

# The Highland School

31 Highland Avenue  
Midland Park, New Jersey 07432

## Highland School Weekly Updates

December 8, 2023

### Read - A - Thon:

Thank-you for the ridiculously great support for our PTA sponsored Read-A-Thon. Between Godwin and Highland, students logged over **166,882** minutes and with that raised a tremendous amount of money for the schools. It will be put to good use, as both Highland and Godwin have projects in mind to enhance the school for the kids, including facility upgrades. Winning homeroom in the school will receive a visit from the ice cream truck in the Spring, winning homerooms by grade level get an extra recess. Individual winners receive gift certificates and all students who read over 550 minutes will receive a medal. The PTA is organizing these now. Since Godwin and Highland combined to smash their reading goal of 100,000 minutes, there will be school wide prizes as well. Last year, Principals were taped to a wall, this year, who knows what it will be, Principals are in high stakes negotiations with the PTA.

### The Highland Read – A – Thon Leader Board:

- **Top Reading Home Room in the School:** Ms. Audino's Homeroom (Gr. 4)
  - Top Reading Homeroom in grade 3: Mrs. Guarini's Homeroom
  - Top Reading Homeroom in grade 5: Mrs. Olson's Homeroom
  - Top Reading Homeroom in grade 6: Mr. Savage's Homeroom
- **Top Reader in the School:** Matthew Fallon (Gr. 4)
  - Top Reader in grade 6: Madeline Libretta
  - Top Reader in grade 5: Catalina Riquelme-Schultz
  - Top Reader in grade 3: Jude Kibala
- **Top Earner in the School:** *Matthew Derwin (Gr. 5)*

Congratulations to all the students for reading and the parents for your support. It would not work without you involved. Now if we could only get students to read this much without prizes and bribery attached to their literary endeavors, how wonderful that would be.

### Highland Schoolwide No Chromebook Screen Day: December 15, 2023



Screen time is at the forefront of many of the Highland staff's mind. Not only is technology common place, but in the upper levels of schooling it has become almost a necessity as lesson planning revolve around the 1:1 Chromebooks, the Google Suite, and other subscriptions. But we are very much aware how much time students are on their screens, even at school. To be reflective of our own practices, as well as, raise awareness in our students and community, Highland School will have a No Chromebook day on **December 15<sup>th</sup> 2023**. Students will not be allowed to use their Chromebooks in the classrooms. When we started planning this, the

teachers and I realized just how dependent we are on technology when it comes to teaching and though it will be difficult, it is something that teachers want to do. Please use Highland as an excuse in your own homes for our kids to shut off the computers, IPAD's, Video Games, and such for the day. It is our hope that we continue to do this at least once a month.

### **Student Council Service Project:**



The Student Council raised close to 1000 pounds of food, which was personally delivered to the Sloatsburg food pantry earlier this week. Raising money or collecting goods for those in need is one thing, but serving those in need is a totally different feeling. Student's categorized food, weighed, and stacked all of it at the pantry. This is true service-based learning. But perhaps the best thing was the compliment the pantry gave our students. They were behaved and kind, and a pleasure to work with. Our Student Counsel represented the Highland School and their families very well.

### **Do-the-Right Thing Award:**

A Highland Do-the-Right Thing Assembly took place on the last day in November to honor those students who were noticed for Doing the Right Thing day in and day out. There are certainly more students to be recognized as the year continues. Hopefully, with the recognition and with the message during the assembly, students will continue to strive to be the best versions of themselves. All DTRT winners and the write ups can be found on the school website.

- [Do the Right Thing Winners-Nov. 2023](#)

### **LOST and FOUND:**

Please have your child look in the Lost and Found located in the Highland Cafeteria. Please have them claim anything that is there's. If you would like to look in the lost and found please stop by the Highland School after school. All items not claimed will be donated over break to make room for the new year of lost items.

### **Vision Screening:** January 16, 2023

The Lions Club will be conducting state of the Art Vision Screenings at Highland School as a service to the community. It is a non-invasive screening and has helped identify vision issues in our students in years past that could not be detected without this type of test. All students will be screened unless an opt out

form is submitted (hard copy also sent home today). Please read more about the process and to access the opt-out form below.

- [Lions Club Vision Screening Information & Opt-Out Form 2023](#)

**Project Santa (Midland Park Fire Department):** (not school affiliated)

All students pre-K through 4<sup>th</sup> grade are allowed to sign up for Project Santa, hosted by the Midland Park Fire Department. Project Santa Information: [Project Santa Webpage](#)

**Make-Up Work for student absences:**

The weather is changing and as it gets colder we all spend more time cooped up inside with the windows closed. This is the time of year where kids begin getting sick. This is also the time when many families travel. If a student misses school this is typically the protocol that is followed:

If a student is **sick**:

- Parents may request work from the teacher. All we ask is that if you do request work from the teacher it gets picked up by the end of the day so it is not just sitting on the bench overnight. Most work, especially in the upper grades can be found on the Google Classroom. We are trying to explain to the older students that the work does not just go away and so it is not overwhelming, to try to keep up with reading and other things they are able to do at home.
- If students go on **vacation**, teachers are not obligated to provide work. It is very difficult for a teacher to put a week's worth of learning together for a vacation, especially since expectations are that lesson plans are adapted daily based on where the kids are in their learning from the previous lesson.

Students who do miss school are typically afforded the same amount of time to make up work. For example; missed 2 days sick, student has 2 days to make up the work.

**Highland Instagram:** @highlandschoolmp

We are over 145 followers on the Highland Instagram. Ms. Carr and the teachers will post pictures and news from Highland on the Instagram routinely. If you enjoy Instagram and would like to follow Highland please scan the QR code to the right.



**Upcoming Events:**

- 12/11: PTA Holiday Boutique (School Hours)*
- 12/12: Evening PTA Holiday Boutique (6:00-700pm)*
- 12/13: PTA Holiday Boutique (School Hours)*
- 12/15: PTA Holiday Boutique (School Hours)*
- 12/15: No Chromebooks for Students*
- 12/20: Progress Reports as Needed*
- 12/22: 12:30pm Dismissal*
- 12/25 – 1/1: Holiday Vacation*
- 1/2: School resumes (8:20am start)*

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**Old but always relevant information:**

**School Website**

Please check the school website for upcoming events, important news and other information including contacts for Technology, the nurse, absences, etc. We are trying to keep mindful about keeping the website up to date.

**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

