

HIGHLAND *Elementary*

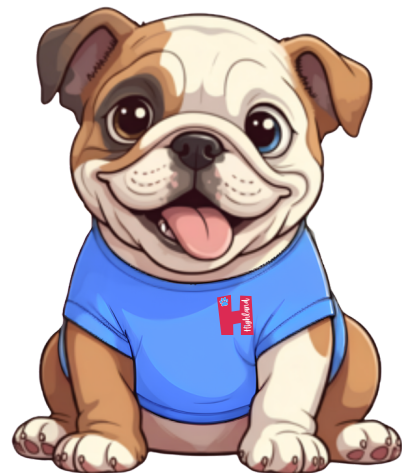


Student Handbook
2026-2027

TABLE of Contents

-  [WELCOME TO HIGHLAND](#)
-  [ACADEMIC INFORMATION](#)
-  [ATTENDANCE](#)
-  [DAILY SCHEDULES](#)
-  [ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL](#)
-  [CELEBRATIONS & VISITORS](#)
-  [CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS](#)
-  [DOCUMENTS KEPT ON FILE](#)
-  [STUDENT DRESS CODE](#)
-  [FIELD TRIPS](#)
-  [HEALTH & WELLNESS](#)
-  [MEALS & CONCESSION](#)
-  [PARENT INFORMATION](#)
-  [TECHNOLOGY](#)
-  [OTHER](#)
-  [SIGN & RETURN PAGES](#)

Click on the section name to navigate there, then click me (bulldog) to come back to the Table of Contents!





Highland Elementary School



1501 Wellerman Road West Monroe, LA 71291



318-396-1213



Fax: 318-397-1927

This handbook was put together to give you a quick and easy reference for our school's policies, procedures, calendar, and lunch schedule. Please take time to look through it with your child so you both know what to expect this school year. It's a helpful tool to keep on hand!

At Highland, our goal is to help every student grow into a responsible, kind, and confident person. Our teachers and staff are here to support your child every step of the way. We also know that the best learning happens when families and schools work together—so your support means everything.

We're proud to welcome all families at Highland. We do not discriminate based on race, color, nationality, sex, age, disability, or veteran status. Everyone belongs here, and we're excited to work with you to make this year a great one!

Sincerely,

Julie Norris

Principal



Highland Elementary School

Mission Statement

Highland Elementary fosters a safe, inclusive community where every individual is valued and empowered. Through kindness, integrity, and mutual respect, we inspire personal growth and shared success

Our Vision

Highland Elementary envisions a community where every student is empowered to reach their full academic, social, and emotional potential in a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment. We believe all students can achieve excellence through high expectations, perseverance, responsibility, and meaningful support.

Through strong partnerships among students, families, educators, and the Highland community, we cultivate a culture of collaboration, respect, and belonging. As a learning organization, we embrace continuous improvement through reflection, innovation, and research-based practices to ensure every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Together, we prepare learners to thrive in a changing world, contribute positively to society, and become confident, compassionate, and lifelong learners.





Highland Elementary School

At Highland, we believe:

- **Every child can learn and succeed.** We are committed to helping all students reach their full academic, social, and emotional potential.
- **A safe, supportive, and inclusive environment** is essential for effective teaching and learning.
- **Respect, kindness, and empathy** are foundational to building a positive school culture.
- **High expectations** for both students and adults promote personal growth and academic excellence.
- **Collaboration among educators, families, students, and the community** strengthens learning and fosters shared responsibility for success.
- **Students thrive when they take ownership** of their learning and are encouraged to be responsible, reflective, and goal-oriented.
- **Adults lead by example** through professionalism, continuous learning, and a commitment to student well-being.
- **Diversity is a strength.** We value and respect the unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of every individual.
- **Continuous improvement** through data, reflection, and innovation drives progress and prepares students for an ever-changing world.



Mission Statement

As a community, Ouachita Parish Schools will connect learning to 21st Century skills needed for college and career ready students who will excel in a global society.

Beliefs

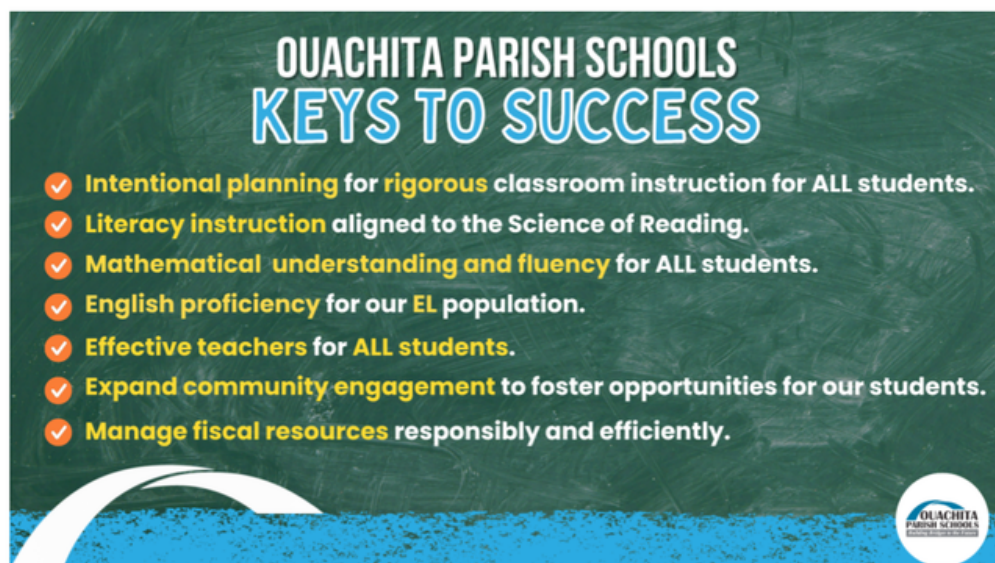
Ouachita Parish students will learn at high levels.

Parents, students, teachers, and community matter.

Safe schools are a top priority.

Bridges connect past and present learning to future dreams.

Keys to Success



ACADEMIC Information

SECTION 1:

- Grading
- Homework
- Migrant Education

SECTION 2:

- Grades K-2 & 4-5
Promotion Requirements
- Grade 3 Promotion
Requirements



Grading Scale	
Grade	Percentage
A	100-90
B	89-80
C	79-70
D	69-60
F	59-0

Homework

This is an essential part of the elementary school program. Reasonable assignments appropriate to the grade level will be given on most weeknights. These will have a specific purpose and be an outgrowth of the daily lesson. Parents should see that students complete the assignment and return it to class the next day.

Although assignments may not be given daily, it is always considered a best practice to:

- Read to your child or have them read to you each day.
- Practice sight words, letter sounds, addition/subtraction facts, or multiplication/division facts.

Migrant Education Program

The Migrant Education Program was established in 1966 under the Elementary and Secondary Act. The program is federally funded and authorized under the No Child Left Behind Act. This program is a part of Title I and is designed to support high quality and comprehensive educational programs for migrant children. You may call your Local Migrant Office at 318-432-5330 and inquire about services.

Promotion Requirements

Ouachita Parish and LDOE requirements from promotion or retention will be followed.

In accordance with state requirements, Ouachita Parish will promote based on the criteria below for K, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. REQUIREMENTS FOR PROMOTIONS IN K, 1, 2, 3, 4, AND 5.	
Kindergarten	Must pass Reading Skills, Reading Knowledge, and Math with a final grade of C or higher.
Grade 1	Must pass Reading Skills, Reading Knowledge, and Math with a final grade of C or higher.
Grade 2	Must pass Reading Skills, Reading Knowledge, and Math with a final grade of C or higher AND must score above Well Below on EOY DIBELS or qualify for Good Cause Exemption. See explanation below.
Grade 3	Must pass ELA/Reading, math, and two other major subjects AND must score above Well Below on EOY DIBELS or qualify for Good Cause Exemption. See explanation below.
Grade 4	Must pass ELA/Reading, Math, and two other major subjects.
Grade 5	Must pass ELA/Reading, Math, and two other major subjects.

Promotion and mandatory retention of students in grade 2

Second graders scoring Well Below Benchmark after the last screening in the current school year will be retained unless the student meets one of the following Good Cause Exemptions:

- A limited English proficient student has been enrolled in an English Language assistance program for fewer than two years.
- An IEP indicates that the student is assessed using the LAAR.
- A student with an IEP or 504 plan who has previously been retained.
- A student with an IEP or 504 plan who has received intensive reading intervention for two years, as documented by the Individual Academic Support Plan or Individual Reading Plan, and still scores at the lowest achievement level on the literacy screener.
- A student was previously retained in kindergarten, first, or second grade and has received intensive reading intervention for two years, as documented by the Individual Academic Support Plan, still scores at the lowest achievement level on the literacy screener.
- A student has been diagnosed with dyslexia.

2nd grade students must pass Reading Skills, Reading Knowledge, and math with a final grade of C or higher AND must score above Well Below on EOY DIBELS or qualify for Good Cause Exemption.

Summer remediation will be offered for 2nd grade students who score at the lowest achievement level on DIBELS after their retest opportunity at the end of the 2025-2026 school year if they do not qualify under a Good Cause Exemption (see above). DIBELS retest will be the last day of summer remediation.

* Students in grade K-3 who do not meet grade requirements for promotion, but have been already retained at least once, should be reviewed by the School Building Level Committee (SBLC) before retaining again.

The decision to retain (hold back) students that meet requirements for promotion to the next grade will be made by the School Building Level Committee (SBLC).

Parents or guardians wishing to request that their child be retained must submit a letter to the principal NO LATER than February 1.

3rd Grade Promotion Requirements

Promotion and mandatory retention of students in grade 3 except for mandatory retention consideration as described below, teachers shall, on an individual basis, determine the promotion of each student according to the local Pupil Progression Plan. Particular emphasis shall be placed upon the student's proficiency in grade-appropriate skills.

Retention will be considered for a student scoring at the lowest achievement level on the state end-of-year literacy screener (DIBELS 8.0) as follows:

- The student shall be provided two additional opportunities to score a higher achievement level on the literacy screener prior to the beginning of the subsequent academic year.
- Any student still scoring at the lowest achievement level after three attempts shall be screened for dyslexia.
- Such a student shall be retained in the third grade unless he or she is found to meet at least one of the good cause exemptions in Bulletin 1566 – Pupil Progression Policies and Procedures, §701.
- Promotion on the basis of good cause exemption is subject to the consent of the parent, principal, and superintendent.
- The Student Information System (SIS) must reflect the promotion and the good cause exemption under which promotion was determined.
- Students promoted for good cause shall be provided an expanded academic support plan (see [Ouachita Parish Pupil Progression Plan](#) Section V. Support for Students).
- Students retained in third grade pursuant to this requirement shall be provided an expanded academic support plan, 90 minutes of daily reading instruction, and 30 minutes of daily reading intervention.

LDOE will provide to each LEA a roster of third grade students who have been identified for the purposes of this section, assisting the LEA in making final determinations relative to students' required plans.

- The decision to retain a student as a result of his/her failure to achieve the standard on the LEAP shall be made by the LEA in accordance with the Ouachita Parish Pupil Progression Plan.
- The expanded academic support plan shall continue to be in effect until such time as the student achieves a score of "Mastery" in each of the core academic subjects that initially led to the development of the student's individual plan.

Summer remediation will be mandatory for 3rd grade students who score at the lowest achievement level on DIBELS after their retest opportunity at the end of the 2024-2025 school year if they do not qualify under a Good Cause Exemption.

ATTENDANCE

Policy



Ouachita Parish and Highland Elementary

Attendance Policy

Please read all information carefully and refer to it as needed throughout the year. Highland Elementary will adhere to all attendance policies set forth by the Ouachita Parish School Board (OPSB). Please refer to the OPSB Attendance Policy for detailed guidelines and procedures regarding student attendance.

No elementary student shall accumulate more than a total of ten (10) unexcused absences during a school year. Once a student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences during the school year a referral must be sent to Ouachita Parish Child Welfare and Attendance.

STATE LAW REQUIRES THAT STUDENTS BE IN SCHOOL EVERY DAY THAT SCHOOL IS IN SESSION UNLESS AN ABSENCE IS DUE TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING REASONS ALLOWED BY LAW AND LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD POLICY.

LOUISIANA LAW R.S. 17:2221 states that every parent, guardian, or tutor of any child between the ages of seven and seventeen is responsible to enroll that child in a public or private day school in conjunction with the school calendar as set forth by the local board of directors. Every child's parent, guardian, or tutor is responsible for assuring the attendance of that child in regularly assigned classes during regular school hours established by the board of directors.

Attendance Requirements

Louisiana requires students to attend school for a certain number of days to be promoted to the next grade and earn credit for a course. Under the law, students must attend school from age 5 (by September 30) to 18 or until they graduate from high school. Students are required to attend school regularly and **must attend at least 167 days or 60,120 minutes** to earn credit and be eligible for promotion to the next grade.

When a student misses school, his/her absence falls under four categories:

1. Exempted and Excused: The student is allowed to make up the missed work and the absence is not counted against the attendance requirement. Examples are extended illness documented by a medical professional or to celebrate religious holidays. There is no limit to these absences. Performances in ballet and theater groups are excused but practices are not excused.

Absences that can be counted as EXCUSED are due to the following reasons:

- Personal illness (with doctor verification)
- Death in the family (not to exceed one week)
- Serious illness in the family (with documented verification)
- Recognized religious holidays of the student's own faith
- Legal, medical or dental appointments (must provide written verification)

Excuses by physicians should be submitted to the school office the first day the student returns to school. OPSB policy states that all excuses for a student's absence, including medical verification of extended personal illness, must be presented in original form within forty-eight (48) hours of the student's return to school, or the student's absence shall be considered unexcused and the student not allowed to make up work missed.

2. Non-Exempted and Unexcused: The student is allowed to make up the missed work but the absence is counted against the attendance requirement. An example is personal or family illness documented by a parent's note. Other examples include participation in an activity that is not associated with the school or a church activity that does not fall on a religious holiday. The number of non-exempt and excused absences is based on the number of school days offered. Schools are required to offer 177 days of school, which means a student can be absent 10 days. If more school days are offered, then the number of absences also increases. It is best to visit Child Welfare and Attendance and complete a Known Absence Form prior to missing the days.

3. Non-Exempt and Excused: The student is allowed to make up the missed work but the absence is counted against the attendance requirement. An example is personal or family illness documented by a parent's note. The number of non-exempt and excused absences is based on the number of school days offered. Schools are required to offer 177 days of school, which means a student can be absent for ten days. If more school days are offered, then the number of absences also increases.

4. Unexcused: The student is not allowed to make up the missed work and the absence is counted against the attendance requirement. An example is skipping school.

Make-Up Work: A teacher is not required to give make-up work or tests if absence is unauthorized, or unexcused, or if the student has been suspended. A student has the same number of days to make up work as they were absent for excused reasons.

When needing to pick up make-up work for your child, **please call the school office by 10:00 A.M.** to make the request. Classroom teachers will gather needed materials as they are able. **Please allow 24 hours for your child's work to be ready for pickup.**

Late to school & Early pickups

Tardiness is not counted against the attendance requirement. However, five late-to-school **or** five early pick-ups is considered as one count of truancy. The only excuses for late-to-school would be a medical professional or other professional excuse. Habitual tardiness should not be excused.

Seat-Time Recovery activities that allow students to make up lost instructional time may include but are not limited to:

- Saturday Seminar
- Edgenuity course
- After-School Tutoring
- Virtual Seminar
- Summer Programs

On any absence after reaching a total of five (5) days, and prior to the excuse being presented to the school, the student and/or parent will have to meet with a Child Welfare and Attendance Officer at the School Board Office and provide a justifiable excuse for that absence. This means, any student who reaches absence number six (6) and any absence thereafter, must have Child Welfare and Attendance approval for the absence to be considered excused.

Excessive absences resulting in a student being significantly behind in school work may result in missed opportunities for field trips and off campus activities.

Truancy Facts (K-12 Students)

Schools Keep Count of Absences and Tardies 1. Five unexcused absences = One Count of Truancy 2. Five Unexcused Tardies = One Count of Truancy <i>Tardies include skipping school, checking in late or checking out early.</i> <i>School administrators/designee(s) decide whether absences or tardies are excused or unexcused.</i>	Parents Can Be Charged with the Crime of Truancy <u>1st Offense</u> - \$100 fine + court costs = \$350 <u>2nd Offense</u> - \$200 fine + court costs = \$450 or more <u>3rd Offense</u> - Must appear in court Penalty is 30 days in jail + \$250 fine + court costs for each truancy. <i>Parents can be put on misdemeanor probation for up to 24 months, be required to pay monthly supervision fees, and do court ordered community service.</i>
Truant students may have to do community service, be on supervised probation, or live at a group home until their 18th birthday.	
Information provided by: Hon. Steve Tew, Ouachita Parish District Attorney Hon. Jay Russell, Ouachita Parish Sheriff Mr. Todd Guice, Ouachita Parish Superintendent Hon. Sharon I. Marchman, Fourth Judicial District Court Judge	

Daily SCHEDULES

- Bell Schedule
- Lunch & Recess
- Dismissal Schedule



Daily Schedule

7:25 Doors open
7:45 School Begins
7:50 Tardy Bell

Lunch & Recess Schedule

Grade	Lunch	Recess
Pre-K	10:40-11:05	10:00-10:15. 11:45-12:00
Kindergarten	11:00-11:25	11:25-11:50
1st	11:10-11:35	11:35-12:00
2nd	11:25-11:50	11:50-12:15
3rd	11:40-12:05	12:05-12:30
4th	11:45-12:10	12:10-12:35
5th	11:55-12:20	12:20-12:45

Dismissal Schedule

2:50 Pre-K Single Car riders

3:00 Bus Riders
Red Team (Pick up in the circle drive)

3:03 Blue Team (Pick up at the front of the school)

3:06 Walkers & bike riders

2nd bus load will be called as soon as the bus returns to campus from delivering 1st load.

Red team: K-2, single car riders

Blue team: 3-5 & siblings

Arrival & Dismissal PROCEDURES

- Arrival
- Bus Transportation
- Check-In/Out
- Dismissal Procedures
 - Car Pick-up
 - Pick-up Changes
 - Weather Emergency Dismissal



Arrival

Please follow the Safe Path to School Act.

Student Supervision and Morning Drop-Off Procedures

Student supervision begins each day at 7:25 a.m., when duty teachers report to their posts.

Students should not arrive on campus or be left unattended by a parent or guardian before this time. Upon arrival, students will be directed to either the cafeteria for breakfast or to their classroom.

Morning Arrival Guidelines:

- Students arriving by car, bicycle, or on foot should enter through the front office entrance.
- Car riders must be dropped off in the front driveway in the designated drop-off area where a duty teacher is present. Once the vehicle has entered the concreted drop-off zone, students should exit the vehicle independently and promptly.
- **The parking lot is reserved for employee and visitor use only and is not to be used for student drop-off or pick-up. Parents may park there only when they need to report to the school office.**
- **For the safety of all students, please do not drop off students on the road next to the school. This practice creates a hazardous situation and is strictly prohibited. Students should only cross the road at the designated crosswalk where a crossing guard is posted to ensure their safety.**

Late Arrival & Tardies:

We understand that there may be occasional circumstances that cause a student to arrive late. However, **tardiness should be kept to a minimum.**

- Students who are habitually tardy (3 or more times) may be reported to the Ouachita Parish Child Welfare and Attendance Office for truancy.
- Students arriving after 7:50 a.m. will be considered tardy.
- All tardy students must be accompanied by an adult to the front office to be signed in and provide a reason for the tardiness.
- Students must obtain an admit slip from the office before being allowed to enter class.

We appreciate your support in helping students develop punctual and responsible habits. We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring a safe and smooth start to each school day.

Bus Transportation

Bus Transportation Policy

School Board bus policies and rules are distributed directly by bus drivers. A **Bus Rider Form** will be provided and must be signed by both the **parent/guardian and the student**. This signed form **must be returned to the bus driver** before the student is permitted to ride the bus.

Important Reminders:

- Please review all bus rules thoroughly with your child.
- **Communication devices or electronics may not be used on the bus at any time.**
- For student safety, **a parent or guardian must be visibly present at the bus stop** in order for the student to be dropped off. **Students will not be left unattended.**

Transportation Consistency and Restrictions:

- **Students must go home the same way every day.** Consistent transportation arrangements help ensure safety and accountability for all students.
- **Students will not be allowed to ride the bus on a one-time basis.**
 - For example, if a student is typically a car rider, they **may not ride the bus for just one day.**
- Students may occasionally ride a different bus home **only with written permission from a parent**, and:
 - The note must be submitted to the office **upon arrival at school**,
 - Approved and **signed by the principal**, and
 - The bus must have **available seating capacity**.
 - If the bus is full, the request may be denied.
- **Students are not allowed to change their assigned bus or bus stop** without prior approval from the principal.
 - Parents must contact the school office to discuss any needed changes.

