

Highlands School District

2023-24 Activities Calendar



Highlands High School Class of 2023 Salutatorian
KASSIDY CAMBAL and Valedictorian RACHAEL BABINSACK



RAM PRIDE!

Highlands School District BUILDING DIRECTORY

Highlands Administrative Center

1500 Pacific Avenue

PO Box 288

Natrona Heights, PA 15065

724-226-2400 Fax 724-226-8437

The Administrative Center is located at the High School.

Parking and entrance is at rear of building.

Central Administration

Superintendent: **Dr. Monique Mawhinney**

Assistant Superintendent: **Dr. Cathleen Cubelic**

Business Manager: **Paul Paradise**

Coordinator of Curriculum, Instruction,

Assessment & Funding Programs:

Dr. Catherine M. Russo

Student Services Director: **Dr. Amber Dean**

School Psychologists: **Dr. Rebecca Keenan**

& Dr. Angela Kennedy

Attendance Officer: **Carmen Corna**

Director of Innovation: **Dr. Stanley B. Whiteman**

Assistant IT Director: **Jonathan Westergom**

PIMS / SIS Data Analyst: **Diane Faix**

IT Support: **Shane Lisowski, Mackinly Adams**

Director of Buildings & Grounds: **Christian Reiser**

Transportation & Athletic Director: **Katie Jo Stobert**

Director of Food Services: **Stacey Waffensmith**

Communications Coordinator: **Jennifer Goldberg**

goldenrams.com



Transportation - 724-226-2400

HS & MS: Kim Hines, ext. 4650

khines@goldenrams.com

HES & HECC: Jamie Mace, ext. 1600

jmace@goldenrams.com

Highlands High School

Grades 9-12

1500 Pacific Avenue

Natrona Heights, PA 15065

724-226-2400 Fax 724-226-9611

Principal: **Michael Toole**

Assistant Principal: **Kaitlyn Selfridge**

Dean of Students: **TBD**

Highlands Middle School

Grades 5-8

1350 Broadview Boulevard

Natrona Heights, PA 15065

724-226-2400 Fax 724-226-3287

Principal: **Rebecca Bragan**

Assistant Principal: **Cory Sakolsky**

Dean of Students: **TBD**

Highlands Elementary School

Grades 1-4

101 East Ninth Avenue

Tarentum, PA 15084

724-226-2400 Fax 724-224-3178

Principal: **Dr. Stanley B. Whiteman**

Associate Principal: **TBD**

Highlands Early Childhood Center

Pre-K & Kindergarten

1060 Atlantic Avenue

Brackenridge, PA 15014

724-226-2400 Fax 724-224-2413

Principal: **Kristie Gizienski**

Dear Highlands Students and Families,

I am pleased to welcome everyone to the 2023-24 school year! I am excited to see the smiling faces of our students and staff. This year, as we continue to **Frame the Future** for our students, we will focus on our **RAM PRIDE** to promote the unique qualities of the students, staff, parents, school board, and community. The administration and staff worked diligently over the summer to prepare the buildings and classrooms so that rigorous teaching and learning can start when our students return to school.

This school year will focus on implementing the **Career and Workforce Readiness Program K-12** that will provide our students with the exposure, preparation, and education relevant to their postsecondary pathway of interest. In addition, we will partner with the **World of Work** and **Partner4Work** organizations to learn about the most current and successful programs that will prepare our students for future careers.

For the second year in a row, the Highlands School District is being recognized for the initiatives we are implementing by the **Grable Foundation**, which has donated significant grant money. This money will allow us to continue our membership with the **Western PA Learning 2025 Alliance** and **AASA**, which provides various local, state, and national workshops, training, and resources specific to the most effective best practices in education. The district's Grading and Assessment Committee will pilot and implement **Standards Aligned Reporting** to provide a more meaningful assessment of your children's learning. The committee has worked with the teaching staff to prepare them for this transition so they can support you and your children along with way.

Another focus area will be to expand our community outreach with our **Mobile Support Unit**. This vehicle will enhance communication between the district and our families. This may include bringing resources to families and conducting in-home meetings for those families who do not have transportation.

Local and state organizations are recognizing the Highlands School District for the hard work of our administrators, teachers, and staff on various programs we've implemented. We've been invited to speak at local and state events about our **Handle with Care**, **Career & Workforce Readiness**, and **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** programs. I am proud that we are finally receiving recognition for the great work our administration and staff do daily to support your children.

I hope you know how important you and your children are to the Highlands School District administration, staff, and school board. We strive to provide your children with a safe and healthy learning environment daily while creating meaningful relationships. Our goal is to support them as they develop into the best possible person they can become throughout their time as **RAMS**.

I look forward to seeing your children soon and wish them and our staff another rewarding and successful school year.

Highlands: Framing the Future through RAM Pride!

Warm Regards,

Monique Mawhinney

Monique Mawhinney, Ed.D., Superintendent

RAM PRIDE!



Welcome to the
2023-24
school year!

Information for Parents 2023-24

goldenrams.com



Bell Schedule



High School (Gr. 9-12)

Start: 7:40am (tardy bell)

Dismissal: 2:30pm

Middle School (Gr. 5-8)

Start: 8:10am (tardy bell)

Dismissal: 2:55pm (walkers)

Highlands Elementary (Gr. 1-4)

Start: 8:55am (tardy bell)

Dismissal: 3:30pm

Full Day Pre-K & Kindergarten

Start: 8:55am (tardy bell)

Dismissal: 3:40pm

Morning Pre-K: 8:55-11:25am

Afternoon Pre-K: 1:10-3:40pm

Emergency School Delays, Closings & Early Dismissals

The decision to delay starting times, to cancel school, or to dismiss students early because of weather factors or other emergencies is based solely on the safety and welfare of students. These situations necessarily require the understanding and cooperation of parents. **Parents who are not ordinarily at home at times of morning delays, school cancellations, or early dismissals should make arrangements at the start of the school year for their children to be supervised at home, or for them to report to a pre-arranged, safe place when such an emergency occurs.** The emergency procedure is as follows:

1. Announcements of school emergencies will be broadcast on local radio and TV stations, the phone call / email alert system, the district's mobile app and website goldenrams.com, Facebook and Twitter.
2. On a two-hour delay, starting times at schools and bus pick-up times will be adjusted accordingly for K-12 students. Parents of Pre-Kindergarten students will be informed of the delay procedures at the beginning of the school year.
3. Early dismissals due to an emergency will be ordered only when absolutely necessary.
4. **Please do not call the schools.** This procedure will always be followed. Additional information or changes during a particular emergency will be broadcast if necessary.

Half-Day Dismissals & 2-Hour Delay Protocol

On designated days during the school year, students will attend school for a *half day* to allow for teacher clerical duties and/or professional development. These days are listed in **red** on the monthly calendar grids. Throughout the year, students may also attend school on a *2-hour delay* due to weather conditions or testing schedules.

HALF-DAYS: All buildings will dismiss students *before* lunch. High School will dismiss at **11:00am**; Middle School at **11:30am** and grades K through 4 at **12:10pm**. Bus schedules will be adjusted to accommodate students.

2-HOUR DELAYS: On a 2-hour delay, starting times at schools and bus pick-up times will be adjusted accordingly for students.

Highlands Offers FREE School Meals for All Students

Highlands School District is approved to have a **district-wide free food program** through the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act. This community eligibility allows **all Highlands students** to receive free breakfast and lunch items that appear on the school menus. The purpose of this legislation and the program at Highlands is to improve overall student health by providing nutritious, healthy food.



This program is the catalyst for improving nutritional guidelines in the Highlands cafes, resulting in meals with lower sodium, less fat and less added sugars. More fruits, vegetables and whole grains are served for student meals. Snacks offered at the a la carte are also more nutritious, but still delicious. Although meals are free, a la carte items and "seconds" must be purchased. My SchoolBucks accounts are used to charge students for such purchases. SchoolBucks balances carry over from year to year for a la carte items.

Contact the Food Services Director with any questions / dietary needs:

Stacey Waffensmith 724-226-2400, ext. 4180 swaffensmith@goldenrams.com

Changes to calendar events/dates will be posted on goldenrams.com.

The 2023-24 Parent/Student Handbooks for each school building will be available on the district website's building pages on goldenrams.com. Please review the handbook with your child.

