

The Small School Advantage: Unrivaled Opportunities in Athletics and Academics at Highland High School

Academic Excellence and Collegiate Pathways

At Highland High School, students receive the same rigorous curriculum and diverse course offerings as larger APS schools, but with the distinct benefit of **smaller class sizes**. This environment allows for more personalized instruction and stronger student-teacher mentorship.

Premier College and Career Readiness

We bridge the gap between high school and higher education through robust partnerships and global opportunities:

- **Dual Enrollment:** Highland offers integrated programs that tie directly into **Central New Mexico Community College (CNM)** and the **University of New Mexico (UNM)**, allowing students to earn college credit while completing high school requirements.
- **Elite University Acceptances:** Highland Hornets have a proven track record of securing admission to prestigious institutions across the country, including:
    - **The United States Naval Academy**
    - **University of Southern California (USC)**
    - **Washington State University**
    - **Many other top-tier national and regional universities.**

A Legacy of Academic and Athletic Excellence

Highland programs consistently compete at the highest levels in New Mexico, proving that excellence on the field goes hand-in-hand with success in the classroom.

- **Academic Standard:** Our athletic department boasts a **collective Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.03**, demonstrating our student-athletes' commitment to their education.
- **Basketball Excellence:** The Boys' program has won **3 State Championships** in the last 6 years (2022, 2024, 2026). The Girls' program achieved **6 consecutive District Championships** and frequent state qualifications.
- **Post-Season Success:** Football has reached the **second round of the state playoffs** in each of the last two seasons, and Girls' Soccer recently competed as a **State Qualifier**.
- **State Champions:** We are home to **State Champions** in Wrestling, Powerlifting, and Track & Field, and regularly send participants to the **State Championships** in Cross Country, Golf, and Tennis.
- **Metro Athlete of the Year and All-State teams:** Highland programs are consistently represented by our outstanding athletes on All-District, All-State, and All-Metro teams.
- **Student Athlete Scholarships:** Highland Athletes are proud winners of scholarships from the NMAA, Davis Scholarships, Chris Eaton and many others.

At Highland High School, we offer a comprehensive and competitive athletic program that provides every student with the chance to participate, excel, and make a meaningful contribution to a team. We are proud to deliver all the high school sports offerings of larger institutions, combined with the unique advantage of a small school environment.

Comprehensive Athletic Offerings

We provide the same extensive list of athletic programs as our larger counterparts, ensuring our students have access to a robust and diverse athletic experience. Our seasonal sports span all major high school activities:

Sport	Season	Typical Program Size
Football	Fall	40-50 for 3 teams
Boys' Soccer	Fall	24-30 for 2 teams
Girls' Soccer	Fall	11-15 for the program
Volleyball	Fall	12-22 for the program
Cross Country	Fall	8-12 for the program
Cheer	Fall/Winter	10-18 for the program
Boys' & Girls' Powerlifting	Winter	15-20 for the program
Boys' Basketball	Winter	24-34 for 3 teams
Girls' Basketball	Winter	24-34 for 3 teams
Boys' and Girls' Wrestling	Winter	20-25 for 4 teams
Swimming & Diving	Winter	10-15 for the program
Baseball	Spring	20-25 for 3 teams
Softball	Spring	18-22 for 2 teams

Track & Field	Spring	20-25 for 4 teams
Tennis	Spring	10-15 for 2 teams
Golf	Spring	10-15 for the program

Pathways to the Next Level

We are committed to helping our student-athletes reach their goals beyond high school. Highland High School has a proud history of signing and sending athletes to compete at collegiate programs across the country, including:

- **Division I Programs:** SDSU, UNM, NMSU, CSU and many others.
- **National Recognition:** Historically Black Colleges and Universities (**HBCUs**).
- **Regional Excellence:** Eastern NM, Western NM, NM Highlands University, and many others.

More Opportunity to Play and Excel

Our smaller athlete pool is a significant advantage. With fewer students competing for limited spots, Highland offers a highly accessible path to:

- **Making a Team:** A significantly higher chance of being selected for a roster.
- **Starting Position:** Increased opportunities to earn a place in the starting lineup.
- **Major Minutes:** Guaranteed more time on the court or field to truly contribute.

Setting the Standard for Sportsmanship and Integrity

At Highland High School, competitive excellence is coupled with an unwavering commitment to integrity.

- **Top-Rated in APS:** Highland High School has been the **highest-rated school for Albuquerque Public Schools (APS)** in the NMAA Director's Cup competition for the **last 7 years**.
- **Clean Record:** Our distinction reflects the exceptional character of our community, including: **Zero Coach Ejections** | **Zero Athlete Ejections** | **Zero Fan Ejections**.

Join a program where winning is done with class. For more information about joining a team, please contact our Athletic Director, John Barnhill, at **John.Barnhill@aps.edu**.

Award-Winning Student Activities & Leadership

Highland's extracurricular programs are among the most decorated in the state, offering students unparalleled leadership and creative opportunities.

9th Grade Orientation Program- "The Crew"

A year-long orientation program pairing successful upperclassmen with incoming freshmen to help build community, tradition, and to make Highland home away from home.

The "Platinum Standard" of Student Government

Our Student Senate is a **10-time continuous Platinum award winner**, the longest streak in the state of New Mexico. This is the highest level of recognition awarded to school senates, solidifying Highland as the leader in student governance and school culture.

Championship Co-Curricular Programs

- **DECA & FCCLA:** Our award-winning **DECA** (Marketing) and **FCCLA** (Family, Career and Community Leaders of America) chapters consistently produce state-level and National winners and provide students with real-world professional skills.
- **The Marching Band:** Highland is home to a large and **award-winning Marching Band**. Known for their excellence and community engagement, the band performs at a championship level and is a cornerstone of our school's spirit.
- **Extensive Club Offerings:** From **Youth and Government** and **MEChA** to **NJROTC** and **Esports**, we offer dozens of organizations that allow students to explore their unique interests and passions.

GET INVOLVED

Whether in the classroom, on the stage, or on the field, Highland High School offers the resources of a large school with the individualized focus of a small community.

For information, contact Highland High School Administration:

Athletics Director- John Barnhill: john.barnhill@aps.edu

Activities- Justin Landis: landis@aps.edu

Highland High School — Building a Tradition of Excellence in Academics, Leadership, and Athletics.