Thank you for supporting safe and consistent transportation procedures for all Highland Elementary students.

Checking In & Out During School Hours

Student Check-In / Check-Out Policy

To ensure the safety of all students and minimize disruptions to instruction, Highland Elementary has established the following check-in and check-out procedures:

- **All parents/guardians and students must report to the front office when checking in or out of school.**
- Please keep check-ins and check-outs **to a minimum** to avoid negatively impacting valuable instructional time.

Important Guidelines:

- **Students may NOT be checked out between 2:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.** This is to maintain the safety and structure of our dismissal process.
- **Students may not be checked out by phone** under any circumstances.
- **If you arrive during your child's lunch or recess time**, please understand there may be a **significant wait**, as staff must locate and retrieve your child from another area of campus.
- Any student who is **signed out before 3:00 p.m.** will be considered an **early check-out**. Early check-outs **count as tardies** for attendance and **truancy reporting purposes**.
- **Medical excuses** for early check-in or check-out must be submitted to the office **within two (2) school days** of the absence. Please note that any written excuse from a doctor's office or other official agency may be verified by calling the office listed on the note.
- For information regarding **custody restrictions**, please refer to the section titled **"Documents Kept on File"** in the Highland Elementary Handbook.

We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining a safe, orderly, and focused learning environment for all students.

Daily Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal Procedures – In Accordance with the Safe Path Act

*In accordance with the **Safe Path Act**, Highland Elementary is committed to ensuring that all dismissal procedures prioritize student safety and reduce congestion in designated loading zones.*

- **Bus riders will exit through the back of the school to the bus loading zone.** Students will **not be released to parents or guardians** from this area during usual daily dismissal. This is a secure zone designated for bus transportation only.
- **Students who are not bus riders will not be released during times when a bus is actively loading or unloading.** This helps prevent unsafe interactions between pedestrians and buses.
- All parents must use the designated **car pickup area** and follow staff directions to ensure a safe and orderly dismissal.

We appreciate your support and cooperation in following these procedures to protect all students during arrival and dismissal times.

Car Pick-Up Procedures

To ensure a safe, smooth, and efficient dismissal process, please follow the guidelines below:

- **Pre-K through 2nd Grade** students are dismissed at the **west end of the building (circle drive)**. (Red Team)
- **Grades 3–5** are dismissed at the **front entrance** of the school. (Blue Team)
- **K–2 students with siblings in grades 3–5** will be dismissed from the **front** of the building with their older sibling(s). (Blue team)

Arrival Timing:

- Please arrive at your child's **scheduled dismissal time—not early or late**.
- Arriving early may block traffic and delay others. You may be asked to move if you arrive before your assigned time.

Car Tag Requirement:

- For security purposes, a **school-issued car tag must be displayed** in your vehicle's front window during pick-up.
- Each person authorized to pick up a student must have their own tag, which will be provided by the **homeroom teacher**.

Parking Guidelines:

- If you need to enter the building during dismissal, park in a **marked parking space** in the lot.
- **Do not park in the driveway** or block the flow of traffic at any time.

Late Pick-Up Policy:

- If a student remains on campus **15 minutes after dismissal time**, and no contact has been made with a parent or guardian, **law enforcement may be called to conduct a well check**. This is for the safety and welfare of the student.

Thank you for following these procedures and helping us keep all students safe and accounted for during dismissal.

After-School Pick-Up Procedures — Lower Grades (RED TEAM)

For the safety and efficiency of dismissal for Pre-K through 2nd Grade students, please follow the procedures below:

- Line up on Florence Street and wait until there is space to safely pull into the school's circle driveway.
- Do not turn into the circle drive from the opposite direction. This causes safety concerns and disrupts traffic flow.
- Do not block residential driveways on Florence Street or stop and block Wellerman Road while waiting.

Once in the circle drive:

- Vehicles will enter the designated loading zone.
- Students will be stationed in assigned waiting areas and monitored by staff.
- As each car enters the loading zone, a duty teacher will direct the student to the appropriate vehicle.

Please be patient and follow all traffic directions from staff to ensure student safety and maintain an efficient pick-up process.

After-School Pick-Up Procedures — Upper Grades (BLUE TEAM)

For the safety and efficiency of dismissal for **Grades 3–5**, please follow the procedures below:

- Line up on Arlene Street and wait for staff to signal you to move forward into the front school driveway.
- Do not stop and block traffic on Wellerman Road while waiting to enter the driveway.
- The crossing guard will only direct traffic when students are crossing; please be attentive and patient.

Once in the front driveway:

- Move forward into the **designated pick-up zone** as space becomes available.
- Students will be waiting in **assigned areas** and supervised by staff.
- As your car pulls into the loading area, a **duty teacher will direct your child** to your vehicle.

Please be patient and follow all traffic directions from staff to ensure student safety and maintain an efficient pick-up process.

Important:

- Any student **not picked up by 3:30 p.m. without prior approval from the principal** will result in **West Monroe Police Department or Ouachita Parish Sheriff's Office being contacted** to conduct a welfare check. The Ouachita Parish Child Welfare and Attendance office may also be contacted for an address verification home visit.
- Parents meeting students who walk or ride bikes home should wait by the **flagpole**. Students will be **escorted by a teacher** to that location for dismissal.

Thank you for helping us keep dismissal safe and organized!

Changes to Student Pick-Up Procedures

To ensure every student is safely and correctly dismissed, Highland Elementary follows a consistent dismissal plan:

- **Students must dismiss the same way every day.** Alternating dismissal methods or pick-up times are not **permitted**.
- **Same-day transportation changes will only be accepted in emergencies.** Please plan ahead to avoid confusion or delays during dismissal.
- Teachers will dismiss students according to the method **indicated by the parent on the yearly registration form**.
- **If a permanent change** to the mode of transportation is needed:
 - Contact both the **school office** and your child's **homeroom teacher** in advance. This allows staff to update records and ensure your child is dismissed properly.

Dismissal Due to Weather or Emergencies

In the event of inclement weather or other emergency situations, please follow the guidelines below to stay informed and help us maintain an organized and safe dismissal:

- **Listen to local news outlets** (TV and radio) for updates regarding school closures or early dismissals.
- **Please do not call the school** during these times, as staff will be focused on preparing students and coordinating dismissal procedures.

Communication Procedures:

- The **Ouachita Parish Superintendent of Schools** will notify media networks and schools of any schedule changes.
- Official announcements will be posted on the **Ouachita Parish School System website**: www.opsb.net
- **Teachers may also contact parents directly through ClassDojo** to provide timely updates regarding classroom-specific needs or changes.

If you do not receive the automated call and confirm that other parents did, please contact our school office so we can verify your contact information.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us ensure the safety and well-being of all students during emergency situations.

CELEBRATIONS and VISITORS

- Birthday Treats
 - classroom guidelines
 - party invitations
- Class Party Policy
- Visitors Policy
- OPSB Clear Bag Policy



Birthday and Celebration Policy

At Highland Elementary, we recognize that birthdays are a special time for students. To maintain a positive and structured learning environment, we ask that families follow the guidelines below:

Birthday Treats:

- With **prior approval from the teacher** (via phone or email), **small treats** may be delivered to the school **office before noon**.
- Treats will be served **after lunch**, and must be **store-bought, individually packaged items** (e.g., cupcakes, cookies).
- **Birthday cakes will not be accepted.**

Classroom Guidelines:

- **No instructional time will be used** to celebrate birthdays.
- **Parents/visitors are not permitted** to go to classrooms to deliver birthday items.
- **Flowers, balloons, and other celebratory items** may **not** be delivered or brought to school.

Party Invitations:

Invitations may only be distributed at school under the following conditions:

1. **The entire class is being invited**, and
2. **Invitations are given to the teacher** to distribute.
 - The parent must **contact the teacher in advance** to make arrangements.
 - **Invitations will not be handed out to a select group of students.**
 - **School staff are not permitted to release personal information**, including student names, addresses, or contact details.

Thank you for supporting a respectful and inclusive environment for all students.

Class Parties Policy:

To support a focused learning environment while still allowing students to enjoy special occasions, Highland Elementary limits class parties to three per school year:

- Christmas
- Valentine's Day
- Easter or Fun Day

Party Guidelines:

- Parents are invited to attend the Christmas party only.
- Valentine's Day and Easter parties are for students and teachers only.
- If you would like to help or provide treats, please contact your child's teacher in advance of the party day.
- Siblings are not permitted to attend class parties.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we celebrate these special moments while maintaining a structured school day.

Visitors Policy:

In accordance with Ouachita Parish Policy and to ensure the safety of all students and staff, the following procedures are required for all parents and visitors entering Highland Elementary:

- All visitors **must report to the school office upon entering the building.**
- Visitors may be asked to present valid photo identification.
- Visitors are required to **sign in on the visitor register** and **wear a visitor identification tag** while on campus.
- Visitors **may not go to classrooms during instructional time** unless they have a **pre-scheduled conference with the teacher** or are assisting with a special project.
- Upon leaving, visitors must **sign out and return their identification tag to the office.**

Please respect these procedures as they are essential for maintaining a safe and secure environment for everyone at Highland Elementary.



Public Conduct on School Property



Highland Elementary will follow the Ouachita Parish School Board policy on public conduct on school property. Including the clear bag policy that states:

To ensure stakeholder safety at all Ouachita Parish Public Schools events and facilities, the Ouachita Parish School Board has instituted a clear bag policy allowed at all events including but not limited to school assemblies, graduation or award ceremonies, sporting events, and school board meetings.

Anyone who brings bags that do not meet the criteria will not be permitted entrance. Prohibited bags will not be held at the gate, but must be returned to the owner's vehicle. While safety measures can sometimes be inconvenient, stakeholder and student safety must be a priority.

The following bags WILL be allowed at events:

- Clear bags of any size
- Small wallet not to exceed 4 x 6 inches
- Medically necessary bags AFTER thorough inspection at the entrance

Revised: August 16, 2011

Revised: May 14, 2024

CONDUCT

expectations

- B.A.R.K.
- Student Code of Conduct
- Discipline
 - Bulldog Behavior Expectations
- Suspensions
 - Mandatory Suspension & Expulsion
 - Louisiana State Law





Highland's Positive Behavior Expectations

B-Behavior is responsible.

