



2023-24 Family Engagement Plan



At Highland Park Elementary (HPE) we encourage international-mindedness by empowering students to take action and to become lifelong learners through collaboration, inquiry and critical thinking.

The Family Engagement Plan (FEP) is organized into four impact areas. We will be working together this year to build positive and goal-oriented relationships in each area. Families and staff at school developed this plan together.

Welcoming Environment	
<p><b>Our school has staff member(s) available for families to discuss this plan and ask questions.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Liaison: Kara Kipfmueller</li> <li>• Principal: Matthew Severns</li> </ul>
<p><b>Our school communicates with families in many ways.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Schoolwide Newsletters</u>: emailed to families weekly; paper copies are available upon request</li> <li>• <u>Classroom Newsletters</u>: weekly, biweekly, and monthly (varies by grade level); newsletters are emailed to families; sent home in backpacks when emailing is not an option; paper copies are available upon request</li> <li>• <u>PTA Notes</u>: newsletters from the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) are prepared, as needed, to communicate upcoming events, announcements and other important PTA related information; emailed to families or sent home in communication folders</li> <li>• <u>Communication Folders</u>: student work and school wide informational flyers are sent home weekly with student in their communication folder on Thursdays; families should return communication folders to the teacher before the following Thursday</li> <li>• <u>Student Planners</u>: used by some grade 1 – 5 classroom teachers as an organizational tool for students; method for two-way communication between families and teachers to keep families informed about their specific child’s homework and progress; planner can be used by families to communicate daily transportation changes to teachers</li> <li>• <u>School Website</u>: (<a href="http://spps.org/highlandel">spps.org/highlandel</a>) contains information about upcoming events, no-school dates, calendar of events, classroom and specialist information, library information, staff email directory, PTA and family engagement information</li> </ul>

- Seesaw: Pre-Kindergarten through third-grade teachers use this app to support and share lessons; used during e-learning days as a way for students to access the curriculum and lessons when in person learning is not possible
- Schoology: Fourth and fifth grade teachers use this app for instructional purposes; families have access to see their child's work
- Calendar of School and PTA Events: posted on school website; sent home in backpacks in the fall; emailed to families; distributed at in-person events throughout the year; given to new students during in-person registration; available in the office throughout the year
- Family Handbook: contains important information for families and is emailed to families in the fall; posted on the school's website and available in the office
- Student Behavior Handbook (Rights and Responsibilities): is available at <http://www.spps.org/Page/3249>
- Informational Posters: displayed in school entrance areas to provide visual references containing details of all school events
- Email Communication: HPE teachers and administrators regularly email families regarding their students, school events and general announcements; families are encouraged to provide their email address to the school and their child's teacher; to ensure important information is received, families should check their email frequently and contact the school office if their email address changes
- Automated Phone Calls: used as a way to make important school related announcements, including evening bus delays of more than thirty minutes
- Text Messages: used to invite families to participate in school events and activities, as well as for general announcements and reminders; to ensure important information is received, families should contact the school office if their phone number changes; teachers are encouraged to use apps for communicating with families via text
- PTA Electronic Communication: the PTA emails families regarding events, fundraisers, meetings, volunteer opportunities and other important matters; PTA maintains a social media site for PTA related announcements

