady