

The Highland School

31 Highland Avenue
Midland Park, New Jersey 07432

Highland School Weekly Updates

January 18, 2024

District Security Guard:

The district continues to keep safety at the forefront school days. Mr. Michael Zimmer is joining the district as a security guard with the responsibility of patrolling each of the schools throughout the day. He will primarily be on the Godwin/Highland campus since the SRO, Sgt. VanVliet, spends most of his time at MPHS. Mr. Zimmer is a retired Police Officer who prides himself on being visible and active.



PTA sponsored Highland/Godwin Talent Show:

Deadline to register: Friday January 19, 2024

The talent show is less than a month away. If you have not experienced a talent show before, this should be on your bucket list. There is a lot of energy in that gymnasium on performance night. It is a very fun experience watching the kids on stage. I attend every year, many times with my own family. The teachers have been working hard preparing a 'good luck' video for the performers.

To participate in the talent show please click the links below:

- [Digital Talent Show Form 2024- registration by 1.19.24](#)

Grade 6 End-of-Year-Privileges:

An email regarding 6th grade privileges went out to all 6th grade parents. If you did not see it, please click the links below. This only applies to grade 6 students.

- <https://highland.mpsnj.org/common/pages/UserFile.aspx?fileId=97051868>
- <https://highland.mpsnj.org/common/pages/UserFile.aspx?fileId=97051870>

Wreaths for Mill Gardens:

It seems like forever ago, but for the Holidays our 3rd grade class made Wreaths for Mill Gardens Senior Residents. Usually students would hand deliver the wreaths, but because of all the sicknesses going around at the time, we just delivered them. This is part of Highland School's Community Service.



ArtVentures by Tic-Toc: Deadline to register: Friday January 19, 2024

Tic-Toc will be running a special program for students to learn about artist Guiseppe Arcimboldo and create their very own masterpiece. Registration is required.

- Register: [Artventures Registration by 1.19.24](#)

No Chromebook Day: 1/19/23

Last month was our first no Chromebook day. Feedback was really good from teachers and students. Especially the younger students, enjoyed the novelty of 'old school' learning. We will have another 'No Chromebook Day' on Friday January 19th, 2024. Though we know one day of no Chromebook may not change much, it does bring awareness and create conversation about screen time.

Highland Spelling Bee 2024:

The annual Spelling Bee at Highland has begun. The field has been narrowed down to 2 students from each homeroom that will have a giant spell off until only 1 champion is left standing. The finals will take place on February 2nd. Last year's winner, Xavier McCarthy, advanced to the county competition where he ranked in the top 14 of spellers in the county.

PTA Sponsored Internet Safety Presentation:

On Tuesday 1/23 at 7:00pm in the Highland Media Center, Mr. Hershberger and Ms. Scala will be presenting to parents on Internet/Social Media safety.

Simple Housekeeping Items:

- **Picking up Children Early:** We know many parents in the district and do not always ask for ID when picking up your child because we know exactly who you are. However, sometimes grandparents or other family members/emergency contacts will pick up a child, which is allowed, but we must see their ID. We will not release a student to anyone whose identify has not been verified.
- **Hygiene:** Please have kids brush their teeth and some will start needing deodorant especially in the spring. If you can smell them, we can smell them.
- **Requesting work:** If a child is out sick for more than one day and you would like work, please try to request the work prior to 9am so we can ensure we can get it together. Some teachers have a prep period first period and then teach the rest of the day except for lunch. This will help us get it together. All work can be picked up outside the office.
- **Social Media:** Social Media can be a wonderful thing, even Highland is on Instagram right now. But, please do not post private teacher-parent emails on Social Media. There is a disclaimer on mpsnj.org emails outlining the expectation. Obviously this is a slippery slope to start going down.
- **Attendance:** I know there is a lot of sickness going around nowadays. With the weather 54 degrees one day and then dropping to 27 degrees 18 hours later it is tough to stay healthy. I am getting nervous about attendance. When I run an attendance report it gives me categories so I can focus on students. You can see by the chart and graph below that 21% of our students at this time are falling into the Unsatisfactory/Chronically absent range (**over 60 students**). To be considered chronically absent by the state, a student must be out for 10% of the school days (that is absent 1 day every 10 school days). The state does not recognize excused absences, that is a district thing.

Student Absences in Highland to Date:

(shows percent of students who fall into each attendance category)

Student Grade	Perfect	Satisfactory	Moderate	Unsatisfactory	Chronic
Grade 3	3%	31%	47%	13%	6%
Grade 4	12%	30%	44%	9%	5%
Grade 5	10%	34%	35%	14%	6%
Grade 6	6%	31%	33%	15%	15%

21% of our students are, or are in danger of, being Chronically absent (truant). 

Upcoming Events:

1/19: No Chromebook Day

1/23: Tic-Toc Art Ventures in the Highland Cafeteria- 3:00pm (must sign up)

1/23: PTA General Meeting – Mr. Hershberger and Mrs. Scala will be presenting on Internet Safety.

- 7:00pm in the Highland Media Center

1/26: End of 2nd Marking Period

2/2: Report Cards Issued (please return hard copy envelope)

2/2: Spelling Bee- during school hours

2/2: Godwin/Highland Talent Show- 5:30pm start for Godwin / 7:00pm start for Highland

2/5: 12:30pm student dismissal (Professional Development for teachers)

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@mpsni.org.

Highland Instagram: @highlandschoolmp

We are over 160 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.



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.