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Family-School Compact for Achievement</u>: The compact is an agreement that parents, students, and teachers develop together; it explains how parents and teachers will work together to make sure all students get the individual support they need to reach and exceed grade-level standards; the compact is also a quick reference guide with general information and important dates</li> <li>• <u>Response Time</u>: HPE staff will do their best to respond to calls, emails and notes from families within 24-48 hours</li> </ul>
<p><b>The achievement gap, or rather the “opportunity gap,” between students of color and white students in Saint Paul Public Schools is unacceptable. Our school is working to change practices and systems by identifying the barriers that make it harder for students of color to succeed and for their families to support their learning.</b></p>	<p>Highland Park Elementary is implementing the following practices in 2023-24 to increase student achievement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PBIS Foundational Infrastructure</li> <li>• Tier I behavioral action plan</li> <li>• Attendance intervention</li> <li>• Explicit, systematic, sequential core mathematics instruction</li> <li>• HMH curriculum screener for math</li> <li>• Explicit, systematic, sequential foundational reading skills instruction</li> <li>• FAST assessment for literacy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transitions between schools can be challenging, and we work to help families as their children start and leave our school.</b></p>	<p><b>For new students and families, we support the transition by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Summer Play Group</u>: Families of incoming students are given the summer playdate dates at the spring orientation event; the group meets at the school’s playground in August to give families and incoming students the opportunity to get to know each other before the first day of school</li> <li>• <u>Fall Outdoor Open House</u>: August 31, 2023: an opportunity for students to meet their new teacher and connect with their classmates before returning to school in the fall</li> <li>• <u>Pre-K and Kindergarten Conferences</u>: September 5 &amp; 6, 2023 allows students, families and classroom teachers to get to know each other, see the classroom and discuss important information for the school year</li> <li>• <u>Family Handbooks</u>: a useful resource for new families</li> <li>• <u>PTA Family Events</u>: provide opportunities for families to get to know each other and learn more about HPE throughout the year</li> <li>• <u>Community Outreach</u>: families of children attending local ECFE and Head Start preschool programs are invited to attend various family nights as a way to introduce them to our school and programs</li> <li>• <u>Pre-K and Kindergarten Orientation</u>: May 14, 2024, for incoming Pre-K and Kindergarten students and their families</li> <li>• Pre-K students visit Kindergarten classrooms in late spring as a way to prepare them for what Kindergarten will look and feel like when they return in the fall</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kindergarten students visit first grade classrooms in late spring to see the rooms, meet the teachers and hear a story about moving on to first grade</li> <li>• <u>End of Year Picnic</u>: June 6, 2024, incoming families are invited to attend the picnic to allow them an opportunity to meet other HPE families</li> </ul> <p><b>For students and families moving to the next school in their pathway, we support the transition by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Highland Park Middle School Events</u>: throughout the year, HPMS invites HPE students to visit and participate in a variety of events, helping HPE students become familiar with the middle school building and experience being part of the middle school community</li> <li>• <u>Middle School Tours</u>: HPE students are excused from elementary school to tour middle schools of their choice</li> <li>• <u>Middle School Registration Open House Nights</u>: 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are encouraged to attend spring 2024 open house registration events at the middle school they will be attending for 6<sup>th</sup> grade</li> <li>• <u>5<sup>th</sup> Grade Exhibition</u>: In the final year of the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at HPE participate in an extended, in-depth, collaborative project known as the PYP Exhibition. In the spring, 5<sup>th</sup> grade students present their work on Exhibition Day to other students and their families</li> <li>• <u>5<sup>th</sup> Grade Celebration</u>: held in June to honor the hard work and accomplishments of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students as they complete their last year of elementary school and transition to middle school</li> </ul>
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**Family Partnerships**