A-Attitude is positive.

R-Respect is shown to others.

K-Kindness is shown to all.



Student Code of Conduct

At Highland Elementary, we believe that developing **self-discipline, self-respect, and respect for others** is essential for a positive learning environment and personal growth.

While every student has the right to a free public education, they also share the responsibility to respect the rights of others and not disrupt the educational process.

Students are expected to learn and follow the basic school rules to help maintain a safe and productive school community.

Therefore, students are expected to:

1. Attend school **every day**.
2. Arrive at school on time and leave at the scheduled dismissal time.
3. Show respect for **all school personnel and fellow students**.
4. Demonstrate behavior that is **educationally and socially acceptable**.
5. Strive to improve continuously, both **academically and socially**.

Bulldog Behavior Expectations

Highland Elementary adheres to the discipline guidelines established by the Ouachita Parish Child Welfare and Attendance Department and the Ouachita Parish School District.

- **Teachers** are responsible for managing classroom behavior and will take appropriate disciplinary action when a student disrupts class, is disrespectful or willfully disobedient to adults, uses inappropriate language, violates school rules, or interferes with the educational process.
- If behavioral issues persist or are not resolved through initial interventions, the student will be **referred to the principal or designee** for further disciplinary action.
- The principal will meet with the student to discuss the misconduct and may implement disciplinary measures, which could include:
 - Counseling
 - Recess detention
 - In-school suspension
 - Suspension
- When a student is referred for a behavior infraction, a **Louisiana Behavior Report** detailing the incident and action taken will be sent home with the student.

Parents are asked to:

1. Review the behavior report with their child.
2. Sign and return the report the following school day.

This documentation helps keep parents informed and involved in addressing behavior concerns.

Important

- If a **conference** with the teacher and/or principal is necessary, this will be noted on the behavior report for parents to schedule.
- Students may not bring radios, electronic items, toys, games, gum or candy to school
- **Buying or selling of anything among students is prohibited.**
- Any items confiscated by a teacher or principal due to a rule violation **may not be returned** to the student or parent.
- Students must meet conduct expectations established for their grade level to be eligible to attend field trips and special school events.
- Students who have been suspended may be **prohibited from participating in field trips and school events for the remainder of the semester** during which the suspension occurred.

Suspensions

A school principal may suspend a student from school or from riding any school bus for any of the following reasons:

- Willful disobedience.
- Disrespect toward a teacher, principal, superintendent, or any employee or member of the local school board.
- Making unfounded charges against any school personnel.
- Engaging in immoral or vicious practices, or conduct harmful to others.
- Using unchaste or profane language.
- Using tobacco or possessing alcoholic beverages on school property or buses.
- Causing disturbances on school grounds or school buses.
- Bringing any item considered a weapon (including toy guns).
- Damaging or defacing school property or school buses.
- Writing or drawing profane or obscene language or pictures on school materials, property, or buses.
- Throwing objects that may injure others on school grounds or buses.
- Instigating or participating in fights while under school supervision.
- Violating traffic or safety regulations.
- Leaving the classroom or detention without permission.
- Leaving school premises without permission.
- Habitual tardiness or absenteeism.
- Bullying.
- Committing any other serious offense.

Mandatory Suspension and Expulsion

In accordance with Louisiana law and Ouachita Parish School Board policy, the principal **must suspend and recommend expulsion** for students who:

- Have been suspended **three or more times** during the same school year.
- Are found in possession of a **firearm**, other **dangerous weapons**, or **controlled dangerous substances**, unless possession is authorized for class purposes and approved by both the principal and teacher.

*** Per RS 17:416:**

Discipline of students:

Mandatory Parent Conference and School Counseling and/or evidence-based intervention and support must be completed with each removal from class from minor or major infractions.

**** State Law:**

On the Second Suspension the student must be counseled and interventions implemented to attempt to prevent a 3rd suspension. Written documentation showing the date of counseling, intervention plan, parent signature, parent comments and the signature of the person conducting the counseling conference, must be submitted with the 3rd suspension to CWA. A third suspension cannot be given if the above requirement has not been done or documented.

DOCUMENTS

kept on file

- Student specific documents
- Custody Papers
- Family & Emergency Contact Info



Birth Certificate/ Health Card/ Social Security Card:

The Louisiana State Department of Education requires that all children, upon entering Kindergarten, Pre-K, or **any subsequent grade in any public school**, present the following to the principal at registration:

- A **copy of their official birth certificate**
- A **copy of their Social Security card**
- A **completed health card**

Please check with the school nurse for current immunization requirements and additional information regarding the health card. (See also the **Health & Wellness** section of this handbook.)

Students will be registered using their **legal name** as shown on these official documents.

Custody Papers and Special Custody Concerns:

- When applicable, please submit the **original child custody papers** to the school office for duplication. A current copy must be kept in the front office to ensure proper adherence to custody arrangements.
- It is important to **promptly update the school office and principal** whenever there are any changes to custody agreements.
- The school must have custody documents on file if any restrictions are indicated on the student's entrance form.
- Additionally, parents are asked to **inform the classroom teacher** of any special custody concerns that may affect their child during the school day.

Family and Emergency Contact Information

- Please update all telephone numbers and addresses, including apartment and lot numbers, as changes occur throughout the school year.
- Be sure to list the name, relationship, and telephone numbers of **two (2) local emergency contacts** who can be reached if you cannot be contacted.
- Also, please ensure you have **permission from each person** before listing them as an emergency contact.

Student DRESS CODE

- Highland Student Dress Code
 - Pants & Shorts
 - Shirts & Tops
 - Dresses
 - Shoes
 - General guidelines
- Ouachita Parish Student Dress Code Guidelines



Highland Student Dress Code

The basic responsibility for student appearance rests with both the parents and the students. Good personal hygiene contributes to a comfortable classroom environment. Clothing or fashion that disrupts classroom instruction will not be permitted.

Any dress code violation will result in a phone call to the parent/guardian to promptly bring appropriate clothing for the student. Repeated violations may lead to further disciplinary action. The principal or designee reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, hairstyles, and accessories. Highland Elementary will follow the Ouachita Parish School Board (OPSB) student dress code policy.

Students who come to school smelling of marijuana or other strong, distracting odors will be required to change clothes at school or be picked up and sent home to change. Parents or guardians may be contacted to retrieve any student belongings that carry such odors. Additionally, parents or guardians who arrive on school grounds with strong odors may be asked to leave the premises.

Dress Code Guidelines for All Students (Grades Pre-K through 5)

Pants/Shorts:

- Must be worn at waist level.
- Shorts must be mid-thigh length or longer (approximately even with fingertips when arms are at the side).
- No holes with skin showing.
- Pajama pants are not allowed.
- Leggings (including athletic types) may only be worn with a long top that fully covers the rear when arms are raised or with a dress/skirt no shorter than 2 inches above the knee.

Shirts/Tops:

- Must be appropriate for school (no inappropriate images or alcohol-related slogans).
- Mesh shirts are not allowed.
- No spaghetti straps, tank tops, off-the-shoulder, backless, or cropped shirts.
- Shirts must be long enough to cover the midriff when arms are raised.
- Sleeveless shirts must have straps at least 3 inches wide.

Dresses:

- Full skirts or dresses must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee and worn with shorts or leggings underneath.
- Spaghetti strap, off-the-shoulder, and backless dresses are not allowed.
- Sleeveless dresses must have straps at least 3 inches wide.
- No tennis skirts/skorts or dresses.

Student Dress Code (continuesd)

Shoes:

- Shoes must be safety-conscious and preferably tennis shoes.
- High heels or high wedges are not allowed due to safety concerns.
- Shoes with wheels or rollers are prohibited.
- **Slippers or house-shoe style slides are not allowed.**

General:

- Distracting hairstyles such as mohawks or unnatural/vivid hair colors are not allowed.
- Distracting headbands or hair accessories are prohibited.
- Hair must be kept out of the eyes to allow proper eye contact with faculty and staff.
- Hats, caps, and sunglasses are not permitted during school hours.
- Earrings or studs may only be worn in the ears.

Please label all of your child's items (jackets, backpacks, etc.) with his/her full name.

Lost and found items are located in the computer lab. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity or discarded at the end of each semester.

Ouachita Parish Dress Code Guidelines

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The policy of the Ouachita Parish School Board shall be that no mode of attire shall be considered proper for school wear that disrupts the classroom and/or the school's positive learning environment. In questions regarding student dress and grooming, the principal or his/her designee of each school shall make the final decision as to what is considered proper or improper dress according to the guidelines provided.

The School Board desires to teach each student to use good judgment in his/her total appearance so that the attention of others is not distracted from the purpose of the school. Cleanliness and the values of the community shall be a basic consideration.

NOTIFICATION

The School Board shall notify the parent or guardian of each student of the dress code specifications and their effective date. The dress code shall be distributed in written form or posted on the school's website annually.

If the School Board adopts a uniform policy or modifies an existing uniform policy, it shall notify in writing the parent or guardian of each student of the policy adoption or uniform policy modification at least sixty (60) days prior to the effective date of the new or revised policy. Each school shall display any uniform selected for a reasonable period prior to the proposed effective date for wearing of the uniform.

However, nothing shall prohibit the School Board from requiring a new or revised dress code or uniform policy without the required notice in the event of an emergency. For the purposes of this policy, emergency shall mean an actual or imminent threat to health or safety which may result in loss of life, injury, or property damage.

BODY ARMOR

It shall be unlawful and against School Board policy for any student or non-student to wear or possess on his/her person, at any time, body armor on any School Board property, school campus, at a school-sponsored function, on a school bus or other school transportation, or in a firearm-free zone, with limited exceptions as enumerated in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §14:95.9, which includes permitting a student to wear, carry, or possess a backpack on school property or a school bus that has bullet-resistant metal or other material intended to provide protection from weapons or bodily injury.

School-sponsored functions shall include, but not be limited to, athletic competitions, dances, parties, or any extracurricular activities. A firearm-free zone means any area inclusive of any school campus and within 1,000 feet of any such school campus, and within a school bus, wherein the possession of firearms is prohibited, except as specifically set forth in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§14:95.2(C) and 14:95.6(B).