August

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Highlands School District
2023 goldenrams.com
    

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<hr/> CALENDAR CODES: HS - High School MS - Middle School HES - Highlands Elementary School HECC - Highlands Early Childhood Center CC - Community Center <hr/>		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 VARSITY MARCHING BAND PIE NIGHT 7:00pm Golden Rams Stadium	9 <i>Pie Night Rain Date</i>	10 Varsity Marching Band Performance at Kennywood Park's Fall Fantasy Parade	11	12
13	14 5th GRADE & New Student Orientation (MS) 9:00-11:45am School Board Agenda Planning Meeting 7:00pm (HS Library & Zoom)	15	16	17	18	19

20	21 School Board Regular Voting Meeting 7:00pm (HS Library & Zoom)	22	23 1st GRADE & New Student Orientation (HES) 6:00-7:30pm	24 9th GRADE & New Student Orientation 6:00pm (HS) KINDERGARTEN & PRE-K Orientation 6:30-8:00pm (HECC)	25	26 SAT I - Gr. 12																																										
27	28 TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY #1	29 TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY #2	30 TEACHER CLERICAL DAY	31 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS <i>Welcome Back!</i>	<div>SEPTEMBER 2023</div> <table> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr> <td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr> <td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr> <td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> </table>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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September **RAMS**

Highlands School District

2023

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				<div> <div>CALENDAR CODES:</div> <div> <div>HS - High School</div> <div>MS - Middle School</div> <div>HES - Highlands Elementary School</div> <div>HECC - Highlands Early Childhood Center</div> <div>CC - Community Center</div> </div> </div>	1	2																																										
3	4 LABOR DAY SCHOOLS CLOSED	5	6	7	8	9 ACT - Gr. 12																																										
10	11 PATRIOT DAY School Board Agenda Planning Meeting 7:00pm (HS Library & Zoom)	12	13	14	15 ROSH HASHANAH Begins	16																																										

17	18 School Board Regular Voting Meeting 7:00pm (HS Library & Zoom)	19 BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT for Highlands High School & Highlands Early Childhood Center 6:30-8:30pm	20 BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT for Highlands Elementary 6:30-8:30pm	21 BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT for Highlands Middle School 6:30-8:30pm	22 HALF DAY FOR STUDENTS & TEACHERS HS: 11:00am dismissal MS: 11:30am dismissal K-4: 12:10pm dismissal HOMECOMING Parade: 6:00pm Rams Football: 7:00pm	23 FIRST DAY OF AUTUMN HOMECOMING DANCE Grades 9-12 7:00-10:00pm (HS)
24 YOM KIPPUR Begins	25 School Picture Day @Highlands Elementary	26 School Picture Day @Middle School	27 School Picture Day @High School	28	29	30

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October

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Highlands School District
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 NATIONAL CUSTODIAN RECOGNITION DAY	3	4 School Picture Day @Early Childhood Center	5	6	7 SAT I @Highlands HS Gr. 12
8 Fire Prevention Week: Oct. 8-14 National School Lunch Week: Oct. 9-13	9 COLUMBUS DAY TEACHER TALK (HS Library) High School - 2:40pm Middle School - 3:20pm HES & HECC - 4:00pm School Board Agenda Planning Meeting 7:00pm (HS Library & Zoom)	10	11 NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS Teacher Professional Development Day	12 PSAT/NMSQT @HS - Gr. 10/11 Superintendent's COFFEE TALK & Title I PAC Mtg. for HS & MS 9:30am @MS Superintendent's COFFEE TALK & Title I PAC Mtg. for HES & HECC 1:45pm @HES	13	14
15 National School Bus Safety Week: Oct. 16-20	16 School Board Regular Voting Meeting 7:00pm (HS Library & Zoom)	17	18	19 "FALL FOLLIES" HIGH SCHOOL TALENT SHOW 7:00pm (HS Aud.)	20	21

22	23 <i>Red Ribbon Week:</i> <i>Oct. 23-31</i> NHS DISTRICT-WIDE FOOD DRIVE (All Schools) Oct. 23-Nov. 3 →	24	25 FINANCIAL AID / FAFSA COMPLETION NIGHT 6:00pm (HS Audion)	26	27	28 ACT - Gr. 12																																																	
29	30 NHS DISTRICT-WIDE FOOD DRIVE (All Schools) Oct. 23-Nov. 3 →	31 HALLOWEEN			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">NOVEMBER 2023</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		NOVEMBER 2023							S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
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November

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Highlands School District

2023

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 November is Career Development Month NHS DISTRICT-WIDE FOOD DRIVE (All Schools) through Nov. 3 →	2	3 <i>End of 1st Quarter Grading Period</i>	4 SAT I - Gr. 12
5 STANDARD TIME BEGINS <i>"Fall Back" One Hour</i>	6 NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS Teacher PD (AM) Teacher Clerical (PM)	7 ELECTION DAY	8 REPORT CARDS <i>Final 1st Quarter Grades Available on Power School</i> HHS Musical Auditions 5:00-9:00pm	9 High School, Middle School & HES Picture Makeup / Retake Day HHS Musical Auditions 5:00-9:00pm	10 District-Wide VETERANS DAY CEREMONY 9:00-11:00am (HS)	11 VETERANS DAY HHS Musical Auditions Call Backs 10:30am - 6:00pm
12 American Education Week: Nov. 13-17	13 NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES 11:30am-2:30pm and 4:00-7:00pm (All Schools) School Board Agenda Planning Meeting 7:00pm (HS Library & Zoom)	14	15	16 HECC Picture Makeup / Retake Day	17	18 Tarentum-Brackenridge Holiday Parade 1:00pm

19	20 HHS Musical Mandatory Parent Info Meeting (HS Cafe) 6:00pm School Board Regular Voting Meeting 7:00pm (HS Library & Zoom)	21	22 HALF DAY FOR STUDENTS Teacher Clerical (PM) HS: 11:00am dismissal MS: 11:30am dismissal K-4: 12:10pm dismissal NHS CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT 11:00am - HS Gym	23 THANKSGIVING DAY SCHOOLS CLOSED Thanksgiving Break	24 SCHOOLS CLOSED Thanksgiving Break	25																																																	
26	27 SCHOOLS CLOSED Thanksgiving Break	28	29 HIGHLANDS AREA ROTARY CHORAL CONCERT 7:00pm (HS Aud.)	30	<div>DECEMBER 2023</div> <table> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr> <td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr> <td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr> <td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr> <td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						
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P R I D E!

December

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Highlands School District

2023

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JANUARY 2024 <table> <tr> <td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr> <td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr> <td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr> <td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr> <td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						1	2 SAT I - Gr. 12 NHS STUFF-A-BUS for Toys for Tots Time & Location TBA Harrison Township Holiday Parade	
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3 <i>Keystone Exams Winter Wave 1 Testing Window: Dec. 4-15 →</i>	4 School Board Reorganization, Agenda Planning & Voting Meetings 7:00pm (HS Library & Zoom)	5	6 HIGH SCHOOL WINTER CHORAL CONCERT 7:00pm (HS Aud.)	7 <i>HANUKKAH Begins</i> 4th GRADE WINTER CHORAL CONCERT 6:00pm (HES Aud.)	8	9 ACT - Gr. 12																																										
10	11	12	13 5th GRADE WINTER CHORAL CONCERT 6:30pm (MS Aud.)	14 GRADES 6, 7 & 8 WINTER CHORAL CONCERT 6:30pm (MS Aud.)	15	16																																										

17	18	19 GRADES 7 & 8 WINTER BAND CONCERT 6:30pm (MS Aud.)	20 GRADES 5 & 6 WINTER BAND CONCERT 6:30pm (MS Aud.)	21 FIRST DAY OF WINTER HIGH SCHOOL WINTER BAND CONCERT 7:00pm (HS Aud.)	22 HALF DAY FOR STUDENTS Teacher Clerical (PM) HS: 11:00am dismissal MS: 11:30am dismissal K-4: 12:10pm dismissal	23
24 CHRISTMAS EVE	25 CHRISTMAS DAY HOLIDAY VACATION SCHOOLS CLOSED through Jan. 2	26 KWANZAA Dec. 26-Jan. 1	27	28	29	30
31 NEW YEAR'S EVE						

Happy Holidays!



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January

R A M S

Highlands School District
2024 goldenrams.com
    

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>January is School Director Recognition Month</p> <p>NOTE: Highlands School Board meeting dates for 2024 were determined at the December Reorganization meeting and are posted on the district's website.</p> <p>Keystone Exams Winter Wave 2 Testing Window: Jan. 3-17 →</p>	<p>1 NEW YEAR'S DAY</p> <p>HOLIDAY BREAK SCHOOLS CLOSED</p>	<p>2</p> <p>HOLIDAY BREAK SCHOOLS CLOSED</p>	<p>3</p> <p>SCHOOLS REOPEN Welcome Back!</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>15 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. HOLIDAY</p> <p>NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS Teacher Professional Development Day</p> <p>TEACHER TALK (HS Library) High School - 2:40pm Middle School - 3:20pm HES & HECC - 4:00pm</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Superintendent's COFFEE TALK & Title I PAC Mtg. via Zoom HECC & HES - 6:00pm MS & HS - 7:00pm</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>

21	22 Great Kindness Challenge Week: Jan. 22-26 →	23	24 End of 2nd Quarter / First Semester Grading Period	25	26 HALF DAY FOR STUDENTS Teacher Clerical (PM) HS: 11:00am dismissal MS: 11:30am dismissal K-4: 12:10pm dismissal	27 HHS Musical Alumni & Cast Cabaret Meet & Greet 11:00am-3:00pm (HS)																																										
28	29 REPORT CARDS Final 2nd Quarter Grades Available on Power School	30	31		FEBRUARY 2024 <table> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr> <td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr> <td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr> <td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr> <td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29		
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February

