

The Highland School

31 Highland Avenue
Midland Park, New Jersey 07432

Highland School Weekly Updates

October 13, 2022

Progress Reports:

- **Grades 3-4:** Students will receive progress reports on Friday October 14th. If your child does not receive a progress report, please contact the homeroom teacher. Please read these progress reports, discuss with your child and/or reach out to the teacher as needed.
- **Grade 5 and 6:** Student progress, unless there is a significant issue, is available on the Power School Parent Portal where the teacher gradebook can be accessed for real-time grading in every course. Please log into the Power School Parent Portal and check your child's current progress.
 - If you do not know how to log into Power School, please contact our new tech. Mr. James Thumm at JThumm@mpsnj.org.

Halloween at Highland: Monday 10/31/22

- Halloween is fast approaching. If your child chooses to celebrate Halloween by dressing up in school, please make sure that their costumes abide by the following;
 - Students **should not have to change** into the costume at school.
 - The costume must **fit properly** and cannot be too long and cannot violate the dress code.
 - No belly buttons, underpants/bra's
 - Leave **weapons, handcuffs, clubs** or other **props** that accompany the costume at home.
 - **Masks and extensive face paint are not allowed**-we have to be able to recognize students and we do not want excessive face paint smearing and getting all over everything.
 - The costume you wear must **allow you to sit, stand, or move** around the classroom and building without difficulty.
 - **Please, the costume should be appropriate for an elementary school.** Highland actually serves K-6 students, please consider the age of the students when choosing a costume to wear to school.
- Classroom parties will begin at 2:00 pm. Homeroom representatives will set up games and activities for the children by homeroom to partake in. If you are a homeroom rep (thank-you) and need a holiday snack list, please visit the Highland website and go to shortcuts on the right-hand side for approved holiday snacks.

Clubs and Activities:

- Highland Clubs are starting their preliminary interest meetings. There are 15 clubs/activities running this year at Highland. If your child(ren) are interested, please have them attend the interest meetings which are announced over the loud speaker. Or, if interested, have the student email the club advisor. Clubs, their descriptions, and supervisors can be found on the school website under activities and at the following link.
 - [Highland Club Descriptions and Supervisors 2022](#)

Highland Nurse:

- We have hired a full-time tenured track nurse at Highland School. Her name is Juliana Lisi. She was an oncology nurse and a school nurse in Lodi. She has fit in very well. Ms. J. Lisi can be contacted at jlisi@mpsnj.org.

Absences and Tardies:

- Absences and tardies over the past couple of years have gone way up for understandable reasons. Last year, 19% of students were absent 11-15 days. More worrisome, is that over 7% of students were absent for even more than 15 days. Absences in school directly relate to how a student performs in school. Please have your child come to school as much as possible. Absence and tardy letters are being sent out so parents know exactly how many absences their child(ren) have accumulated.
 - Excused absences: In district absences can be excused for certain reasons, i.e. a doctors, funeral. **HOWEVER**, though the district excuses absences with proper documentation, the state does not excuse absences.

Chromebooks:

The use of Chromebooks has created more opportunities for students to utilize digital tools which have led to an increase in cloud-based services and subscriptions. These services and subscriptions aim at increasing student engagement and achievement. The tools allow students and staff 24-hour access to these instructional resources. With students and staff having anytime, anywhere access, learning is no longer bound to the classroom walls but creates an environment where students can learn anywhere. An integral part of this increased access to learning is having a device in proper working condition. Please remind your student to do these simple steps to ensure he/she is prepared to learn;

1. *Bring their device to school fully charged*
2. *Take care of their device to ensure it doesn't break*
3. *Keep track of their charger*

Family Life/ Sex. Ed. Curriculum:

Thank-you to those who attended the presentation on the new health curriculum. Below is follow up information regarding the newly adopted health curriculum.