DRESS AND PERSONAL GROOMING

Student dress, grooming and personal hygiene are not to adversely affect the students' participation in classes, school programs, other school-related activities or detract from the learning environment of the school. Extremes in style and fit in student dress and extremes in style of grooming will not be permitted. Administrators are authorized to use their discretion in determining extremes in styles of dress and grooming and what is appropriate and suitable for school wear. No student shall wear, possess, use, distribute, display or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, blade, symbols, sign or other things which are evidence of affiliation with drugs, alcohol, violence or gang related activities or exhibits profane or obscene language/gestures. Policies regarding dress and grooming stress the importance of reducing distractions that inhibit learning and are addressed as an attempt to enhance the learning environment.

The following general guidelines are required in all grades.

Clothing:

Clothing with suggestive words or pictures will not be allowed.

Jeans and pants should not have any skin showing.

Mini skirts should not be worn.

Spandex based pants that fit like leggings may only be worn under a regular dress or skirt.

All shorts need to be appropriate length.

Hooded garments are discouraged, but will be allowed. Under no circumstance is the hood allowed on the student's head at any time while on school campus or on the school bus. If the student violates this rule the student will then receive behavior consequences. No hooded garments are allowed when students take any standardized test.

Body Piercings:

Ear piercings may be worn if not excessive in size that could pose a safety issue to the student or cause a distraction to the learning environment. Only nose studs may be worn by high school students (grades 9-12). No other piercings are allowed.

Hair Styles:

The School Board shall not exclude a student on account of a natural, protective or cultural hairstyle.

Natural, protective, or cultural hairstyle shall include, but is not limited to, afros, dreadlocks, twists, locs, braids, cornrow braids, Bantu knots, curls, and hair styled to protect hair texture or for cultural significance.

Hair styles or hairdos are required to be clean and neat. Hair styles that cause a disturbance or attract undue attention to a student will not be allowed. The principal or designee will have the final say on the dress code.

Shoes/Footwear: Students will not be allowed to wear house shoes, house slippers, or flip-flops. Other backless shoes are discouraged due to safety concerns.

Anything not mentioned in the above policy the administration or designee will make the determination as to whether dress/grooming is appropriate.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

The Ouachita Parish School Board shall permit each school in the Ouachita Parish School System to determine whether each individual school shall participate in a school uniform program. Once uniforms have been approved and implemented at a school the wearing of uniforms by students shall be mandatory. However, parents may request an exemption from the requirement of their child wearing a school uniform based on medical necessity or religious belief by submitting a written request for such exemption to the principal of the school the child attends which sets forth the request. Any student exempted from wearing a school uniform shall still be required to comply with all other applicable school dress codes.

Uniform Requirements

Pants: Cotton twill or polyester blend pant in accordance with dress code. Pants with a belt loop must wear belt. Colors: Khaki, Navy, Black (per designated school colors)

Shorts: Cotton twill or polyester blend walking shorts in accordance with dress code. Pants with belt loops must wear belts. Colors: Khaki, Navy, Black (per designated school)

Shirts: Polo style: short or long sleeve of designated school color
Oxford shirts: short or long sleeve, button down or straight collar (boys); button down or Peter Pan collar (girls).
Colors: designated by school

Sweatshirts, Sweaters or Hoodies* (See OPSB policy for Hoodies.)

Crew neck, v-neck, or cardigan. Colors: designated by school

Skirts/Jumpers/Skorts

Cotton twill or polyester blend, pleated or plain front, must be three (3) inches above the knee or longer may only be worn by girls. Colors: Khaki, Navy, Plaid (one plaid may be selected by individual schools. Colors: designated by school

Shoes: Students will not be allowed to wear house shoes, house slippers, or flip-flops. Other backless shoes are discouraged due to safety concerns.

Socks: Determined at individual schools.

Belts required: Black or Brown.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

Students who violate the dress code shall be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

A student enrolled in grades prekindergarten through five shall not be suspended or expelled from school or suspended from riding on any school bus for a uniform violation that is not tied to willful disregard of school policies.

Revised: August, 2010

Revised: September 13, 2022

Revised: October 13, 2015

Revised: May 14, 2024

Revised: July 23, 2019

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§14:95.2, 14:95.6, 14:95.9, 17:81, 17:111, 17:416, 17:416.7

Scott v. Board of Education, 304 N.Y.S.S. 2d 601 (1969)

Karr v. Schmidt, 460 F. 2d 609 (5th Cir. 1972)

Board minutes, 10-13-15, 7-23-19, 9-13-22, 5-14-24

FIELD TRIPS

- Eligibility & Behavior
- Chaperones
- Check-Out Procedures



Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled throughout the school year to enhance the instructional program. Participation in these trips is a privilege and not a requirement.

Eligibility & Behavior

- Students must meet **conduct requirements** (as set by each grade level) to attend field trips.
- **School fees must be paid in full or payment arrangements made with our bookkeeper before teachers can accept any field trip payments.**
- Students with **excessive absences** or who are **significantly behind in classwork** may be excluded from field trips or off-campus activities until all make-up work is completed.

Chaperones

- In some cases, teachers may request chaperones to attend. Chaperones must:
 - Provide their **own transportation**
 - Confirm participation with the **classroom teacher in advance**
 - Undergo a **background check and fingerprinting through OPSB** at the parent's expense.
- **Siblings or other children may not attend field trips** under any circumstances. Field trips are for students and designated chaperones only.

Check-Out Procedures

- For safety reasons, **students may not be checked out while on a field trip.**
- All students must **arrive and leave with the class by bus.**
- If a chaperoning parent needs to check out their child, they must return to school and **sign them out through the front office.**

* Students must meet **conduct requirements**, as determined by each grade level, to participate in field trips and special school events.

* Students who have been **suspended** may not be allowed to attend field trips or school events for the **remainder of the semester** in which the suspension occurred.

HEALTH and WELLNESS

- Crisis Evacuation Plan
- Illness or Injury at School
- Immunizations
- Lice Policy
- OPSB Medication Policy
- School Nurse Program
- Substance Abuse Policy



Crisis Evacuation Plan

Although unlikely, some crisis situations may require the school to be evacuated and students relocated to a nearby site. If emergency personnel determine that the school building is unsafe for an extended period, students will be relocated to one of the following designated evacuation sites:

New Iona Presbyterian Church 1403 Wellerman Rd.

OR

LandMark Nursing Home 1611 Wellerman Rd.

Important Instructions for Parents

In the event of an emergency at the school:

- Do NOT report to the school to pick up your child.
- Instead, go directly to one of the evacuation sites listed above.
- Follow all instructions from school staff and emergency personnel.
- Be prepared to present valid photo identification to sign out your child.

Your cooperation is critical in ensuring the safety and accountability of all students during emergency situations.

Ill or Injured Children

If your child becomes **ill** at school, the school nurse will contact you immediately. If you cannot be reached, we will use the **emergency contact information** you have provided.

Please note: We cannot keep ill children at school. If the nurse determines your child must go home, **they must be picked up promptly**. Students with a **fever, diarrhea or vomiting** must be **symptom-free for at least 24 hours without medication** before returning to school.

If your child is **injured** at school:

- We will make the student comfortable and then contact you as soon as possible.
- Minor injuries (scrapes, cuts, or bruises) will be treated with basic first aid (e.g., soap, water, bandage), and a phone call or note will be sent home if deemed necessary by the nurse.
- If the injury is more serious, or **emergency medical attention is required, 911 will be called** immediately.

Keeping your contact information up to date is essential to ensuring timely communication in these situations.

Student Insurance

Highland Elementary and Ouachita Parish Schools **do not carry insurance** on students.

If you have **private insurance**, and you choose to purchase optional **student insurance**, your private insurance will serve as the **primary coverage**, and the student insurance will be **secondary**.

If your child **does not have private insurance**, the school-offered student insurance may be a good option to consider.

Insurance enrollment forms will be available during registration for those interested.



Immunizations

In accordance with **Louisiana State Law (Statute 17:170)**, all children entering the school system are required to be **immunized against childhood diseases**.

Students who are not in compliance with immunization requirements **will not be allowed to attend school** until all necessary immunizations have been completed. Failure to comply will result in the information being submitted to the appropriate authorities.

Important Notes

- If any immunization is administered **before its scheduled due date**, **additional doses may be required**. This is monitored through the state immunization database.
- If your child is **allergic to immunizations**, you must submit **official documentation** from either the **Health Unit** or your child's **physician**.

Please consult the school nurse for guidance on current immunization requirements or to verify your child's immunization status.

Ouachita Parish School Board Policy on Head Lice

In accordance with Ouachita Parish School Board policy, any student found to have an active head lice infestation will be excluded from school and referred for treatment. Parents will be notified if their child has head lice or nits.

Before a student may return to school, they must be examined by the school nurse, principal, or principal's designee, and found to be completely free of lice and live nits.

OUACHITA PARISH MEDICATION POLICY

Parents cannot send any type of medication, prescription or over-the-counter, to school with their child. Over-the-counter medications include, but are not limited to, cough drops, ear drops, Tylenol, antacids, etc. If a student must take medication at school, the parent may bring the medication and administer it to the child.

If the student must take medication on a long-term basis, a parent or guardian must meet with the school nurse before a school official may administer the medication. The student must have written orders from a physician detailing the name, dosage, and time of administration on the proper medication order form. When the medication needs to be replaced, **the parent or guardian must bring the medication to school and sign it in with the nurse or office personnel that have been certified to administer medications to students.**

Students are not allowed to have any medication in their possession on the bus or at school with exception of an inhaler or Epi-pen, and only once the written orders from the doctor have been received by the nurse. Medication must be in a current container labeled by the pharmacy. No more than a 25 day supply will be accepted.

UNAUTHORIZED (Over-the-Counter/Prescription) DRUGS:

Any student found to be in possession of any unauthorized OVER-THE-COUNTER OR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS, will be dealt with in the following manner:

<u>FIRST OFFENSE</u>	The principal or his designee will confer with the parent/guardian and student advising them of the Louisiana State Law and the Ouachita School Board Policy concerning the administration of medication.
<u>SECOND OFFENSE</u>	The student will be suspended for three days, plus attend a conference with the Director of Child Welfare and Attendance.
<u>THIRD OFFENSE</u>	The student will be recommended for expulsion for the remainder of the semester or the remainder of the school year.

Ouachita Parish Schools Nurse Program

The school nurse program continues to expand its services, and strives to fulfill mandated legislation. Their primary concern is for the health, safety, and welfare of students. The school nurse is available as a resource person for any health related concerns you may have. The nurse can provide preventive measures, health counseling, education, and can assist with medical problems. The nurse can help to promote understanding of chronic health problems and assist the student, family and school personnel in the adjustment of those problems.