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Highlands School District
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>FEBRUARY IS:</p> <p><i>National Career and Technical Education Month</i></p> <p><i>African American History Month</i></p> <p><i>National Love a Book Month</i></p>				1	2 <i>GROUNDHOG DAY</i>	3 HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL ALUMNI & CAST CABARET CONCERT 7:00pm (HS Aud)
4 <i>National School Counseling Week: Feb. 5-9</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10 ACT - Gr. 11/12
11	12	13	14 <i>VALENTINE'S DAY</i> <i>ASH WEDNESDAY</i>	15 "FEBRUARY FOLLIES" HIGH SCHOOL TALENT SHOW 7:00pm (HS Aud)	16	17

18	19 <i>PRESIDENTS' DAY</i> SCHOOLS CLOSED	20	21 EARLY CHILDHOOD FAIR 6:30-8:00pm (HECC)	22	23	24																																																	
25	26	27	28	29 <i>LEAP YEAR DAY</i>	<div>MARCH 2024</div> <table> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr> <td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr> <td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr> <td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr> <td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						
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March

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3 <i>National Read Across America Week</i> → <i>National School Breakfast Week: March 4-8</i>	4	5	6	7	8	9 SAT I - Gr. 11/12 GRADES 3-8 MUSICAL WORKSHOP with HHS Musical Cast 1:00-3:00pm (HS Aud)																																										
10 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS "Spring Ahead" One Hour	11	12	13	14 Superintendent's COFFEE TALK & Title I PAC Mtg. for HES & HECC 6:00pm @MS Superintendent's COFFEE TALK & Title I PAC Mtg. for HS & MS 7:00pm @MS	15	16																																										

17 <i>ST. PATRICK'S DAY</i>	18 TEACHER TALK (HS Library) High School - 2:40pm Middle School - 3:20pm HES & HECC - 4:00pm HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL TICKET SALES 5:30-7:00pm HS Aud. Lobby Mar. 18-21 →	19 <i>FIRST DAY OF SPRING</i>	20	21	22 HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL <i>Disney's Descendants:</i> <i>The Musical</i> 7:00pm (HS Aud) Ticket sales begin at 6:00pm. Spring School Picture Day @HES & HECC	23 HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL <i>Disney's Descendants:</i> <i>The Musical</i> 7:00pm (HS Aud) Ticket sales begin at 6:00pm.
24 HS MUSICAL <i>Disney's Descendants:</i> <i>The Musical</i> 2:00pm Matinee (HS Aud) Ticket sales begin at 1:00pm.	25	26	27 NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS Teacher Professional Development Day	28 SPRING BREAK: SCHOOLS CLOSED	29 <i>GOOD FRIDAY</i> SPRING BREAK: SCHOOLS CLOSED	30
31 <i>EASTER</i>						

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April

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Highlands School District
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 SPRING BREAK: SCHOOLS CLOSED	2	3 NATIONAL PARAPROFESSIONAL APPRECIATION DAY <i>End of 3rd Quarter Grading Period</i>	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS Teacher PD (AM) Teacher Clerical (PM)	11	12 REPORT CARDS <i>Final 3rd Quarter Grades Available on Power School</i> Highlands Varsity Marching Band Trip to Virginia Apr. 12-14 →	13 ACT - Gr. 11/12
14	15	16	17	18	19	20


21 <i>PSSA Testing Window:</i> ENGLISH / LANGUAGE ARTS April 22-26 →	22 EARTH DAY PASSOVER	23 HIGH SCHOOL & MIDDLE SCHOOL SPRING JAZZ BAND CONCERT 7:00pm (HS Aud.)	24 NATIONAL SECRETARIES DAY “ONE SONG” SHOW CHOIR FESTIVAL @Freeport HS - 7:00pm	25	26 Highlands Choir & Variations Trip to New York City Apr. 26-29 →	27																																										
28 <i>PSSA Testing Window:</i> MATH / SCIENCE / MAKEUPS April 29 - May 3 →	29	30 4th GRADE SPRING CHORAL CONCERT 6:00pm (HES Aud.)			<div>MAY 2024</div> <table> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr> <td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr> <td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr> <td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr> <td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr> </table>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
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May

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Highlands School District
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<div>5</div> <div>National Teacher Appreciation Week: May 6-10</div> <div>HIGHLANDS STAFF APPRECIATION WEEK May 6-10 →</div>	<div>6</div> <div>ACADEMIC HONORS CEREMONY: High School 5:30pm - Reception 6:00pm - Ceremony</div>	<div>7</div> <div>NATIONAL TEACHER APPRECIATION DAY</div>	<div>8</div> <div>NATIONAL SCHOOL NURSE APPRECIATION DAY</div>	<div>9</div> <div>HIGH SCHOOL SPRING CHORAL CONCERT 7:00pm (HS Aud.)</div>	<div>10</div> <div>JR/SR PROM</div>	<div>11</div>																																																	
<div>12</div> <div>MOTHER'S DAY</div> <div>Keystone Exams Testing Window: May 13-24 →</div>	<div>13</div> <div>Band Front Auditions (HS) May 13-17 →</div> <div>ACADEMIC HONORS CEREMONY: Middle School (at HS) 5:30pm - Reception 6:00pm - Ceremony</div>	<div>14</div> <div>Drum Major Auditions (HS)</div>	<div>15</div> <div>Superintendent's COFFEE TALK via Zoom MS & HS - 9:30am HECC & HES - 1:45pm</div> <div>5th GRADE SPRING CHORAL CONCERT 6:30pm (MS Aud.)</div>	<div>16</div> <div>GRADES 6, 7 & 8 SPRING CHORAL CONCERT 6:00pm (MS Aud.)</div> <div>NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION CEREMONY 7:30pm (HS Aud.)</div>	<div>17</div>	<div>18</div> <div>ARMED FORCES DAY</div>																																																	

19 <i>Keystone Exams Testing Window: May 13-24</i> →	20 TEACHER TALK (HS Library) High School - 2:40pm Middle School - 3:20pm HES & HECC - 4:00pm	21 4th GRADE SPRING BAND CONCERT 6:00pm (HES Aud.)	22 GRADES 5 & 6 SPRING BAND CONCERT 6:30pm (MS Aud.)	23 GRADES 7 & 8 SPRING BAND CONCERT 6:30pm (MS Aud.)	24	25
26	27 <i>MEMORIAL DAY</i> SCHOOLS CLOSED	28 Drum Line Auditions (HS)	29 Drum Line Auditions (HS)	30 NHS SPRING SANITY DUNK TANK (HS)	31 NHS SPRING SANITY DODGEBALL TOURNAMENT (HS)	



June

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																										
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						1 SAT I - Gr. 11/12																																										
2	3	4 SENIOR WALK @MS, HES & HECC	5 SENIOR AWARDS CEREMONY 9:00am (HS)	6 SENIOR PARADE 6:00pm & Food Trucks 4:00-7:00pm	7 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL - HALF DAY Teacher Clerical - PM HS: 11:00am dismissal MS: 11:30am dismissal K-4: 12:10pm dismissal 56th Annual COMMENCEMENT Class of 2024 6:00pm - Stadium	8 ACT - Gr. 11/12																																										
9	10 <div>REPORT CARDS Final 4th Quarter Grades Available on Power School</div>	11	12	13	14 FLAG DAY	15																																										

16 <i>FATHER'S DAY</i>	17	18	19	20 <i>FIRST DAY OF SUMMER</i>	21	22
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2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 ACT - Gr. 11/12
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29 Keystone Exams Testing Window: July 29 - Aug. 2 →	30	31			
						

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2024



HIGHLANDS ATHLETICS

All 2023-24 Fall, Winter & Spring Sports Schedules will be available on
goldenramsathletics.bigteams.com



Katie Jo Stobert
Athletic Director
kstobert@goldenrams.com
724-226-2400

Jaye Misejka
Athletic Dept. Secretary
jmisejka@goldenrams.com



District Programs & Services

Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)

Highlands schools have successfully implemented Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), an evidence-based, tiered framework for supporting students' behavioral, academic, social, emotional, and mental health.

When implemented with fidelity, PBIS improves social-emotional competence, academic success and school climate. It also improves teacher health and wellbeing. It is a way to create positive, predictable, equitable and safe learning environments where everyone thrives. PBIS is based on a problem-solving model and aims to prevent inappropriate behavior through teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors.

PBIS offers a range of interventions that are systematically applied to students based on their demonstrated level of need, and addresses the role of the environment as it applies to development and improvement of behavior problems. PBIS is grounded in differentiated instruction. Each approach delimits critical factors and components to be in place at the universal (Tier 1), targeted group (Tier 2) and individual (Tier 3) levels. The goal is to describe the shared characteristics of these approaches as a basis for highlighting how best to meet the needs of children experiencing academic and social difficulties in school.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for Academics and Behavior is a whole-school, data-driven, prevention-based K-12 framework for improving learning outcomes for every student through a sequence of evidence-based practices and systems.

At Highlands, MTSS includes standards-aligned, culturally responsive and high quality core instruction, universal screening, data-based decision-making, tiered services and supports, family engagement, central/building level leadership and professional learning. MTSS represents a broad set of evidence-based practices intended to help *all* students meet with continuous academic and behavioral success.

Title I Program

Title I is a federally funded program developed to meet the academic needs of students. The goal of Title I is a high quality education for every child. This is achieved by providing extra help to students who are having difficulty mastering grade level skills.

