

The Highland School

31 Highland Avenue
Midland Park, New Jersey 07432

Highland School Weekly Updates

February 7, 2024

The Talent Show '24:

The PTA pulled it off again. Thank-you to those volunteers who worked on organizing and running the night which included well over 20 acts for Highland and a standing room only audience. It was very well run and everything went smooth, which is great because then all of us were able to concentrate on the acts themselves and enjoy the night. We certainly have a lot of talented and brave students. My only hope is that as they grow older, they keep those attributes --- it is one of my favorite nights.

The Wonderful Car Line: (After School Pick-Up)

Please do not park and leave your car unattended in the pickup line after school. If you are in the pickup line, **you must be in your vehicle** waiting for your child to come out right after school. If your child is in a club or wants to play on the playground, please park in a white spot or on the street. We want the pickup line moving as much as possible.

Highland Spelling Bee results:

The 2024 Spelling Bee results are in. Xavier 'The Champ' McCarthy has won the Bee 2 years in a row, joining Gabby Pena as the only multi-year winner since the inception of the Bee at Highland School in 2017. Xavier will now represent Midland Park at the County Bee – very exciting. Two 4th graders placed 2nd and 3rd, which makes for strong competition next year. Matthew Fallon took 2nd place and Elias Adamo placed 3rd. Congratulations to these students. Their success was no accident as they definitely put time in to prepare for the Bee. We are proud of them and also proud of all the contestants who made it to the finals.



WINNERS HISTORY:

2017 – WILSON DHALWANI

2018- GRACE PAGANO

2019- GABBY PENA

2020- GABBY PENA

2021- GABBY PENA

2022- JOEY VRSALOVIC

2023- XAVIER MCCARTHY

2024- XAVIER MCCARTHY

Anxiety and Stress Management for Parents: February 15, 2024 – 7:00pm – Highland Media Center

This workshop is open to all Highland and Godwin parents and is presented by Hackensack Meridian Health. It will be presented in-person in the Highland Media Center, or there is also a virtual option. The flyer is below. Even if we, as parents (myself included), pick up just 1 useful tid-bit to apply to ourselves or our family, it is worth it. Stress is not going away, in fact I think as we get older it increases, so we might as well try to manage it.

- [Anxiety and Stress Management for Parents Flyer](#)

Table to Table:

The Table-to-Table Fundraiser was a huge success! Thank you, Highland families!! With the money we raised we can feed 15,000 hungry bellies in the community and around the county. Pictured are our top fundraisers.

(Top Row- left to right: Emma McGonigle, Madeleine Libretta, Ken Charlenea, McKenna Whalen, Kaitlyn Abramson / Bottom Left to Right: Jacob Charlenea, Laila Dunworth, Harper Buttino, and Shane Butler)



Battle of the Books '24:

So the Battle begins. Teams have been working hard closely reading their books and ready or not will compete in the school-wide competition on Wednesday, February 7th. The winning teams will represent Highland School at the County level in March, where we have become a perennial powerhouse, either placing or winning in each competition over the past 6 years. At the end of the year, the Battle of the Books winners will then face off against their most difficult opponents, a teacher Battle of the Books team, which will take place in front of the entire school. Thanks to Ms. Carr's efforts, people from other districts actually come to our school to watch how we run and promote the event. All Battle participants get a special t-shirt pictured to the right.



No Chromebook Day: February 14, 2024

Our Monthly 'No Chromebook Day', which is beginning to be something we all look forward to, will be on 2/14. Please use this as an excuse to keep the kids off of their tablets, computers, and video games at home as well. Watching TV as a family is okay though. Research says the communal aspect of a family watching one screen, like the old days, has social emotional benefits.

2024 Student Climate Survey:

Beginning the week of February 26th, students in grades two through twelve (with parental consent), will take the School Climate Survey. This is the fourteenth year that our students will participate in this anonymous survey. This annual survey assures that Midland Park Public Schools are in compliance with provisions outlined in the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act. The voluntary survey also provides our Administration and School Safety and Climate Teams with valuable feedback from our students. As a result of this feedback, our district is able to identify areas of strength and address areas that need improvement. This student feedback assists us in our endeavor to promote a positive school climate and reduce bullying. Our School Climate Survey results are shared with the community during our annual HIB Community Presentation in the fall. If you are interested in previewing the School Climate Survey, there is a hard-copy kept in the main office of each school. As always, we appreciate your partnership and your support as we all work together to make Midland Park Public Schools a friendly, welcoming and respectful educational community.

To view the school climate/HIB presentation which occurred in the fall, please click the link below:

- [Fall Presentation - HIB Case Law and School Climate Survey Results](#)

Report Cards:

Report Cards were issued on Friday February 2nd. Students were sent home with a hard copy and they are also on line via Power School. Please look at the report cards with your child and give kudos where deserved, but also let them know if you believe they did not live up to your expectations when it comes to achievement in school. School is important, not only for the academic content they learn, but more importantly the habits and skills that go into learning. If you have any questions about your child's progress please reach out to your child to the appropriate teacher.

Internet Safety Presentation:

Thank-you for those who attended the presentation on Internet Safety by Mr. Hershberger and Ms. Scala on January 23rd. Those who were there heard first hand accounts of how the internet, smartphones and social media is still dangerous even in the Midland Park bubble. Please know, the craziness of the internet does affect our students. Below is a copy of the presentation for you to view.

- [Highland-Godwin Internet Safety Presentation - January 23, 2024](#)

Here are links to help stay on top of your children.

- [Parental Control Software & Cell Phone Monitoring Comparison Guide \(smartsocial.com\)](#)
- [YouTube Kids! How to Set Up Safer Parental Controls | Defend Young Minds™](#)
- [Conversation starters for your child's online life | Internet Matters](#)

Battle of the Bands: March 9, 2024 – 7:00pm at Macaluso's

The MPPEF will hold their annual fundraiser in just under a month. I will certainly be there. All funds that are raised go directly back to the school system to support our students. They are another very dedicated group that supports the Midland Park Public School and are appreciated.

- [MPPEF Battle of the Bands Flyer](#)

Grade 5 Art contest:

Sponsored by Tic Toc (not the Social Media platform):

- [Art Contest Flyer](#)

Upcoming Events:

- 2/2: Report Cards Issued
- 2/7: Grade 5 LEAD Begins
- 2/7: Battle of the Books In-School Competition (8:30-11:30am)
- 2/9: Grade 4 Drugs and Alcohol Presentations begin
- 2/13: Highland Presentation on CTC Academy Mentorship Program- BOE Meeting
- 2/14: No Chromebook Day
- 2/19 – 2/23: Presidents Day – NO SCHOOL
- 3/1: Progress Reports as needed
- 3/4: Read-Across-America-Week begins – One School One Book Assembly grades 3 and 4
- 3/8: PTA Sponsored Bingo Night- Godwin School
- 3/9: MPPEF Spring Fling – Macaluso's

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.

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>

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.

Make-Up Work:

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:

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.

If students go on vacation, teachers are not obligated to provide work, but may provide some they think is necessary or beneficial. It is very difficult for a teacher to put a weeks worth of learning together for a vacation, especially since plans are augmented all

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

Highland Instagram: @highlandschoolmp

We are over 120 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.

Sincerely,

Peter Galasso, Principal

Peter Galasso