The school nurse needs to be notified of any changes that occur in your child's health condition. Provide updated telephone numbers and address changes to facilitate proper care to meet the needs of the child. Please submit needs in writing to your school nurse each year.

If you have any questions or concerns, you may call the school office to meet with the school nurse.

Screening programs/classes taught which are performed during the year are as follows:

- 1.Mandated vision and hearing screenings per recommendation by the American Academy of Pediatrics or by special request of parents or school personnel. Screenings are primarily conducted in Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and odd grades.
- 2.Head lice checks on elementary students per parish protocol. At the request of a teacher or parent, the school nurse will perform a lice check for a student or classroom. The parents will be notified immediately if lice/nits are noted.
- 3.General overall assessment of students which may include, but not limited to, vital signs, listening to heart and lung sounds and visual assessments.
- 4.Health and Hygiene classes are taught to 5th grade girls and boys.

*If you do not want your child to participate in any of the above optional screenings, then you must notify the school nurse in writing by the first of September.

Please mail to:School Nurse
Highland Elementary School
1501 Wellerman Rd.
West Monroe, La. 71291



OUACHITA PARISH SCHOOL BOARD SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

PURPOSE:

To be in full compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, Public Law 101-226, the Ouachita Parish School Board adopts and implements a drug prevention program to prevent the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees on school premises or as a part of any school activity. This program conveys to students and employees the message that the possession and use of illicit drugs and the possession and use of alcohol are wrong and harmful.

The guidelines and procedures outlined in this Substance Abuse Policy apply to all students and all employees of Ouachita Parish School System and will remain in effect until such time as it is necessary for the Ouachita Parish School Board to amend the policy to reflect new mandates as set forth by state or federal law.

Harmful involvement with mind-altering chemicals/alcohol is an illness. Use and abuse by students and/or employees affects the quality of the system's education. The Ouachita Parish School System is responsible for providing a drug/alcohol free environment for students and a drug free workplace for employees. However, because the use and abuse of alcohol/drugs by students and employees may exist, the Board accepts the responsibility to work to identify those in need of help and to provide guidelines for obtaining that help.

The Ouachita Parish School System is committed to educating students and employees about the harmful effects of alcohol/drugs. It is also committed to setting standards of conduct that clearly prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises or as a part of any of its activities. These standards are applicable to all students and all employees. The standards of conduct will be given to students, parents, and employees, notifying them that student and employee compliance is mandatory.

Student Policy and Procedures



The Ouachita Parish School System will implement for all students in grades K-12 an age appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention program which addresses the legal, social and health consequences of drug and alcohol use. Information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs or alcohol will be provided. The Substance Abuse Prevention Program will also work to help students increase self-confidence and self-esteem in a supportive atmosphere, to realistically define personal and academic goals, to develop strategies to carry out these goals, to develop new behaviors in coping with peer pressure, and to learn strategies for improving adult relationships. The student educational program will include:

1. A minimum of sixteen (16) contact hours of drug education for all students grade K-9.
A minimum of eight (8) contact hours of drug education for all students grades 10-12.
2. An explanation of the Board's policy of maintaining a drug/alcohol free school environment.
3. An explanation of the penalties that will be imposed upon the student for any drug/alcohol violations occurring on any school grounds or at any school activities held after school hours.

Students' use, unlawful possession or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on the school premises or as a part of any of its activities is prohibited. By law, all employees are required to report any suspected incidents of drug/alcohol possession or use by a student.

- A. When a student is suspected of having a drug/alcohol use problem and is reported to the principal or the Substance Abuse Prevention Team, the following action may be taken:
 1. Investigate the problem
 2. Confront the individual/parent/guardian
 3. Make recommendations for helping the student
- B. A student suspected of drug/alcohol possession or of being under the influence of drugs/alcohol on the school premises will be reported to the principal. After investigation, if the student is in possession of a controlled dangerous substance governed by the uniform controlled dangerous substance law, the following action, Articles C-F, will be taken.
- C. In accordance with R.S.17:436 SEC. 436.1

Administration of Medication:

Students requiring or in need of prescription or over-the-counter drugs at school must provide the medication to the designated school employee with physician's documentation and written parental permission to administer such medication.

No student shall have permission to possess or administer to themselves or others any prescription or over-the-counter medication at school. Violation of this procedure will result in the discipline of the student as outlined in School Board Policy.

D. R.S.17:46 (b) © (1)

Notwithstanding the provision of R.S.17:46416 (B), any student, sixteen years of age or older, found guilty of possession of, or knowledge of intentional distribution of or possession with the intent to distribute any illegal narcotic, drug, or other controlled substance on school property, on a school bus, or at a school event pursuant to a hearing as provided R.S.17:416 © (1) shall be expelled from school for a minimum of twenty four (24) calendar months. However, any student under the age of sixteen and in grades six through twelve shall be expelled from school for a minimum period of twelve (12) calendar months.

E. R.S.17:46 (C) (1) (2) (a) (1)

In cases involving students in kindergarten through grade five found guilty of possession of or knowledge of an intentional distribution of or possession with the intent to distribute any illegal narcotic drug, or other controlled substance on school property, on a school bus, or at a school event pursuant to a hearing as provided for by R.S.17:46© (1) shall be referred to the local school board where the student attends school through a recommendation for action from the superintendent or his designee.

F. R.S.17:46 (3) (a)

Any student arrested for possession or of intentional distribution of, or possession with the intent to distribute any illegal narcotic, drug, or other controlled substance on school property shall be referred by the school principal or his designee, within five (5) days after such arrests, for testing or screening by a qualified medical professional for evidence of abuse of alcohol, illegal narcotic, drugs or other controlled dangerous substance.

MEALS

and concession

- Concession
- Meals
- Special Lunch Events



Concession

Concession items are \$1 each and are available for purchase daily during concession time.

- Students in recess detention may be allowed to purchase concessions if time permits; however, items will be placed in the student's backpack and may only be eaten after school.
- Outside food, drinks, or candy are not allowed for snacks during the school day.

If your child has special dietary needs, please contact the principal to discuss accommodations.

Meals

Highland Elementary will participate in the **National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program** through the **Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)** for the current school year.

What this means for your family:

- **All enrolled students** are eligible to receive **one free healthy breakfast and lunch each school day — at no cost to your household.**
- **No meal application** is required to participate.

Important Reminders:

- **Second servings and extra items** (such as additional milk, juice, or snacks) **must be paid for** and **cannot be charged.** Students must have funds in their **cafeteria account** to purchase extras.
- If your child transfers to a **Non-CEP school**, you will have **10 days** to submit an application for meal benefits at the new school.

Breakfast Service:

Breakfast is served each morning from **7:25 a.m.** until **7:45 a.m.** Please ensure your child arrives in plenty of time if they plan to eat breakfast at school.

Special Lunch Events

Throughout the school year, Highland Elementary will host **special lunch events** such as **Thanksgiving Lunch**, where family members are invited to join their students for a cafeteria lunch.

- These events will follow a **special event schedule**, which will be shared in advance.
- The **visitor lunch cost is \$5.00** (subject to change based on food service updates).
- **Outside food or drinks from restaurants are not allowed** on these special lunch days.
- **Students will not be called out of class** to eat with other classes or groups during instructional time.

Please note: Some special lunches may be limited or adjusted this year due to **Ouachita Parish food supply shortages**.

We appreciate your understanding and support in helping us maintain a safe and organized environment for all students and staff.

PARENT

information

- Communication with Teachers
- Student Transfers
- Telephone messages
- Visitors
- Helpful Tips
 - Suggestions for Parents
 - Important Notes
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- PTO
- Personal & School Property
- Money
- Fundraisers



Communication with Teachers

If you need to get in touch with your child's teacher, you have several convenient options:

- **Email your child's teacher** using the address provided on our school website: <https://highland.opsb.net>
- **Use ClassDojo or other electronic messaging platforms** if your child's teacher uses them. You can expect a response within **24 hours (Monday–Friday)**.
- **Call the school office** at 396-1213 and leave a message for your child's teacher. Teachers are unable to answer the phone during class but will return your call within 24 hours (Monday–Friday). If your call is an emergency, please inform the school secretary so your message can be handled promptly.

We appreciate your cooperation in using these communication channels to help maintain smooth and effective contact.

Student Transfers

If you are transferring to another school, please notify the office by phone or send a note **a few days before** your child's withdrawal date. This allows us enough time to complete necessary paperwork, collect textbooks, and return any library books.

Telephone/Messages

Please do not call the school office to request that messages be delivered to students, except in cases of real emergencies.

Visitors

In accordance with Ouachita Parish Policy and to ensure the safety of students and staff, all parents and visitors must report to the office upon entering the building. Visitors are required to sign in on the visitor register and wear an identification tag while on campus. A valid picture ID may be requested at check-in.

Visitors are not permitted to enter classrooms during instructional time unless invited by the teacher for a pre-scheduled conference or to assist with special projects. Upon leaving, visitors must sign out and return their identification tag to the office.

Please respect these procedures, as they are in place to ensure the safety and security of everyone in our school community.

Suggestions for Parents

Good discipline originates in the home. Parents are a child's first teachers and play a crucial role in instilling good behavior habits and a positive attitude toward school and learning.

Parents of Highland students are encouraged to:

- Recognize that the teacher acts in place of the parent while the child is at school.
- Teach the child respect for laws, private and public property, authority, and the rights of others.
- Ensure prompt and regular school attendance, adhering to all attendance rules and procedures.
- Collaborate with the school regarding recommendations made in the best interest of the child.
- Engage with your child about school activities and maintain an active interest in report cards and academic progress.

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR PARENTS:

- Please visit our school website at highland.opsb.net and click on your child's teacher's name to stay informed. You can also access your child's grades through OnCourse.
- Each grade level uses additional communication tools such as ClassDojo to keep parents updated. Staying connected with these platforms helps you stay informed about important school activities and announcements.
- Ensure that both your child's teacher and the school office have your current phone numbers, and be sure to sign up for messaging with the teacher. More information will be shared at parent meetings held at the beginning of the school year.
- Test papers are sent home weekly with all students (Grades K-5) every Tuesday in Bulldog Folders. Please review these papers, sign the folder, and return it to class the next day. If your child does not bring home a folder, you should receive a special note or contact from the teacher. If you do not receive the folder for that week, please contact your child's homeroom teacher.
- Communication with your child's teacher is essential to provide the best educational experience possible. If any issues arise, please contact the teacher first via OPSB email or call the school to leave a message. Most concerns can be resolved through positive and direct communication between parent and teacher.
- The Ouachita Parish School System operates on a 9-week grading period. Highland Elementary will send home progress reports at the midpoint of each grading period. Please sign and return these reports to the teacher the following day.