<p><b>Our school-parent compact establishes the shared responsibility for student success between the school, families, and students. Families and teachers work together to develop the compact.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Grade-Level Compacts</u>: the compacts, updated and jointly developed by parents and staff, describe school actions, parent actions and student actions to support academic success for all students; the compact also stresses the importance of communication throughout the school year; emailed to all families prior to November parent teacher conferences; distributed to new families throughout the year during registration; available on the school website: <a href="http://spps.org/highlandel">spps.org/highlandel</a> in the school office and upon request</li> <li>• The compact was updated in the spring of 2023</li> </ul>
<p><b>There are many opportunities for families to build connections to the school and to each other.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Annual Title I Meeting</u>: November 14, 2023 Principal presents information about the Title 1 program and how these funds are used to support student achievement at HPE</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>PTA Meetings</u>: PTA meets virtually monthly; meeting dates can be found in newsletters, on the school calendar, on the school’s website and in the grade-level compacts; interpreters are available upon request and free childcare is available at all in-person meetings</li> <li>• HPE and HPE’s PTA host family events throughout the school year including: Coffee Connections, Grade Level Playdates, Fall Festival, Cultural Night, Fun-Run, and School Picnic</li> <li>• <u>Classroom Showcase Events</u>: families are invited into the classroom occasionally during the year, so students can showcase their work to their families</li> <li>• <u>Home Visits</u>: HPE has a social worker, a counselor, some teachers and a parent liaison trained in the Parent Teacher Home Visit Project</li> </ul>
<p><b>We work to make these meetings and events available for every family in the school.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HPE has two English Learners (EL) Education Assistants (EA) who provide translation and interpreting for Somali, Oromo, and Amharic families</li> <li>• Interpreters are available upon request at all PTA meetings</li> <li>• Hmong, Spanish, and other interpreters are available upon request for other meetings and events</li> <li>• Our EL teachers and EL EAs work to get information to our EL families in a timely manner</li> <li>• HPE has a language line account to access interpreters for any language needed</li> <li>• Written and automated phone messaging communications are translated in other languages when required/necessary</li> <li>• School communications to families include footnotes in other languages to indicate the information is available in a specific language upon request</li> <li>• Pre-K Family Day invitations and handouts are available in Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Karen and English</li> <li>• Free childcare is provided when monthly PTA meetings are held in-person and at any other in-person special events that require parent participation without their child</li> <li>• Transportation to school meetings and events is available upon request</li> <li>• The school works to provide flexible meeting times and days of the week and when possible, provide childcare, food and transportation to remove barriers to participation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Our school supports families as advocates and provides opportunities for parent leadership.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families are encouraged to email, call, or schedule a meeting with classroom teachers if they have questions or concerns regarding their child’s learning; if after that they are not satisfied with the result, families should call or schedule a meeting with the principal</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families are invited to participate in the PTA and attend monthly meetings to learn more about what is happening at HPE, support teachers and advocate for all HPE students</li> <li>• Families are invited to provide input on HPE's School Continuous Improvement Plan (SCIP) throughout the year</li> <li>• Families are invited to participate in the Family Engagement Plan development and review; the PTA and school staff also provide input and review the draft before the plan is finalized</li> <li>• Families are invited to participate in SPPS District Parent Advisory Councils and other school/district advisory focus groups</li> <li>• Pre-K Family Days and Family Circle events encourage parents and caregivers to be advocates</li> <li>• HPE's Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) program builds advocacy with families</li> <li>• Teachers provide families with opportunities to volunteer in the classroom or chaperone field trips</li> <li>• Families are encouraged to volunteer in the classrooms and at school events; families should contact teachers directly to learn of classroom volunteer opportunities and to make arrangements to volunteer in the classrooms; families should contact the PTA's Volunteer Coordinator at <a href="mailto:highlandparkel.pta@gmail.com">highlandparkel.pta@gmail.com</a> to sign up to volunteer at PTA or school events</li> <li>• Families are surveyed at various events throughout the year for feedback and input on how to better meet their needs; survey results are shared with the school's staff</li> <li>• Teachers and staff will be provided with information about working with families during a staff meeting</li> </ul>
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Teaching and Learning	
<p><b>Our school shares information about state standards, assessment and student achievement with families in multiple ways.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Progress Reports</u>: Available to families through Parent Portal in November, March and June; families needing their User Name and Password should contact the school's office at 651-293-8770; families may request a paper copy of their student's progress report as well</li> <li>• Several grade 1 - 5 classrooms have student planners that are used to communicate with families regarding specific learning goals, homework or areas of strengths and areas of growth specific to the individual student</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Student Led Parent-Teacher Fall Conferences</u>: November 6, 9 &amp; 10, 2023; teachers will work with their families to schedule a conference time during these dates</li> <li>• <u>Student Led Parent-Teacher Spring Conferences</u>: March 25, 28 &amp; 29 2024; teachers will work with their families to schedule a conference time during these dates</li> <li>• Families are encouraged to read daily with their children and to check in about what they are learning in school</li> <li>• The family handbook provides information on our International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program (PYP) or you can find more information at <a href="http://bit.ly/hpepyp">bit.ly/hpepyp</a> and <a href="http://ibo.org">ibo.org</a></li> <li>• Individual classrooms and grade levels have events throughout the year connected to the PYP, where families learn more about the standards and the curriculum, along with seeing their students engaged in learning</li> <li>• Classroom newsletters provide grade level specifics around the content being studied</li> <li>• K-1 and EL Teachers utilize Raz-Kids, an online guided reading program with interactive e-books and reading quizzes to test comprehension, for students to work on their reading at home</li> <li>• <u>Seesaw</u>: Pre-Kindergarten through third grade teachers use this app to support and share lessons; used during e-learning days as a way for students to access the curriculum and lessons when in person learning is not possible</li> <li>• <u>Schoology</u>: Fourth- and fifth-grade teachers use this app for instructional purposes; families have access to see their child's work</li> <li>• Families are notified when their children receive support from Reading Corp (grades K-3) and Math Corps (grades 4&amp;5) volunteers</li> <li>• HPE encourages families to help their children improve their reading comprehension by helping them make connections of what they are reading to what they already know; when families are reading with their children, they are encouraged to ask them two questions: who are the main characters in the text? what is the story about?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Our school will engage families in Personalized Learning as a key strategy to accelerate student achievement, as these changes come to our school.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Schoology</u>: can be accessed at <a href="http://spps.org/onestop">spps.org/onestop</a>; family log-in information can be obtained by calling the school's office</li> <li>• Students are issued iPads that are used by direction of the teacher for learning in the classroom</li> <li>• <u>Seesaw</u>: Pre-Kindergarten through third grade teachers use this app for instructional purposes and to share student work with families</li> </ul>

