

Information Guide *for* *Parents*

Updates You Need to Know About the End of the 2019-20 School Year

Response to the Coronavirus COVID-19 School Building Closure



Highlands School District

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Grading & Assessment Adjustments

4th Quarter & Final Grades

Please review the following grading and assessment adjustments that will be applied to the 4th quarter and final grading periods.

As we implement the planned instruction model in our Continuity of Education Plan, grading in this new environment will look differently. We will be modifying our grading model effective **Monday, April 27, 2020**. Teachers will continue to work with students/families to encourage participation, effort and engagement while also providing additional support and guidance as necessary. At its recent meeting, the Highlands School Board suspended Board Policies **212: Reporting Student Progress** and **213: Assessment of Student Progress** for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

Our goals for assessment during this time are to focus on learning, specifically on growth and progress toward mastery of critical skills and core concepts. Students should be encouraged to do their best and guide their own success. Below is specific guidance for reporting student progress for the remainder of the school year.

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's principal.

High School: Grades 9-12

Completion of assignments is expected for ALL Highlands students. For students in Grades 9-12, a **Pass/Fail system** will be utilized for the 4th quarter according to the following:

- **PASS:** Students completing **at least 50%** of the work assigned (NOT ACCURACY)
- **FAIL:** Students completing **49% or less** of the work assigned (NOT ACCURACY)
- These Pass/Fail designations will be *exempt* from a student's GPA.

The Overall Course grade will be determined by an average of the first 3 quarters' grades. *If a student's grade at the conclusion of the 3rd quarter falls short of passing the course or meeting a prerequisite, then the student's 4th quarter performance may be used. This will happen ONLY if the 4th quarter performance will enhance the student's opportunity towards passing the course or meeting the prerequisite.*

Remote Learning will not negatively impact a student's overall grade.

Middle School: Grades 5-8

Completion of assignments is expected for ALL Highlands students. For students in Grades 5-8, a **Pass/Fail system** will be utilized for the 4th quarter according to the following:

- **PASS:** Students completing **at least 50%** of the work assigned (NOT ACCURACY)
- **FAIL:** Students completing **49% or less** of the work assigned (NOT ACCURACY)

The Overall Course grade will be determined by an average of the first 3 quarters' grades. *If a student's grade at the conclusion of the 3rd quarter falls short of passing the course or meeting a prerequisite, then the student's 4th quarter performance may be used. This will happen ONLY if the 4th quarter performance will enhance the student's opportunity towards passing the course or meeting the prerequisite.*

Remote Learning will not negatively impact a student's overall grade. Student work shall be evaluated based upon engagement, effort and work completion. We believe that during this unprecedented time, the focus of our middle level learners should be on content exposure and engagement. Teachers will directly contact the parent or guardian of any student who is not actively engaging.

Grading & Assessment Information cont.

Elementary: Grades 1-4

Completion of assignments is expected for ALL Highlands students. For students in Grades 1-4, a **Pass/Fail system** will be utilized for the 4th quarter according to the following:

- **PASS:** Students completing **at least 50%** of the work assigned (NOT ACCURACY)
- **FAIL:** Students completing **49% or less** of the work assigned (NOT ACCURACY)

The Overall Course grade will be determined by an average of the first 3 quarters' grades. *If a student's grade at the conclusion of the 3rd quarter falls short of passing the course or meeting a prerequisite, then the student's 4th quarter performance may be used. This will happen ONLY if the 4th quarter performance will enhance the student's opportunity towards passing the course or meeting the prerequisite.*

Remote Learning will not negatively impact a student's overall grade. Student work shall be evaluated based upon engagement, effort and work completion. We believe that during this unprecedented time, the focus of our elementary school learners should be on content exposure and engagement. Teachers will directly contact the parent or guardian of any student who is not actively engaging.

HECC: Kindergarten

Students in Kindergarten will NOT receive a Report Card for the 4th quarter. Rather, teachers will provide a Summary of Performance for each child. This summary will be generated through a review of the child's progress to date as of the March 13, 2020 closure, and data from work and progress since.

Performance will be reported according to the foundational areas in reading and mathematics that are represented on the Report Card. They will, however, be reported in terms of "demonstrating adequate progress" OR "areas for growth".