Parent/ Teacher Conferences

Effective communication is an essential part of your child's education. We encourage parents to maintain close contact with their child's teacher regarding academic progress and any concerns.

Please note that **teachers cannot conference or respond to messages during instructional time.** However, they are happy to schedule an appointment to discuss your child's progress. To arrange a meeting, please call the school office or email the teacher directly.

Many teachers also use ClassDojo to send quick reminders and updates. To help streamline communication, we ask that only one guardian per household join the app. (For more information, see the "Parent Information – Communication" section.)

PTO

Our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is a vital partnership between parents and faculty/staff that supports and enhances our school programs. The PTO has contributed to important school improvements such as purchasing student technology, playground equipment, and much more.

We warmly invite you to join the PTO and share your time and talents to help make our school the best it can be!

Personal Property

Please label all of your child's belongings (jackets, backpacks, etc.) with their full name to help ensure items are returned if lost.

The **Lost and Found** is located in the nurses office and will be displayed weekly in the cafeteria during lunchtime. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity or discarded at the end of each 9 weeks. Follow Highland and our PTO on Facebook to stay current on lost and found information.

Students are not permitted to bring radios, electronic devices, toys, games, gum, or candy to school. Buying or selling items among students is strictly prohibited. Items confiscated may not be returned.

School Property

Books and Devices

Students are responsible for all textbooks and devices assigned and all library books received. Lost or damaged books must be replaced/ paid for by the parent or guardian.

Bus, Classroom, and School Building

All items and surfaces on Highland's campus are considered school property. Any vandalism or removal of items will result in the student meeting with the principal or designee for disciplinary action, which may include suspension.

(See also "Conduct and Discipline" and "Suspensions" sections in the Highland Student Handbook.)

Concession

Concession items are \$1 each. The concession stand is open daily unless there are special circumstances or events. Please make sure your student brings concession money with them to school. Money **will not be delivered to students after the 7:50 bell**. Thank you for your cooperation!

Outside food/drinks/candy for snacks are not allowed. This is for the safety of our students as some have allergy concerns. If your child has special dietary needs, please discuss with the principal.

Fees

School fees are \$30-\$45 per student (depending on grade level) and include a \$5 technology fee. Fees are due on the first day of school or upon registration during the school year and must be paid directly to the teacher so that she can provide a receipt. **Please ensure all fees are paid in full by October 1.**

These fees cover required workbooks, technology supplies, art supplies, copies, awards, report card envelopes and postage, and other daily-use items for your child. **If needed, a payment schedule may be arranged through the school office.**

Please note that all school fees must be paid or payment arrangements made before sending money for field trips, yearbooks, or other purchases.

Important: Some teachers may request additional nominal fees to cover classroom items such as binders, organizers, and tote bags.

Fundraisers

Our fundraisers help support the programs that make our school special! The money raised goes toward improving activities, buying new technology, and making our campus better—like adding new playground equipment. You don't have to participate, but every little bit helps and is truly appreciated. When we all work together, we make Highland an even better place for our kids!

TECHNOLOGY

- Cell Phones
- Computers
- OPSB Web Publishing
- OPSB Medication Policy
- Ivy Daniels Act





STUDENT USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES

The Ouachita Parish School Board shall prohibit, as outlined in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:239, students from using or operating cell phones, cameras, video tape recorders, digital recorders of any kind, or any electronic telecommunication device in public school buildings and on school buses used to transport public school students. Cell phone “use” is defined for this policy as the cell phone or device being in the “on” position or mode. Student cell phones or devices are required to be kept out of sight in their lockers and turned off during school hours in a school building or on school grounds, or whenever on a school bus. This policy is inclusive of any such device as stipulated above in a student’s possession.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES DISCIPLINE

First Offense: Parents will be called. The phone is taken and returned to the student at the end of the day. Written minor infraction that parents must sign.

Second Offense: Parents will be called. Phone taken and returned when parent picks it up prior to 3:00 p.m. Written minor infraction that parents must sign.

Third Offense: Parents will be called. Phone will be taken for three (3) days and parents must pick up the phone at school prior to 3:00 p.m. Written minor infraction that parents must sign.

Fourth Offense: Parents will be called. Phone will be taken for five (5) days and parents must pick up the phone at school prior to 3:00 p.m. Referral is written and put into the system.

Fifth Offense: Parents will be called. The phone will be taken for ten (10) days and parents must pick up the phone at school prior to 3:00 p.m. Referral is written, the student is given suspension, and must see CWA (Child Welfare and Attendance) before returning to school.

EXCEPTION: In the event of an emergency, any person may use any electronic device available. Emergency is defined as an actual or imminent threat to public health or safety which may result in loss of life, injury, or property damage.



COMPUTER USE

Because computer and internet access are provided in Ouachita Parish School System schools as an educational resource, the following procedures and guidelines are used to help ensure appropriate, considerate, ethical, and responsible use of all technology at Ouachita Parish School System schools. All users should be aware that the inappropriate use of electronic information resources can be a violation of local, state, and federal laws. Violations can lead to prosecution.

1) Acceptable use

The use of an assigned account must be in support of educational goals and objectives of the Ouachita Parish School System. Students are not allowed to access email accounts others than those assigned by the teacher.

2) Network Etiquette

Communication on the internet may be scrutinized by the teacher of the System Administrator. Each internet user is expected to abide by the following generally accepted rules of user etiquette.

- a. Be polite
- b. Use appropriate language
- c. Use email in an appropriate manner

3) The following behaviors are not permitted:

- a. Sending or displaying ANY offensive messages or pictures
- b. Encrypting of any files
- c. Using obscene language
- d. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others
- e. Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks.
- f. Trespassing in another person's folders, work, or files
- g. Intentionally wasting limited resource, including the use of "chain letters" and messages broadcasted to mailing lists or individuals
- h. Employing the computer for commercial purposes
- i. Revealing the personal address or phone number of any other person
- j. Changing the default settings (desktop settings, screen saver, etc.) on the computer
- k. Installing ANY unauthorized or unlicensed software on school/school board computers
- l. Installing ANY unauthorized or unlicensed school/school board software on personal/home computers
- m. Using ANY outside media (diskettes, CD's, tapes, etc.)
- n. Any illegal activities, "hacking", or attempts to otherwise compromise system security

Inappropriate use of the computer and internet access may result in the temporary or permanent cancellation of that privilege. As with any other serious violation of school or district rules and regulations, consequences of violations include the possibility of suspension or expulsion from school. Should a student violate this policy, he/she may lose computer and internet access privileges. Users agree to report any misuse of electronic information.

OPSB.net Web Publishing Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Ouachita Parish School Board (OPSB) website is to provide a means of effective communication between administrators, teachers, support staff, students, parents, and our community. All content on the OPSB website must adhere to the policies outlined in this document. Failure to follow these policies may result in a loss of publishing privileges and/or other disciplinary actions.

Organizational Responsibilities

- The Website Administrator is responsible for developing and maintaining the OPSB district website.
- The Communications Department has the primary responsibility for the content of the OPSB website. All content for the OPSB district website must be approved by the Communications Department.
- A Website Coordinator will be designated for each school in the district. Each school's Website Coordinator will be responsible for all content posted to that school's website. The Website Coordinator is also responsible for insuring that a release form is on file before publishing any identifiable student photos or works.
- The Webmaster is the person who actually creates, publishes, and maintains the school's website. The Webmaster may be a teacher (or other school employee), parent, or other individual deemed capable of publishing the school's website. However, the Website Coordinator is ultimately responsible for the content of the school's website.

Content Standards

- All content must adhere to all state, federal, and international laws concerning copyright and intellectual property rights.
- All official school board and school web pages should reside primarily on the OPSB web server. If a school chooses to host its website with another provider, the OPSB website will provide a link to the school's website only if the school's website meets all other criteria maintained in this policy.
- All content must be related to curriculum, instruction, or other school or school district related information.
- Personal information should not be published. Any phone numbers or email addresses should be ones used within the school system.
- The OPSB web server will not be used for personal or commercial financial gain or for any illegal activity. Links to retail or political sites will not be allowed.
- All web pages must not link to or contain any inappropriate material. The Communications Department will have full discretion in determining the appropriateness of content.

Student Safety

- Student names may be published without a release form. However, no identifiable student photo or student works may be published unless a signed release form is on file for the current school year for every associated student.
- No personal information (other than the student name) should ever be published about a student.
- No information that identifies the location of a student at any particular time during the school day (such as student schedules) should ever be published.
- Students are not allowed to have or use OPSB assigned email accounts.
- Students are not allowed to publish information to the OPSB web server



STUDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Ouachita Parish School system will implement for all students in grades K-12 an age appropriate developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention program which addresses the legal, social and health consequences of drug and alcohol use. Information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs or alcohol will be provided. The Substance Abuse Prevention Program will also work to help students increase self-confidence and self-esteem in a supportive atmosphere, to realistically define personal and academic goals, to develop strategies to carry out these goals to develop new behaviors in coping with peer pressure, and to learn strategies for improving adult relationships. The student educational program will include:

1. A minimum of sixteen (16) contact hours of drug education for all students grade K-9. A minimum of eight (8) contact hours of drug education for all students grades 10-12.
 2. An explanation of the Board's policy of maintaining a drug/alcohol free school environment.
 3. An explanation of the penalties that will be imposed upon the student for any drug/alcohol violations occurring on any school grounds or at any school activities held after school hours. Students' use, unlawful possession or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on the school premises or as a part of any of its activities is prohibited. By law, all employees are required to report any suspected incidents of drug/alcohol possession or use by a student.
- When a student is suspected of having a drug/alcohol use problem and is reported to the principal or the Substance Abuse Prevention Team, the following action may be taken:
 - a. Investigate the problem
 - b. Confront the individual/parent/guardian
 - c. Make recommendations for helping the student
 - A student suspected of drug/alcohol possession or of being under the influence of drugs/alcohol on the school premises will be reported to the principal. After investigation, if the student is in possession of a controlled dangerous substance governed by the uniform controlled dangerous substance law, the following action, Articles C-F, will be taken.
 - In accordance with R.S. 17:436 SEC. 436.1

Administration of Medication

Students requiring or in need of prescription or over-the-counter drugs at school must provide the medication to the designated school employee with physician's documentation and written parental permission to administer such medication. No student shall have permission to possess or administer to themselves or others any prescription or over-the-counter medication at school. Violation of this procedure will result in the discipline of the student as outlines in School Board Policy.