Schools with at least 40% low income families can develop a Schoolwide Title I Plan. This plan offers special programs and services to address the needs of struggling students. Frequent progress monitoring and assessment data is used to make instructional decisions. High quality instruction and interventions that use proven and appropriate methods and materials are implemented.

The plan is revised and evaluated each year with input from building parents, teachers and administrators. All Highlands schools are Schoolwide Title I buildings. For more information about the Title I Program, visit the district's website, goldenrams.com

Gifted and Talented Education

Highlands School District is dedicated to providing opportunities which promote the growth of skills and knowledge necessary for identified gifted students to achieve their potential and to fulfill their future roles in our ever-changing global society. Highlands recognizes the unique abilities, talents, interests and needs of intellectually gifted students which require special educational modifications.

The gifted program (GATE) is a sincere commitment to the gifted student, yet the responsibility for educating a gifted student is inherent to all educators, the student's parents and the student. For more information about GATE, visit the district website goldenrams.com, or contact the Director of Student Services at 724-226-2400.

Library Media Services

The libraries of the Highlands School District function as a continuing unit, primary through high school, to provide the students and teachers with educational materials and media which serve to supplement and enrich the school curriculum and serve to provide the incentives for individual growth in specific areas of study and in the use of leisure time; incentives which will develop the spirit of independent learning and exploration.

All district schools are serviced by a building library / media center and a library media specialist. Highlands also partners with the Community Library of Allegheny Valley, which offers many services and programs to students and their families. For more information, visit the website at goldenrams.com.

Highlands Virtual Academy (HVA) Web-Based Education

Highlands School District understands that parents and students are looking for an alternative to the traditional classroom environment for various reasons. Highlands is proud to meet the needs and wants of students and their parents by providing the same quality academic environment in our Highlands Virtual Academy program. The **Highlands Virtual Academy** (HVA) is an exciting, engaging, online learning environment that is designed to capture your child's attention and draw him/her into the interactive world of web-based education. Highlands School District has partnered with Waterfront Learning to utilize the Edgenuity (Grades 7-12) and Accelerate (Grades K-6) platforms to provide a high quality cyber program for your child.

Highlands students may enroll in Highlands Virtual Academy from Kindergarten through Grade 12. Our cyber school offers the benefits of an online education with the reward of a Highlands High School diploma upon completion. Students also may participate in home district athletics, extracurricular activities, and use district facilities for hands-on learning. The academy is overseen by Highlands employees and teachers who are using Highlands curriculum. *Did you know that by operating our own cyber school we are able to recoup \$9,000 to \$20,000 per district student that elects to enroll in our cyber school versus another offered in this state?*

The Highlands Virtual Academy provides your student with a state of the art education, opportunities to participate in a wide range of district activities, and individualized instruction and support by certified and highly qualified members of the professional teaching staff. For additional information about enrollment, visit the district website at goldenrams.com/hva.



Health Services

Highlands School Nurses

Melissa Lentz, BSN, RN, CSN
Highlands High School

Natalie Rich, RN
Highlands Elementary

Aliza Zelina, RN
Highlands Middle School

Samantha Eiler, RN
Early Childhood Center

Annual Health Screenings

1. Growth Screenings - Height, Weight, and BMI (Body Mass Index) is required annually for all children in all grades (K-12). These measurements will be done by a certified school nurse, teacher, or persons under the direction of a certified school nurse. The certified school nurse will send a Parent/Guardian Notification letter as needed.

2. Scoliosis screening will be done in grades 6 and 7 by the certified school nurse or persons certified in scoliosis screening.

3. Vision screening for both distance and near vision acuity is required annually for all children in all grades (K-12). Students in grade 1 will be tested for plus lens, color vision deficiency, and depth perception. The Snellen eye charts are used for vision exams. Referrals are sent home to parents/guardians of those students who have failed any of the vision screenings. The vision screening is done by a certified school nurse, or under the direction of the certified school nurse.

4. Annual hearing screening is required for all children in Grades K-3, 7 and 11. The Pure-Tone Audiometer is used for hearing screenings. Referrals are sent to parents/guardians of those students who failed the hearing screening. The hearing screenings are done by a certified school nurse or under the direction of the certified nurse.

All results of the health screenings are recorded in the student's confidential health record.

Dental Health Services

The Pennsylvania School Health Act, Pennsylvania Department of Health, and Highlands School District mandate that all children as first-time enterers (Kindergarten or Grade 1) in Grade 3 and in Grade 7 must receive a Dental Examination.

Required dental examinations may be conducted by the family dentist and reported to the school. Parents are encouraged to have their children examined by the family dentist so as to provide continuity in the child's dental care. An examination done by the family dentist within the calendar year of that school year (from January 1) and recorded on the

form provided by the school will be accepted for the required examination. Implementation of the School Dental Examination is the responsibility of the school administrators, certified school nurse, and the school dental examiners. School dental examinations will be scheduled and conducted for students who do not return verification of receiving a dental exam by their family dentist.

Procedure of Dental Exam by Family Dentist

Each spring before the close of school, the Private Dentist Report of Dental Examination, together with the Highlands School District cover letter, will be sent to parents of all children in Grade 2 and Grade 6. These forms will also be given to parents of children registering for Kindergarten or Grade 1 as first-time enterers.

When school opens in the fall, determination will be made of the number of children in Kindergarten or Grades 1, 3 and 7 that have had a dental examination by their family dentist and have returned a completed Private Dentist Report form to the school. Documents returned to the school will be placed in the student's confidential health record. After October 1, another private dental report form and letter from the school nurse will be sent to those who have failed to return the initial form. Following this procedure, the school nurse will notify the school administrator of the students who still have not returned the requested form; will schedule these students to receive a school dental examination during school hours, by the school dentist.

Medical Health Services

The Pennsylvania School Health Act, Pennsylvania Department of Health, and Highlands School District stipulates that medical examinations will be required of all first enterers (Kindergarten or Grade 1) in Grade 6 and in Grade 11. Required medical examinations may be done by the family physician within the calendar year of that school year (from January 1) and recorded on the form provided by the school. Documentation from the district's athletic department of students receiving a "sports physical" during the calendar year will also be accepted for the required medical examinations for grade 6 and grade 11 school years. Parents are encouraged to have their children examined by their family physician so as to provide continuity in the child's medical care.

Procedure of Medical Exam by Family Physician

Each spring before the close of school, the Private Physician's Report of Physical Exam, together with the Highlands School District cover letter will be sent to parents of all children in Grade 5 and Grade 10. These forms will also be given to parents of children registering for Kindergarten

or Grade 1 as first-time enterers. When school opens in the fall, determination will be made of the number of children in Kindergarten or Grades 1, 6 and 11 that have had a physical examination by their family physician and have returned a completed Private Physician's Report form to the school. Documents returned to the school will be placed in the student's confidential health record. After October 1, another private physical report form and letter from the school nurse will be sent to those who have failed to return the initial form. Following this procedure, the school nurse will notify the school principal of the students who still have not returned the form and will schedule these students to receive a school physical exam during school hours by the school doctor.

Summary of Medication Policy and Procedures

The administration of prescribed medication to a student during school hours in accordance with the direction of a parent/guardian or family physician will be permitted only when failure to take such medicine would jeopardize the health of the student or if the student would not be able to attend school if the medicine were not available during school hours.

No medication, prescription and non-prescription (over the counter), will be administered in school except by the Direct Medication Order Form of a licensed health provider and accompanied with a parent's/guardian completed and signed Highlands Medication Administration Permission Form. This paperwork must be in place before any medications are dispensed to students. Highlands School District does not supply any medications and it is the parent's responsibility to supply and deliver all medications to be administered during school hours.

Only the School Nurse, or other licensed health personnel, is solely responsible for administering medications to students. The parent/guardian is responsible for the delivery of all medications, required consent form, and medication order to the school health personnel. **Students are not permitted to carry or possess any medications while at school. All medication is to be taken in the presence of the school nurse.** In the case of inhalers and EpiPens, the parent/guardian and student will follow the procedures and for possession and use of emergency medications. The parent/guardian of the child must assume responsibility for informing the school nurse of any changes in the child's health or change in medication. A new "Medication Order" from the licensed provider and the Medication Permission Form, completed by the parent will be required with each change in medication and at the start of each school year. The complete Medication Policy may be viewed at any school building or online at goldenrams.com.



Re-Admission to School After Illness & Disease

The certified school nurse will comply with the “Requisition of Communicable and Non-communicable Diseases” issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Health for the management of diseases in the school age population. For the diseases listed below, re-admission of students to school will occur on the following basis:

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Period of Exclusion</u>
Chicken Pox	Until all vesicles are scabbed and absence of fever
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	24 hours after medical treatment has begun
Impetigo	(For large area of multiple site infection) 24 hr. after medical treatment has begun; draining sores must be covered while in school
Ringworm	24 hours after treatment has begun; no contact sports until lesions are gone
Scarlet Fever	At least 24 hours after treatment has begun and temperature has been normal for 24 hours
Strep Throat	At least 24 hours after treatment has begun and temperature has been normal for 24 hours
Scabies	12 hours after proper medical treatment has begun
Pediculosis (Head Lice)	Re-admit as soon as shampoo treatment has been used and school nurse has confirmed that all nits have been removed (<i>Ask nurse about separate procedure.</i>)
Acute Gastro-enteritis Virus (diarrhea, vomiting)	Children who are vomiting will be sent home and remain home until vomiting subsides. Acute diarrhea episodes will be assessed individually.
Fever	Children with fevers greater than 100.4 will be sent home and remain home until fever free (less than 100.4). Children with a fever less than 100.4 during the course of the school day will be permitted to rest and return to class provided they have no other symptoms of infection.
Covid	Children <i>diagnosed</i> with Covid will be asked to quarantine for 5 days from the initial symptom and wear a mask for 5 days after quarantine. Report positive cases to the school secretary and nurse. Children <i>exposed</i> to Covid should be monitored for symptoms for 10 days. If symptoms develop, the district suggests you get the child tested.

