

# The Highland School

31 Highland Avenue  
Midland Park, New Jersey 07432

## Highland School Weekly Updates

October 27, 2023

### **WARNING: Road Work (Rescheduled)**

From the town: *We have received confirmation from the contractor that work will begin on Franklin Ave. Monday October 30<sup>th</sup>. The first part of the project will be replacing the concrete apron leaving the Library parking lot. The cut through will be closed during pick up and drop off to help with confusion and no parking signs will be posted on the one side of Highland Ave. to allow more room for cars to travel. Any questions, please contact the Town Hall DPW.*

### **Highland Instagram: @highlandschoolmp**

We now have a schoolwide Instagram. Ms. Carr and the teachers will post pictures and news from Highland on the Instagram. Rest assured, those students whose parents did not consent to the photo/video at the beginning of the year will not be posted. Social Media tends to be my nemesis, but if used correctly, which I know this will be, it can serve as a peek into Highland School.



### **Technology/Social Media Safety:**

The link below is a great resource to help parents keep kids safe on Technology/Social Media, provided by way of the Bergen Mom's Network. This one provides information about Social Media, but also how to install parental controls on devices. Please, if your kids have Social Media, be hard on them now when they will still listen to you. Try regulating a 17 or 18 year old kids Social Media. It becomes way harder.

- <https://www.olawellness.org/digital-safety>

### **Parent Teacher Conferences: (Half day for students)**

Godwin-Highland Parent/Teacher Conferences are fast approaching, Nov. 1 – Nov. 3. Conferences will be held on the following days/night;

Conference Dates	
November 1	Daytime Conferences
November 2	Evening Conferences
November 3	Daytime Conferences

Enrollment has fortunately went up and conference spots are limited for grades 4-5 based on the teamed and departmentalized nature of the schedule. Grade 6 conferences will be scheduled by the teachers based on need. If a parent has a concern, please reach out to their child's homeroom teacher to schedule a conference.

### **What to Ask at Conferences:**

I also have conferences for my kids coming up soon, specifically my 10 year old son. I have asked the same basic questions every time because I think it gets to the heart of what I am looking for from my children as being part of a school system. These are the questions I will ask my son's teacher when I

meet with her in the coming weeks. Depending on what the teacher reports, will dictate my son's experience at home.

**Question 1, Is my child a good person? (I ask for evidence)-**

- *Over everything I want my children to be healthy, and also be good people. What makes my son a good person? Does he listen, does he treat others nicely, is he inclusive, does he tolerate other kids that may be having a difficult day, etc.?*

**Question 2, what is the frequency and duration of bathroom /and or nurse room visits, if any?**

- *I do not want my son avoiding class time. I want him in the classroom and present. If he is asking to go to the nurse a lot, or the bathroom a lot (the teacher will know what a lot is), much of the time this is an avoidance mechanism, or in much rarer cases, maybe something medical is going on. Either way, I want my son learning the value of being in class.*

**Question 3, As a teacher can you count on my child?**

- *If the teacher asks my son to do something, will he follow through? Follow through is crucial. Even if he is just an okay student, he can still do what a teacher asks, and do it to the best of his ability. Simple stuff like taking out a pencil when asked, or putting a name on the paper, or bigger things like following directions and larger requests by the teacher. Just like I want my son to count on me, I want to be able to count on my son to do what I ask; the little things and the big things. It should be the same in school.*

**Question 4, Do you think my child is meeting their potential?**

- *Not everyone is an 'A' student in every subject with a 145 IQ, but everyone has the ability to work hard and achieve their potential. In fact, what we are seeing is very beneficial now is actually a higher Emotional Quotient (EQ) combined with work ethic. These people can be just as successful in life as those who are extremely 'smart'. Is my son working hard to be the best academic version of himself he can be. If he is not, I would like to know. After all, school is his only job right now.*

**Question 5, What does my child do when they experience difficulty?**

- *I do not have to tell any adults reading this that life can be hard and tiring. We have to figure things out, struggle through things, do our best, etc. We do not have the luxury of just giving up or not doing something at our work or for our family. Does my son persevere or does he give up and ask for help immediately? Does he just sit there and wait for help? Or does he dig in and try, and fail, and try again? I want him to try.*

**Question 6, Does my child smile?**

- *My son is okay with school. He does not love it. But as much as he will say some days he does not like school, when I talk to the teachers, it seems like he is smiling a lot, so despite what he says, I know he enjoys school, or at least some of school. My son, just like, many kids, will try to get me to feel sorry for him and say, "I don't like school." The same thing has been said for centuries by millions and millions of children, including most of us when we were kids. But the reality is, our*

*schools are now more dynamic, safer, and more nurturing places than ever before. I have seen every student smiles in this school.*

Conferences are meant to be informative. Please use this information that the teachers give you to help build a well-rounded child. We, as adults, know where our kids need to be when they strike out on their own. They have to be independent, they have to work hard, and they have to know how to learn. Believe it or not, those fundamental skills start as early as Godwin. Conferences are an inside peak into how your kids are doing.

**Halloween at Highland:** Tuesday 10/31/23

- 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; 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 all over.
  - 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 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.

**Upcoming Events:**

*10/27: Trunk or Treat*

*10/31: Halloween Class Parties*

*11/1 – 11/3: 12:30pm Dismissal for students- Parent Teacher Conferences*

- *11/2 – Evening Conferences*

*11/9-11/10: Schools Closed NJEA Convention*

*11/13: 2<sup>nd</sup> Marking Period Begins*

*11/17: Report Cards Distributed and On-Line*

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**Old but always relevant information:**

**Nurses Contact:**

Mrs. Patty Trava has returned as the Highland School nurse. Should you have any student related health questions, or need to submit vaccinations, and/or doctor's notes, please contact Mrs. Trava at [HLNurse@mpsnj.org](mailto:HLNurse@mpsnj.org).

**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 Parent Handbook 2023-2024](#)

### 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. Your child should not be playing outside if you are not present afterschool. 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 stampede going out of one door. Please arrange a spot for your child to meet you or your 'picker-upper'. Those who walk home, please set a time for arrival home, and those who go to aftercare should head right over to Godwin so we do not have to send out a search party if they are late.

Sincerely,

Peter Galasso, Principal