- The presentation and opt out form can be found on the Highland School website. Before you opt out, please read the presentation. **Then please read the opt out form in its entirety so you understand what you are opting your child(ren) out of. To opt out of any other part of the health curriculum beyond Family Life/Sex Ed., you will have to cite a specific standard.**
- The Family Life Sex Ed. Curriculum will be done in the Spring for the 5th graders over a 2 day period. There are no other formal Family Life/Sex Ed. classes at Highland School.
- The Powerpoint that will be used for teaching the Family Life/ Sex Ed. course will be available upon request. Please email your child's corresponding 5th grade health teacher.
- We will not be running a formal Family Life/ Sex Ed. course in 6th grade for the students who missed it in 5th grade due to the transition to the new standards (Sex Ed. used to be taught in 6th grade). These current 6th graders had the 'puberty talk', but did not have the formal sex ed. discussion. We will make the 5th grade resources available to 6th grade parents who would like to expose their child(ren) to the Family Life/ Sex. Ed curriculum/content. These students will receive Family Life/Sex ed. again at MPHS. Third grade as well, we will not be teaching the 2nd grade standards in our health classes as they will be exposed to the content in 5th grade as we have done for decades before.

Birthday Books:

- If you would like to - celebrate your child's birthday, or other special event, by donating a book to our school library. The book is put in a special section of the library with acknowledgment to your child. All the details are in the document linked below, which includes a link to the school library wish list. Please feel free to send in your book donation and the form any time of the year to celebrate your child!
- [Birthday book celebration brochure](#)

OLD BUT ALWAYS RELEVANT INFORMATION:

Student Drop-Off:

- Hopefully everyone knows where they are going at this point; Grade 3= playground, Grade 4= Back of School (door 5), Grade 5 = Gymnasium entrance, Grade 6 = Back of School (door 6)
- **Drop-Off Timeline:**
 - 8:00am- supervision provided at each entrance.
 - 8:19am- students enter the building.
 - 8:23am- **late bell sounds**. Outside doors will close. All students arriving who cannot get to their entrance by 8:23am, should then proceed to the front of the building to be let in through the main office. (when in doubt, go to the main office)
 - 8:25am- Morning announcements begin.

*** If it is raining, students will be let into the school at 8:00am from their same regular entrance: grade 6 will then go to the cafeteria, grade 5 will be in the music room hallway, grade 3 and 4 will be stationed in their hallway outside their classrooms.

The Car Line:

- All across America the drop off car lines at elementary schools can be stressful. We have been doing okay so far considering over 300 students are being dropped off in a 20 minute span- THANK-YOU. Traffic is not backing up to the intersection of Prospect and Godwin as much.
 - **Reminders of things we can do to keep the car line moving:**
 - **Pull all the way up as far as you can go, then let out your child(ren).** Have student exit the vehicle on left side whenever possible (safer).
 - Have student water bottles and backpacks ready to go, like a paratrooper ready to jump out of a plane. When the car stops it's a "Go, Go, Go."
 - Pre hug and kiss your child prior to getting in the car. Those are important things, but safety of kids during drop off is too. We want to avoid cars passing in line as much as possible.
 - **If you find yourself U-turning anywhere, you are doing something illegal. Let's try not to do illegal things.**

After School Pick Up:

After the bell rings at 2:50pm, students are released with the expectation that they will be watched, picked up by parents, or head to aftercare. There is limited supervision outside after school. Students who misbehave may be held accountable for their actions.

Students will be released from the same door they entered in the morning so we do not have a stampeded going out of one door. Please arrange a spot for your child to meet you or your 'picker-upper'.

Highland School Student/Parent Handbook:

Every year the Student/Parent Handbook is embedded into the student academic planner that the PTA so graciously provides. In the handbook is information related to the school, i.e. code of conduct, absences, bell schedules, and other important information. It is also posted under resources on the Highland homepage. Please use this as a resource prior to calling the main office.

- [Highland School Handbook 2022-2023](#)

Sincerely,

Peter Galasso, Principal