TITLE I: Parent Involvement Policy

The Board recognizes that parental involvement contributes to the achievement of academic standards by students participating in the Title I programs. The Board views the education of students as a cooperative effort among the school, parents/guardians and community.

In compliance with federal law, the district and parents/guardians of students participating in Title I programs shall jointly develop and agree upon a written parental involvement policy. When developing and implementing this policy, the district shall ensure the policy describes how the district will:

1. Involve parents/guardians in the joint development of the district's overall Title I plan and the process of school review and improvement by conducting monthly building and/or district PAC meetings attended by parents, teachers, administrators and Board members.
2. Provide the coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, including assistance in understanding state academic content and performance standards, state and local and requirements of Title I.
3. Develop activities that promote the schools' parents'/guardians' capacity for strong parental involvement by promoting an atmosphere of open communication and cooperation.
4. Coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies with appropriate programs, as provided by law, including information on how to work with business partners and other community organizations to learn about Title I and to encourage school/ family/ community partnerships.
5. Involve parents/guardians in an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the policy in improving the academic quality of schools served under Title I through explanation and discussion of policy details.
6. Identify barriers to participation by parents/guardians who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority and find ways to strengthen outreach.
7. Use findings of annual evaluations to design strategies for more effective parental involvement that will be implemented throughout the district as appropriate.
8. Involve parents/guardians in the activities of schools served under Title I.

The Board shall adopt and distribute the parental involvement policy, which shall be incorporated into the district's Title I plan and shall be evaluated annually, with parent involvement.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the district's Title I parental involvement policy, plan and programs comply with the requirements of federal law.

The building principal and/or Title I staff shall provide to parents/guardians of students participating in Title I programs:

1. Explanation of the reasons supporting their child's selection for the program.
2. Set of objectives to be addressed.
3. Description of the services to be provided.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that information and reports provided to parents/guardians are in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent feasible, in a language the parents/guardians can understand.

An annual meeting of parents/guardians of participating Title I students shall be held to explain the goals and purposes of the Title I program. Parents/Guardians shall be given the opportunity to participate in the design, development, operation and evaluation of the program. Parents/Guardians shall be encouraged to participate in planning activities, to offer suggestions, and to ask questions regarding policies and programs.

In addition to the required annual meeting, additional parent/guardian meetings shall be held at various times of the day and evening. At these meetings, parents/guardians shall be provided:

1. Information about programs provided under Title I.
2. A description and explanation of the curriculum in use, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
3. Opportunities to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in the decisions relating to the education of their children.
4. Opportunities to submit parent/guardian comments about the program to the district level.

If sufficient, Title I funding may be used to facilitate parent/guardian attendance at meetings through payment of transportation and child care costs. Opportunities shall be provided for parents/guardians to meet with the classroom and Title I teachers to discuss their child's progress. Parents/Guardians may be given guidance as to how they can assist at home in the education of their child.

Whenever Title I parents/guardians are involved in the planning, review, and improvement of the educational programs of the district and require transportation, child care, home visits or other services in order to participate, related expenses may, at the discretion of the district be paid from Title I funds. The goal of our partnership is to develop programs, activities, and procedures collaboratively, aiding families in the district.

School-Parental Compact

Each school in the district receiving Title I funds shall jointly develop with parents/guardians of students served in the program a School-Parental Compact outlining the manner in which parents/guardians, school staff and students share responsibility for the improved student achievement in meeting academic standards.

The compact shall:

1. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment, enabling students in the Title I program to meet the district's academic standards.
2. Indicate the ways in which parents/guardians will be responsible for supporting the children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering in the classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to their child's education and positive use of extracurricular time.
3. Address the importance of parent-teacher communication on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum, parent-teacher conferences, frequent reports to parents/guardians, and reasonable access to staff.

Additional Title I information, PAC meeting dates and newsletters are available on the district's website at goldenrams.com

ANNUAL NOTICES

Annual Notice: Tobacco Use

Policy #222 - To view the complete details of this policy, visit goldenrams.com.

The Board recognizes that tobacco and vaping products, including the product marketed as Juul and other electronic cigarettes, present a health and safety hazard that can have serious consequences for users, nonusers and the school environment. The purpose of this policy is to prohibit student possession, use, purchase and sale of tobacco and vaping products, including Juuls and other electronic cigarettes. State law defines the term tobacco product to broadly encompass not only tobacco but also vaping products including Juuls and other electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes).

The Board prohibits possession, use, purchase or sale of tobacco and vaping products, including the product marketed as Juul and other e-cigarettes, regardless of whether such products contain tobacco or nicotine, by or to students at any time in a school building; on school buses or other vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district; on property owned, leased or controlled by the school district; or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property. The Board prohibits student possession or use of products marketed and sold as tobacco cessation products or for other therapeutic purposes, except as authorized in the Board's Medication policy. The Board prohibits student possession of any form of medical marijuana at any time in a school building; on school buses or other vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district; on property owned, leased or controlled by the school district; or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property. The Board authorizes the confiscation and disposal of products prohibited by this policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy. The Superintendent or designee shall notify students, parents/guardians and staff about the Board's tobacco and vaping products policy by publishing information in student handbooks, school calendar, posters, and by other efficient methods, such as posted notices, signs and on the district website.

Parental Report – The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving possession, use, purchase or sale of a tobacco or vaping product, including a Juul or other e-cigarette, immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to prosecution initiated by the district and, if convicted, shall be required to pay a fine for the benefit of the district, plus court costs. In lieu of the imposition of a fine, the court may admit the student to an adjudication alternative. Tampering with devices installed to detect use of tobacco or vaping products shall be deemed a violation of this policy and subject to disciplinary action.

Annual Notice: Student Rights / Surveys

Policies #235 & #235.1 - To view the complete details of these policies, visit goldenrams.com.

This notice sets forth guidelines by which student rights and responsibilities are determined, consistent with law and regulations. The Board has the authority and responsibility to establish reasonable rules and regulations for the conduct and deportment of district students. At the same time, no student shall be deprived of equal treatment and equal access to the educational program, due process, a presumption of innocence, and free expression and association, in accordance with Board policy and school rules. Attendant upon the rights established for each student are certain responsibilities, which include regular attendance; conscientious effort in classroom work and homework; conformance to Board policies and school rules and regulations; respect for the rights of teachers, students, administrators and all others who are involved in the educational process; and expression of ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.

Surveys

Personal information means individually identifiable information, including a student's or parent's/guardian's first and last name; home or physical address, including street name and the name of the city or town; telephone number; or social security number.

For purposes of this policy, protected information, as addressed by the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), includes: political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian; mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family; sex behavior or attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships; legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers; religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian; income, other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

Surveys conducted by outside agencies, organizations and individuals shall be approved by the Board, based on the Superintendent's recommendation, prior to administration to students. All surveys and instruments used to collect information from students shall relate to the district's educational objectives.

U.S. Department of Education Funded Surveys: No student shall be required, as part of any program funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education, to submit to a survey, analysis or evaluation that reveals protected information without written parental consent for students under eighteen (18) years of age or written consent of emancipated students or those over eighteen (18) years of age. All instructional materials, including teachers' manuals, films, tapes or other supplementary material, that will be used in connection with any survey, analysis or evaluation as part of any program funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education, shall be made available for inspection by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student.

Surveys Funded by Other Sources: Parents/Guardians shall be informed of the nature and scope of individual surveys and their relationship to the educational program of their child and the parent's/guardian's right to inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party prior to administration or distribution to a student. Such requests shall be in writing and submitted to the building principal. Parents/Guardians shall be informed of their right to have their child excluded from any research studies or surveys conducted by entities other than a school entity without prior written consent.

Collection of Information for Marketing, Sales or Other Distribution Purposes: The district shall notify parents/guardians of any activities involving the collection, disclosure or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or selling, or otherwise providing the information to others for that purpose. The parent/guardian has the right to inspect the instrument used in collection of personal information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information and opt the student out of participating in any activity that results in the collection, disclosure or use of personal information for purposes of marketing or selling that information. This provision does not apply to the collection, disclosure or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions, such as the following: recruiters, book clubs, curriculum and instructional materials used by schools, sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities, or student recognition programs. The district shall implement procedures to protect student identity and privacy when a survey containing one or more of the items listed under protected information is administered or distributed to a student and in the event of the collection, disclosure or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution purposes.