Students Who Require Hard Copy Materials for Work Completion

Teachers will contact students who are completing work through hard copy materials. They will provide specific instructions for completing the final set of assignments for May 8 through June 5, 2020. Students should keep all completed work to turn in. Guidelines will be provided on how the completed work will be collected closer to the end of the school year.

State Assessments PSSA, Keystone Exam & PASA

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has canceled all state assessments for the 2019-2020 school year, including PSSA, Keystone exams and the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA).

Final Exams

Final exams will only be administered as required by our *College in High School* program via an approved articulation agreement with the college. Otherwise, there will not be final exams administered to students.

Advanced Placement Testing

Highlands High School counselors have contacted students involved with our Advanced Placement program to share that the College Board has provided the following guidance: <https://pages.collegeboard.org/sat-covid-19-updates> Advanced Placement teachers and school counselors will follow up with students to discuss their interest in taking the College Board's revised, in-home exam administration.

SAT Exams

The College Board canceled the May 2, 2020 and June 6, 2020 SAT administration. For updated information about testing changes and new administration dates, visit: <https://pages.collegeboard.org/sat-covid-19-updates>

Transcripts

The district will provide a notation on its transcript that a Pass/Fail grading system was implemented for the 4th quarter for the 2019-2020 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This notation will be made for the Classes of 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Future College Admissions

Most colleges/universities support the decisions made by high school faculty and administrators regarding what grading methods they think most appropriate given the academic adjustments required by the public health challenges we are all facing. Accordingly, they are typically deferring to what the high school believes most appropriate for grading methods in the spring semester 2020. Colleges/universities intend to be flexible in these atypical times and not hold students accountable for things beyond their control. However, students are still expected to engage in their school work to the best of their ability (acknowledging that circumstances will not be consistent for all students based on home arrangements/dynamics, access to internet, etc.). Students should consult with their School Counselor and/or prospective college or university to discuss the college application process and respective admission criteria due to COVID-19.

PIAA/WPIAL Athletics

In accordance with Governor Tom Wolf's announcement that Pennsylvania schools will be closed to in-person learning for the remainder of the school year, the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc. (PIAA) has canceled all remaining Winter and Spring sports and championships. More information will be communicated via <http://www.piaa.org> as it becomes available.

NCAA Eligibility Center

The NCAA Eligibility Center has received a number of inquiries regarding potential adjustments to the initial eligibility certification process as a result of closures, cancellations and changes due to COVID-19. NCAA is working closely with member institutions and making progress toward national solutions to the issues raised for both Divisions I and II. They will communicate the details of these adjustments in the coming weeks upon complete review through its governance processes. For information on COVID-19, please visit ncaa.org/COVID-19 and continue to monitor for more information from the Eligibility Center at ncaa.com/EC.

Summer Programming/ Extended School Year

Highlands School District is working to prepare for summer programming to include academic reinforcement for students due to the school closure and COVID-19 pandemic. The details and schedule will be based on the parameters of the Stay at Home and Social Distancing Orders. More information will be communicated as the school year comes to a close.

Commencement & Prom 2020

Highlands School District is committed to giving our Seniors the recognition they deserve that culminates their schooling success.

Therefore, the new date for Commencement is **Wednesday, July 1, 2020** with a rain date of Thursday, July 2, 2020.

In addition, the Highlands Prom has been rescheduled for **Thursday, June 25, 2020**.

Please know that these events will only take place if the Governor's Stay at Home and Social Distancing Orders have been lifted.

Otherwise, alternative plans will be implemented.



Spring Events Canceled

Unfortunately, all other Highlands spring events that are canceled will not be rescheduled due to time and staffing constraints.

Food Distribution

School Meal distributions will continue as scheduled through the last week of the 2019-2020 school year, June 5, 2020, unless additional guidance is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).

A week's worth of Grab & Go Breakfasts and Lunches are available on Mondays only between 11:00am and 1:00pm at the High School door #23 near the student parking lot; Elementary School door #22 nearest the cafeteria; and The Hayden Center at Sheldon Park. Additional locations may be available. Please visit <https://www.goldenrams.com/Page/5593> for details.