**Many before- and after-school enrichment and support opportunities are available for students.**

- HPE offers Extended Day Learning (EDL) for students in grades 3 - 5 on Monday and Wednesday nights, including enrichment programming and Lego League
- Flyers with after-school Community Education youth class offerings held at HPE are sent home in communication folders
- Other school enrichment activities include Spelling Bee, Geography Bee, and Math Masters
- Pre-K students may register for and attend evening ECFE classes with their families

### Community Partnerships

**Our school develops community partnerships to provide additional support for students and their families.**

- [AmeriCorps](#)
- [Bakken Museum](#)
- [Bell Museum](#)
- [Belwin Conservancy](#)
- [Como Planetarium](#)
- [Como Zoo](#)
- [Cretin-Derham High School](#)
- [Gibbs Farm](#)
- [Gloria Dei Lutheran Church](#)
- [Highland Park Library](#)
- [Highland Park Middle School](#)
- [Highland Park Senior High School](#)
- [Junior Achievement](#)
- [Minneapolis Institute of Arts](#)
- [Minnesota Historical Society](#)
- [Minnesota State Fair](#)
- [Minnesota Zoo](#)
- [Out on a Limb Dance and Theater Company](#)
- [Rotary Club](#)
- [Saint Paul Fire Department](#)
- [SPPS Community Education](#)
- [SPPS Urban Teacher Residency \(SUTR\)](#)
- [Somali Museum](#)
- [St. Catherine University](#)
- [University of Minnesota](#)
- [Artists in Residence \(COMPAS, etc.\)](#) HPE's PTA provides funding for various artists in residence throughout the year
- [Various Community Volunteers:](#) neighbors, retired teachers, alumni students and other community volunteers



This plan is available on our school website at <http://highlandel.spps.org/>, and printed copies are available in the office.

**English:** To receive this information or any other school information in another language, please contact Highland Park Elementary.

**Spanish:** Para recibir esta información o cualquier otra información de la escuela en otro idioma, por favor comuníquese con Highland Park Elementary.

**Hmong:** Yuav kom tau txais cov ntaub ntawv no los yog lwm yam tsev kawm ntawv nyob rau hauv lwm yam lus, thov hu rau Highland Park Elementary.

**Amharic:** yihini mereja weyimi lēla k’wanik’wa lēla maninyawimi yetimihiriti bēti mereja lemek’ebeli, hayilanidi pariki Elementary yanegagiru.

**Somali:** Si aad u hesho warbixin ama macluumaad kasta oo dugsi kale ee luqad kale, fadlan kala soo xiriir Highland Park Elementary.