Student and Parent/Guardian Rights: Under federal law, the rights provided to parents/guardians under this policy transfer to the student when the student turns eighteen (18) years old or is an emancipated minor. These rights do not transfer under state law; therefore, parents/guardians retain their rights to receive notice and to inspect.

Annual Notice: Electronic Devices

Policy #237 - To view the complete details of this policy, visit goldenrams.com.

The Board supports an educational environment that is orderly, safe and secure for district students and employees, while also recognizing that electronic devices may provide a positive contribution when used for educational purposes. **Electronic devices** shall include all devices that can take photographs; record, play or edit audio or video data; store, transmit or receive calls, messages, text, data or images; operate online applications; or provide a wireless, unfiltered connection to the Internet.

The Board authorizes use of district-issued electronic devices in the classroom, in education-related activities and in approved locations under the supervision of the classroom teacher or staff for educational purposes. All use shall be in compliance with the Code of Student Conduct and Board policy, or as designated in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Service Agreement.

Building principals, in consultation with the Superintendent and in compliance with Board policy, regulations and rules, are authorized to determine the extent of the use of electronic devices within their buildings and programs, on district property, and/or while students are attending school-sponsored activities. Use of electronic devices at the elementary level may be different than at the middle school and/or high school levels or may be different between programs. Building principals shall establish rules and notify students, staff and parents/guardians of all applicable rules for use of electronic devices within their buildings and programs.

The Board directs that district-issued electronic devices may be used in authorized areas or as determined by the building principal as follows: For educational or instructional purposes, as determined and supervised by the classroom teacher. Before and after school, in the cafeteria at lunchtime, in the hallways during the passing of classes, on the bus or other vehicles if authorized by the driver, and in the library and study hall if authorized by the classroom teacher. When the educational, safety, emergency, medical or security use of the electronic device is approved by the building principal or designee, or the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 team. In such cases, the student's use must be supervised by a classroom teacher or district staff. The Board prohibits use of electronic devices in locker rooms, bathrooms, health suites and other changing areas at any time. The district shall not be liable for the loss, damage or misuse of any electronic device.

Electronic Images and Photographs: The Board prohibits the taking, storing, disseminating, transferring, viewing, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or other means, including but not limited to texting and emailing. Because such violations may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law, the district may report such conduct to state and/or federal law enforcement agencies.

The Superintendent or designee shall annually notify students, parents/guardians and employees about the Board's electronic device policy. The Superintendent or designee shall develop regulations to implement this policy. Violations of this policy by a student shall result in disciplinary action and shall result in confiscation of the electronic device. The confiscated item shall not be returned until a conference has been held with a parent/guardian.

Right-to-Know Law

The Right-to-Know Law is an Act that provides for access to School District records and information that is open to the public. Requests for records or information must be made in writing and submitted to the Open Records Officer, Highlands School District, PO Box 288, Natrona Heights, PA 15065. A response will be issued within 5 business days from receipt of the request. There will be a fee charged per page of provided copies of documents.

**All Board Policies are online at:
goldenrams.com/policy**

Annual Notice: Custody Issues

Policy #238 - To view the complete details of this policy, visit goldenrams.com.

The Board recognizes that the support of parents/guardians shall be vital to a student's educational success. The district supports essential communication with parents/guardians and promotes cooperation among all parties who have a legitimate and legal interest in each student. The Board reserves the right to request a certified copy of the most recent court order or custody agreement governing the custody of the student. The district shall refer to the most recently issued court order or agreement until such time as a superseding order or agreement shall be submitted from the parent/guardian. For the purposes of this policy, custodial parent/guardian shall mean the parent/guardian with whom the student lives and sleeps, the one who has physical custody, the one who assures compulsory attendance and the one who shall be called in an emergency.

It shall be the responsibility of parents/guardians living at two (2) addresses to notify the principal(s) of the student's schools, in writing, of current address and the effective date of a second parental address. The district shall inform parents/guardians aware of this responsibility through annual notification in district publications and/or correspondence.

Parents/Guardians shall be responsible to provide written authorization for the district to speak to designated others, for example, to grandparents, significant others of parents/guardians, etc., regarding students. District employees shall not share information about students with anyone other than a parent/guardian, unless such authorization shall be on file. Noncustodial parents/guardians possess the same right of access to a student during school hours as the custodial parent/guardian, as long as the custodial parent/guardian shall be notified. However, noncustodial parents/guardians may not remove a student from school without written consent of the custodial parent/guardian.

In the event that one (1) parent/guardian has been granted sole custody, the district shall deal exclusively with the parent/guardian on all matters. Unless one or both parents/guardians provide a document to the contrary, the district shall presume that the custodial person shall receive report cards, permission slips and other related notifications. Unless one or both parents/guardians provide a document to the contrary, the district shall presume that both parents/guardians have shared or joint custody, giving them the right to make educational decisions. Where legal custody shall be shared, or in the event that an order pertaining to custody shall not exist, both parents/guardians have a right to exercise their rights under special education due process: Both parents/guardians shall be entitled to notices. Either parent/guardian may object to an evaluation, notice of recommended educational placement, individual education plan or placement. Access to student records shall be in accordance with Board policy.

Annual Notice: McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act: Student & Parent Rights

Students and/or parents who live in a shelter, motel, vehicle or campground, on the street, or in an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations because they cannot find or afford housing have certain rights and protections under the Homeless Education Act. Contact the district's liaison officer for homeless education for information and assistance, Dr. Cathleen Cubelic, at 724-226-2400.

Highlands Media Procedure

The Highlands School District will allow a student's image, verbal or written comments, and a student's work to appear in various multimedia outlets, including newspaper features, television and radio broadcasts, district newsletters, publications, promotional videos, the district's website, and official district social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) *unless the student's parent or guardian submits a written objection*. A parent or guardian may object to the use of their child's image, comments, or work appearing in any form of media by notifying the child's principal within 30 calendar days from the start of the school year. If a written objection is not received, silence will serve as implied consent. Anyone with questions should contact Jennifer Goldberg, Communications Coordinator, at 724-226-2400, ext. 5640.

Compliance Notice

The Board declares it to be the policy of this district to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs offered in the schools regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability.

The district shall provide to all students, without discrimination, course offerings, counseling, assistance, employment, athletics and extracurricular activities. The equitable distribution of district resources is one means the district shall use to ensure all students receive a quality education. The district shall make reasonable accommodations for identified physical and mental impairments that constitute handicaps and disabilities, consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations.

The Board encourages students and third parties who have been subject to discrimination to promptly report such incidents to designated employees. The Board directs that complaints of discrimination shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action be taken when allegations are substantiated. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the district's legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals nor retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of discrimination.

For information regarding services, activities, programs and facilities that are accessible to and usable by all persons or for inquiries regarding compliance with the above policies, contact the Compliance Officer, Highlands Administrative Center, PO Box 288, Natrona Heights, PA 15065.

Notice of Discrimination Grievance Procedure

Highlands School District has established a comprehensive grievance procedure for complaints of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and discrimination on the basis of physical or mental handicap. The procedure is in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Any Highlands student or employee, or any individual or group acting in behalf of a student or employee (male or female) may file a grievance of sex discrimination or sexual harassment with the district's Title IX Coordinator. Any handicapped student or employee may file a grievance of discrimination on the basis of physical or mental handicap with the district's 504 Coordinator. Persons with complaints may obtain a copy of the grievance procedure and form from the district's coordinators by contacting Highlands Administrative Center at 724-226-2400.

Notice of Intent to Disclose Directory Information

Highlands School District has designated the following information as directory information: Student's name; Participation in officially recognized activities and sports; Address; Weight and height of members of athletic teams; Telephone listing; Degrees, honors, and awards received; Electronic mail address; The most recent educational agency or institution attended; Photograph; Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems that cannot be used to access education records without a PIN, password, etc. *(A student's SSN, in whole or in part, cannot be used for this purpose)*; Date and place of birth; Major field of study; Dates of attendance; and Grade level.

The District may disclose this information without prior consent after giving notice of the school's intention to release the information. **A parent or eligible student may object to the release of certain directory information by informing the school principal in writing within 30 days of the start of the school year. Failure to object within the designated time period waives the right to object to the release of the above directory information.**



Annual Notice: Grievance Procedures for Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

I. FILING OF A GRIEVANCE

A. Eligibility for Filing: Any student or employee or any individual or group acting in behalf of a student or employee (male or female) may file any grievance of sex discrimination or sexual harassment with the Title IX Coordinators at the Administrative Center.

B. Pre-grievance Contact: Prior to the submission of a written grievance to a hearing officer, the grievant(s) may request a pre-grievance contact with the respondent alleged to be directly responsible for the violation, and/or with the persons having immediate supervisory authority related to the grievance. These persons may make reasonable efforts to meet with the Title IX or Section 504 Coordinator to discuss the grievance that the student(s) or employee(s) wishes to bring to their attention. Such pre-grievance contact, however, shall be at the option of the grievant(s); it shall not be a precondition of a written grievance to a hearing officer.

C. Grievance Filing: Grievances filed with the Title IX coordinator or Section 504 coordinator shall be in writing on a form provided by the coordinator, and shall provide the following information: *name and address of grievant; nature of alleged violation; names of persons responsible for the alleged violation (where known); requested relief or corrective action (specification of desired relief shall be at the option of the grievant), and any background information the grievant believes to be relevant (e.g. names or groups of other persons affected by the violation, etc.)*

D. Grievance Forms: A grievance form shall be prepared by the grievant and the Title IX coordinator or Section 504 coordinator who will facilitate the filing of the grievance. These forms and a copy of the Grievance Procedures may be obtained from the Title IX coordinator or from the Section 504 coordinator located at the Highlands Administrative Center. The grievant shall have the right to request assistance from the Title IX coordinator or Section 504 coordinator or other individual, group, organization to assist in the preparation of the form or in the filing of the grievance.

E. Time Limit: A grievance must be filed within 60 days of the occurrence of the alleged Title IX violation or the alleged Section 504 violation.

F. Grievance Provisions: Prior to filing a grievance, the grievant shall be informed of the provisions and their rights, and shall be given a copy of Part V: General Provisions.

Annual Notice: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Highlands SD receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask Highlands SD to amend a record should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the [School] to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office - U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202

Parents Have Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED):

Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent; Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family; Sex behavior or attitudes; Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships; Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers; Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding; Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

Protected information surveys of students; Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer to from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Highlands School District has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Highlands will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Highlands will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. Highlands will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys.

Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement: Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution; Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED; Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Family Policy Compliance Office - U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-8520.

School Bus Safety & Assignments

Riding a school bus is a privilege, not a right. The safety of our students is of the utmost importance to the Highlands School District. Students are expected to follow the same behavioral standards while riding school buses as are expected on school property or at school activities, functions, or events. Highlands has three bus runs - Elementary, Middle and High School. ***The district only schedules ONE bus assignment for your child.*** Please note that students in Pre-K through grade 12 are not permitted to ride another bus other than the one(s) assigned for AM & PM at the beginning of the school year. If you move to another residence within the district during the school year, please contact your child's school to update your information and bus assignment. Transportation questions and concerns should be directed accordingly:

HS & MS: Kim Hines, khines@goldenrams.com 724-226-2400, ext. 4650
HES & HECC: Jamie Mace, jmace@goldenrams.com 724-226-2400, ext. 1600

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding regarding transportation.



Annual Notice: Programs for Exceptional Students Offered

Identification of Special Needs Children

According to state and federal special education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within the school district is required according to child find responsibilities. The Highlands School District is responsible for locating, identifying and educating children who are in need of special education. This notice shall inform all parents throughout the Highlands School District of the child identification activities and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities and eligible young children. If a parent believes that their child may be eligible for special education, the parent should contact the Student Services office at 724-226-2400. If anyone in the community is aware of a child with a disability such as intellectual disabilities, blindness, deafness or a physical disability who is not attending school, please notify Student Services at 724-226-2400.

Services for Preschool Children

Act 212, the Early Intervention Services Act, entitles all preschool children with disabilities to appropriate early intervention services. Young children experiencing developmental delays or physical or mental disabilities and their families are eligible for early intervention services. At-risk children are eligible for screening and tracking.

Children age three through the age of admission to first grade are entitled to Special Education and related services. Developmental delay is defined when a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least three years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (1) the child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas, or (2) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing services to preschool children ages three through five. For information, contact Project DART at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, 475 Waterfront Drive, Homestead, PA 15120.

Special Education Services for School-Age Exceptional Students

Highlands School District provides a free and appropriate public education for exceptional students. To qualify as an exceptional student a child must be of school age, in need of specially-designed instruction, and meet eligibility criteria for mentally gifted and/or one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities, as set forth in Pennsylvania Department of Education standards: autism, deaf/blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific hearing disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment.

The district provides identification procedures to ensure that eligible students receive an appropriate educational program consisting of special education and related services individualized to meet specific needs. These services are provided at no cost to parents in compliance with state and federal law, and are reasonably calculated to yield meaningful educational benefits.

To identify students who may be eligible for special education, various screening activities are conducted on an on-going basis. These screening activities include: a review of group-based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records, report cards, ability and achievement test scores); hearing, vision, physical and speech/language screening; and review by a building-level Instructional Support Team. When screening results suggest that a student might be exceptional, the district will seek parental consent to conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE). Parents who suspect that their child is exceptional may request a multidisciplinary evaluation at any time by a written request to the school principal or the Director of Special Education.

Services designed to meet the needs of exceptional students include the annual development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP), tri-annual multidisciplinary re-evaluation, supportive intervention in the regular class, supplemental intervention in the regular class, or in a special education itinerant, supplemental, and full-time special education class in a regular school, or placement in a full-time special education class at a location other than the regular school.

The extent of special education services, and the location for the delivery of such services are determined by the IEP team, and are based on the student's identified needs and abilities, chronological age, and the level of intensity of the specified intervention. The district provides related services, such as transportation, physical therapy and occupational therapy that may be required for the student to benefit from the special education program.

Parents of exceptional students should know that their children have the same rights to participate in extracurricular activities as do non-exceptional children.

Procedural Safeguards

Upon completion of the written IEP, a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) will be issued to the parent for the parent's signature. The parent must indicate on the NOREP whether he/she agrees or disagrees with all or certain parts of the program and placement. If the parent disagrees with the NOREP, then a prehearing conference may be held. The parents and the school district each have the right to "waive" the prehearing conference, which means they choose not to participate, and therefore give up the right to have this conference. If the conference is held, it should provide school personnel and parents an opportunity to resolve the disagreement informally. Prehearing conferences can be requested by a parent at any time.

Other methods for solving disputes are the filing of a complaint, mediation and due process hearings. Student rights also include notice, consent and confidentiality of records.

Parents may obtain additional information regarding special education services, programs, and procedural safeguards by contacting the school principal or the Director of Special Education. Students who have been identified as not being exceptional for special education, as defined by special education regulations, may have written recommendations for regular education.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students

In compliance with state and federal law protected handicapped students, as a group, are covered by Chapter 15 of the school code. Highlands School District will provide for protected handicapped students those services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities. These related aids are provided without discrimination or cost to the student or parents. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. Services and protections for protected handicapped students are distinct from those applicable to exceptional students enrolled or seeking enrollment in special education programs. For further information about the evaluation procedures, and provision of services to protected handicapped students, contact the Director of Special Education.

Confidentiality

In compliance with state and federal law, Highlands School District protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding exceptional and protected handicapped students. Parents have the rights to review, inspect, make copies and request a list of all individuals having access to those records. Parents and guardians must contact the building principal to arrange to view records. Copies of the Highlands School District Policy for Collection, Maintenance, and Disclosure of Student Records may be obtained at the Highlands School District Administrative Center.

Highlands School Board of Directors 2023

MEETINGS

The 2023 Highlands School Board Agenda Planning Meetings are held on the **second Monday of the each month** at 7:00pm and the Regular (Voting) School Board Meetings are held on the **third Monday of each month** at 7:00pm, unless otherwise advertised in the local paper or posted on the website. Both meetings are held in the Highlands High School Library at 1500 Pacific Avenue, Natrona Heights. The public is welcome to attend the meetings. Meeting agendas are posted on the district's website through **BoardDocs**. *Board meetings will also be livestreamed via Zoom. The link will be available on the web-based meeting agenda, as well as on the district website and Facebook page.*

Public Comment at Meetings

As per Board Policy 903, in order to permit fair and orderly expression of public comment, the Board shall provide an opportunity at each open meeting of the Board for residents and taxpayers to comment on matters of concern, official action or deliberation before the Board prior to official action by the Board. **Planning Meetings:** The Board shall require that all public comments related to the agenda items be made *at the end of the meeting*. **Voting Meetings:** The Board will accept public comments related to the agenda items at the *beginning of the meeting*, prior to voting on agenda items.

School Board Meeting Highlights and School Board Policies are on the district website at [goldenrams.com](https://www.goldenrams.com)



2023 HIGHLANDS SCHOOL BOARD

Front Row: Bobbie Neese (Pres.), Gene Witt, Laura Butler, Kelli Canonge; Back Row: Kristie Babinsack, Dr. Debra Lehev, Judy Wisner, Nicole Kocon (VP), Ashley Javier

School Attendance Policy & Procedures

Good attendance is a habit every student should develop. A student with excessive absenteeism cannot be taught effectively and cannot keep up with the work missed in class. To develop and maintain good attendance habits for all students, Highlands has adopted a strict and effective attendance policy. New School Laws of Pennsylvania classify all absences as unexcused or illegal except those for the following reasons: illness of the pupil, death in the family, religious, and "exceptionally urgent reasons" such as quarantine, recovery from an accident, required court attendance, approved family educational trips, educational tours, etc. Highlands will enforce the state's compulsory attendance laws to eliminate absenteeism. Parents can access their child's attendance at any time by logging into PowerSchool via goldenrams.com. A doctor's excuse is required for absences due to illness in excess of ten days, and for each day of absence thereafter. A warning letter will be sent after the eighth day of absence regardless of the reason.



ABSENCE REPORTING / INFORMATION

- It is not necessary to call the school when your child is absent. Feel free to communicate with your child's teachers about absences, but please understand that **a phone call will not excuse the absences. Written or email documentation is required for our records.**
- A call will be made to all homes/families of students who are marked absent from their homeroom.
- Family educational trips (up to 5 days) must be pre-approved by the building principal. Requests must be submitted at least one week in advance of the trip and should be submitted to the office.
- **If an excuse is not provided to the school within 3 days of the student's absence, the absence(s) will be recorded as an illegal absence.** Excuses will not be accepted if they are turned in late.
- If a student has 3 illegal absences, parents will receive a Notice of Truancy in the mail notifying them of the illegal days and encouraging them to participate in an attendance improvement meeting.
- After the 6th illegal absence, a letter will be sent in the mail with a date and time for a **Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP)** conference. If parents cannot attend due to work, they should contact the school office within 48 hours of the meeting to reschedule. Failure to attend the meeting and/or continued absences may result in a citation with the local magistrate.
- When a student reaches an 8th Excused absence, a Warning Letter will be mailed notifying parents that all absences beyond 10 require a doctor's excuse or the absence will be illegal.
- **Truancy is defined as 3 unexcused absences; habitually truant is defined as 6 unexcused absences.**
- **If a student has 10 days of consecutive non-attendance, they will officially be withdrawn from Highlands School District.** Re-enrollment would be required to attend Highlands School District in the future.

Please contact the District Attendance Officer Carmen Corna if you have any questions about the policy at ccorna@goldenrams.com or 724-226-2400; press 3, ext. 3007.

EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE

After an absence, a student **MUST** provide a written or email excuse to the student's school secretary. The excuse must include the student's full name, date(s) of absence(s), reason(s) for absence(s), the date(s) the excuse was written, and the signature of the parent or guardian. The excuse must be submitted upon return to school, or the absence will be classified as illegal.

Emails to submit excuses are as follows:

Highlands High School HHSAttendance@goldenrams.com

Highlands Middle School HMSAttendance@goldenrams.com

Highlands Elementary School HESAttendance@goldenrams.com

Highlands Early Childhood Center HECCAAttendance@goldenrams.com

Excused absences include illness, accidents, death in the family, religious reasons, or impassable roads. All other absences may be judged illegal.

APPOINTMENTS During the School Day

Parents and students should make every effort to schedule appointments for special services after school. Administrators and teachers discourage the practice of dismissal during school hours, but if it is necessary to be excused during the day, the student must follow this procedure:

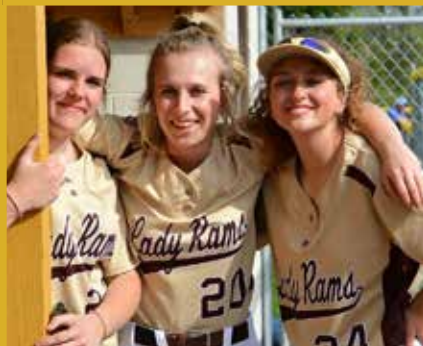
1. Submit to the office, a written request from the parent stating the reason and time the student is to be excused. The excuse must be presented to the office one day in advance. **Requests made by phone will not be honored.**
2. After verifying the request, the school will give the child a special excuse on a blue slip.
3. The parent or guardian must report to the office to have the student released.



More information about attendance, truancy tardiness, absence for vacations and illness during school hours is posted on the district website at goldenrams.com/Page/5786



RAM PRIDE!





R4L = RAMS FOR LIFE!



School Volunteers

Volunteers who wish to donate time as room parent, party helper, field trip chaperone, backstage assistants for performances, volunteer team coaches or any other volunteer position that includes *direct contact with children* must submit the proper clearances that are required under Act 153.

To become approved for the District Volunteer Program, you must submit the following to your child's building principal *PRIOR* to volunteering:

1. **PA State Criminal Record Check** (current within a year)
2. **PA Child Abuse History Clearance** (current within a year)
3. **Volunteer Affidavit Form** (available on goldenrams.com)
(if you've resided in PA for the past 10 years)
OR FBI Federal Criminal History Report
(if you haven't lived in PA for the past 10 years)

Costs of the clearances from the state are waived for volunteers. If the federal clearance is required, the cost is the responsibility of the volunteer. **Clearances will need to be updated and resubmitted every FIVE years.** Please note that parents are permitted to attend award assemblies, and after-school events and performances on school property *without submitting clearances.*

For direct links to clearance sites and step-by-step directions, please visit our district website at www.goldenrams.com/volunteer

School Visitors

Visitors to all of our schools are required to check in through the Raptor system with a valid state-issued photo ID or Driver's License in order to enter the building. The Raptor system is a visitor log that also instantly alerts the school administrators of anyone who is a registered sex offender and anyone with custody or security issues.

goldenrams.com



Access Grades & Attendance Online

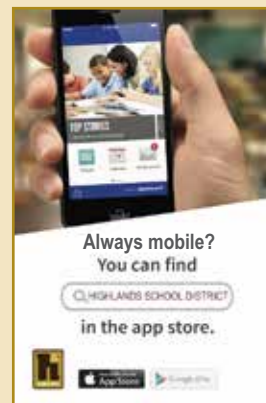
Parents have the ability to access their child's grades, report cards and attendance through the school district's Power School portal. **If you are new to the school district or if you have not yet received an Access ID and Access Password for your child, please contact the office secretary at your child's school or the Highlands IT Department secretary at 724-226-2400, ext. 5635.** Once you have your Access ID and Access Password, you will need to follow these steps:

1. Click on the **A+ GRADES** icon on the goldenrams.com homepage, OR open the internet browser (Firefox or Chrome preferred) on your computer and type this into the address bar: <https://powerschool.goldenrams.com/public>
2. Click the **Create Account** tab and **Create Account** button.
3. Enter your **Parent Account Details**.
4. In the **Link Students to Account** section: Enter the Student Name, Access ID and Access Password (exactly as they are given - both are case sensitive); and Relationship.
5. Click **Submit** at the bottom of that window.
6. Sign in again using your new account. Keep your username and password secure and do not share it with anyone.
7. Remember to log off when you are finished.



What are the features in the Power School Parent Access Portal?

The **Grades and Attendance** tab will allow you to check assignments and scores by clicking on the blue percentage across from a class. To **email the teacher** a question or concern, please click the blue teacher's name link. The **Grades History** tab shows previous grading periods. The **Teacher Comments** tab is used to access current teacher comments for your child.



SAFE SAY
SOMETHING

Safe2Say Something PA is a youth violence prevention program run by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General. The program teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, from individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and to "say something" BEFORE it is too late. **The crisis center sends all submissions to school administration and/or law enforcement for intervention.** A Safe2Say link is on the goldenrams.com site and app.

THREE WAYS TO SUBMIT AN ANONYMOUS TIP:

1. Call the tipline: 1-844-SAF2SAY (1-844-723-2729)
2. Use the website: www.safe2saypa.org
3. Use the mobile app available in iOS and Android stores (Safe2Say Something PA)

Administrative Center Directory

724-226-2400	EXT.
Superintendent: Dr. Monique Mawhinney	5606
Secretary to Superintendent: Kate Rich	5606
Assistant Superintendent: Dr. Cathleen Cubelic	5611
Secretary to Asst. Superintendent: Jaye Misejka	5611
Business Manager: Paul Paradise	5620
Accounting & Benefits: Jennifer Wofford	5621
Accounts Payable & Worker's Comp: Sandy Godfrey	5622
Student Services Director: Dr. Amber Dean	5650
School Psychologists: Dr. Rebecca Keenan	5653
Dr. Angela Kennedy	5652
Student Services Secretary: Brianna While	5650
Curriculum Coordinator: Dr. Catherine M. Russo	5655
Attendance Officer: Carmen Corna	3007
Communications Coordinator: Jennifer Goldberg	5640
Director of Innovation: Dr. Stanley B. Whiteman	2605
Assistant IT Director: Jonathan Westergom	5661
Secretary - IT Department: Adrienne Kolek	5635
PIMS / SIS Data Analyst: Diane Faix	5662
IT Support Technicians: Shane Lisowski	5663
Mackinly Adams	5663
Transportation Director: Katie Jo Stobert	5670
Secretary - Transportation, Act 48: Kim Hines	4650
School Police Officer: Craig Harnish	5750
Buildings & Grounds Supervisor: Christian Reiser	6605
Athletic Director: Katie Jo Stobert	5670
Secretary - Athletics: Jaye Misejka	5611
Food Services Director: Stacey Waffensmith	4180



Highlands School District
1500 Pacific Ave., P.O. Box 288
Natrona Heights, PA 15065

724-226-2400

goldenrams.com



Dr. Monique Mawhinney, Superintendent
Dr. Cathleen Cubelic, Assistant Superintendent

HIGHLANDS SCHOOL BOARD 2023

Bobbie Neese, President	Nicole Kocon, Vice President
Kristie Babinsack	Laura Butler
Kelli Canonge	Ashley Javier
Dr. Debra Lehew	Judy Wisner
Gene Witt	

Highlands School District

2023-24 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

RAM PRIDE!



#R4L



Special thanks to all of the Highlands staff members who submitted photos throughout the school year.

Sincere appreciation to Kathy's Kreative Portraits, Highlands parents and the K-4 PTO for also providing photos for use in the calendar.

This calendar is published annually by the Highlands School District.
Calendar compiled, edited and designed by Jennifer Goldberg, Communications Coordinator.