- R.S. 17:46 (B)©(1) Notwithstanding the provision of R.S. 17:416(B), any student, sixteen years of age or older, found guilty of possession of, or knowledge of intention distribution of or possession with the intent to distribute any illegal narcotic, drug, or other controlled substance on school property, on a school bus, or at a school event pursuant to a hearing as provided R.S.17:416©(1) shall be expelled from school for a minimum of twenty-four (24) calendar months. However, any student under the age of sixteen and in grades six through twelve shall be expelled from school for a minimum period of twelve (12) calendar months.
- R.S. 17:46 (C) (I) (2) (I) In cases involving students in kindergarten through grade five found guilty of possession of or knowledge of an intentional distribution of or possession with the intent to distribute any illegal narcotic, drug, or other controlled substance on school property on a school bus, or at a school event pursuant to a hearing as provided for by R.S. 17:46©(1) shall be referred to the local school board where the student attends school through a recommendation for action from the superintendent or his designee.
- (3) (a) Any student arrested for possession or of intentional distribution of, or possession with the intent to distribute any illegal narcotic, drug, or other controlled substance on school property shall be referred by the school principal or his designee, within five days after such arrest, for testing or screening by a qualified medical professional for evidence of abuse of alcohol, illegal narcotic, drugs or other controlled dangerous substance.



OUACHITA PARISH SCHOOL BOARD SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

PURPOSE

To be in full compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989. Public law 101-226, the Ouachita Parish School Board adopts and implements a drug prevention program to prevent the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees on school premises or as a part of any school activity. This program conveys to students and employees the message that the possession and use of illicit drugs and the possession and use of alcohol are wrong and harmful.

The guidelines and procedures outlined in this substance abuse Policy apply to all students and all employees of the Ouachita Parish School System and will remain in effect until such time as it is necessary for the Ouachita Parish School Board to amend the policy to reflect new mandates as set forth by state or federal law.

Harmful involvement with mind-altering chemical/alcohol is an illness. Use and abuse by students and/or employees affects the quality of the system's education. The Ouachita Parish School System is responsible for providing a drug/alcohol free environment for students and a drug free workplace for employees. However, because the use and abuse of alcohol/drugs by student and employees may exist, the Board accepts the responsibility to work to identify those in need of help and to provide guidelines for obtaining that help.

The Ouachita Parish School System is committed to educating students and employees about the harmful effects of alcohol/drugs. It is also committed to setting standards of conduct that clearly prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises or as a part of any of its activities. These standards are applicable to all students and all employees. The standards of conduct will be given to students, parents, and employees, notifying them that student and employee compliance is mandatory.



Highland Elementary School



1501 Wellerman Road West Monroe, LA 71291



318-396-1213



Fax: 318-397-1927

Date: August 10, 2026

Parent Notification – Ivy Daniels Act

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As required by the Louisiana Ivy Daniel Act, Highland Elementary will provide age-appropriate instruction to students on digital citizenship, online safety, and the responsible use of technology.

For elementary students, instruction will focus on:

- Using technology safely and responsibly.
- Respecting the privacy of others.
- Understanding that creating, altering, or sharing images to embarrass or harm someone is inappropriate.
- Knowing what to do if they encounter inappropriate content online, including telling a trusted adult.
-

Our goal is to help students become safe, respectful, and responsible digital citizens while reinforcing the importance of kindness and good decision-making both online and offline.

Thank you for your partnership in helping our students use technology safely and responsibly.

Sincerely,

Julie Norris

Julie Norris, Principal

OTHER

important information

- Section 504
- Homeless Education
- FERPA (Family Education Rights & Privacy Act)





POLICY STATEMENT

Section 504 Compliance

The policy of the Ouachita Parish School System is to provide a free and appropriate public education to each student within its jurisdiction, including students with disabilities, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability.

It is the responsibility of the Ouachita Parish School System to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.

Due process rights of disabled students and their parents under Section 504 will be enforced.

Information Regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of a disability in any program receiving federal funds. Section 504 states that: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied, the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Included in the U.S. Department of Education regulations for Section 504 is the requirement that disabled students be provided with a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

The Act defines a person with a handicap as anyone who has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities

- Major life activities include functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Major life activities also include other general activities such as eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating. In addition, major life activities include major bodily functions such as the functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. The above list of major life activities is not exhaustive.

School districts have specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services. Appropriate services are those designed to "level the playing field" and meet the needs of students with disabilities to the same extent that the needs of students without disabilities have been met so that students with disabilities may enjoy full participation in educational opportunities. This law is intended to provide individuals with disabilities equal opportunity to pursue employment, educational, and recreational goals without discrimination.

A student must meet the definition of a student with a disability as defined in the statute to be covered under Section 504. This determination is made by a team of persons knowledgeable about the student, the evaluation data, and placement options. If the student is determined to be disabled under Section 504, the team should review the nature of the disability, how it affects the student's education, and what accommodations and services are needed. An Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) must be developed and implemented if needed by the student. Periodic re-evaluations are required for qualified students who receive services. Districts are expected to establish prior notice and consent procedures to encourage parents' involvement in the educational decisions affecting their children. If the parent or legal guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of a school district, grievance procedures are in place to be followed.

PARENT AND STUDENT RIGHTS



IN STUDENT DETERMINATION OF PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY AS DEFINED IN SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

The following is a description of rights granted by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a federal law pertaining to students with disabilities. The law states that "qualified disabled persons will not be discriminated against on the basis of disability in any program, activity or employment practice. A disabled person is defined as any person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment." An intent of the law is to provide parents the opportunity to participate in and be informed of decisions about their student and their right to agree or disagree with those decisions.

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:

1. Have the school system notify you of your rights under federal law (Section 504).
2. Have your child receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). This includes the right to be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school system make reasonable accommodations to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in academic, nonacademic, and extra-curricular activities offered by the school system.
3. Have your child take part in and receive benefits from public educational programs without discrimination because of his/her disabling condition(s).
4. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, and educational placement of your child.
5. Have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided non-disabled students.
6. Have your child receive services, accommodations/modifications and related services that will meet his/her needs as well as the needs of non-disabled students if he/she is found to be eligible for services under Section 504.
7. Have evaluation, educational and placement decisions made based upon a variety of information sources and by persons who know the student, the evaluation data, and placement options.
8. Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if your child were placed in a program operated by the school system.
9. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions made regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program, and placement.
10. Obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny access to the records.
11. Receive a response from the school system to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records.
12. Request amendment of your child's educational records if there is reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If the school district refuses this request for amendment, it shall notify you within a reasonable time and advise you of the right to a hearing.
13. Have an opportunity to present complaints or an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program or placement. You and your child may take part in the hearing and be represented by counsel – counsel at your expense. Hearing requests must be made through the Ouachita Parish 504 Supervisor.
14. File a local grievance.

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, contact Ouachita Parish's Section 504 Supervisor: Barry Johnson, 800 Claiborne Street, West Monroe, LA 71292, (318) 432-5400.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Revised 4/2020

"Bridges of Ouachita, Homeless- Education Program"

"Bridges of Ouachita" Homeless Education Assistance Program abides by federally mandated policies to ensure that homeless children and youth have access to free, appropriate public education on the same basis as children and youth with established residences. Laws, regulations, practices, or policies should not act as barriers to the enrollment, attendance, or school success of homeless students. (Federal Law: Title VII-B; of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; 42 USC 11431 at seq.) (State Law: LA. RS. 17.238/Public Law 107-110, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; BESE Policy: 1.012.00 — 1012.05 and 2.012.00 — 2.012.04.

Definition of Homeless or "Highly Mobile" Individual. The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (P.L. 107-110) defines the term "homeless person" as one who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and who has a primary nighttime residence that is:

- Displaced due to a natural disaster
- A shelter/transitional housing
- The streets, cars, abandoned buildings, campgrounds, etc.
- An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized
- A residence with substandard living conditions (not fit for human habitation- no electricity, no heat, no running water, no windows/doors, holes in the roof/floor, no way to cook/store food)
- Two or more families living together in crowded or undesirable living conditions, (doubling/tripling up because they have no place of their own to live where they can safely and healthfully meet their basic needs in privacy and with dignity)
- Runaway children who have run away from home and live in a shelter or inadequate accommodations even if parents are willing to provide a home
- Unaccompanied youth
- In December 2001, Congress made the law protecting the educational rights of those children even stronger by passing the McKinney-Vento Act.

It gives children and youth in homeless situations the right to stay in their "school of origin" even if they move; enroll in a new school without proof of residence, immunizations, school records or other papers; some transportation to school; go to pre-school programs; get all the school services available; have disagreements with schools settled quickly (Dispute Resolution Policy) and be enrolled in the school for the "best interest of the child" while disagreements are settled.

Homeless Education Services:

- Identify homeless and youth by utilization of the Residency Questionnaire
- Immediate Enrollment Assistance, including obtaining birth and immunization records
- Free lunch
- Uniforms
- School Supplies/some school fees
- Medical/Dental /Housing/counseling referrals
- Tutorials in shelters and schools
- Connect students to summer programs/preschool programs/parenting education
- Link to literacy, social, and life skills training
- Pre-service case management

Enrollment: (Bulletin 741, Section 341)

In order to ensure homeless students are being identified and tracked appropriately in our school system, the following procedure is to be followed for enrolling any homeless child residing within our district:

1. The person who has the responsibility for enrolling a homeless child in school must contact the District Liaison Supervisor at the OPSS Media Center to fill out a Louisiana Residency Questionnaire for eligibility required by law. (Forms are also available at each school.)
2. Upon completion of this interview process and signature of the District Liaison, all legal documents will accompany the student/guardian to the school where the child will be attending and completing the enrollment process. Student information will also be sent to the Food/Nutrition Supervisor, SIS Coordinator and Child Welfare and Attendance.
3. As a result of this procedure, copies of enrollment process of any homeless child will be filed at the Media Center, the CWA office, school of attendance, SIS office, and Food/Nutrition office.

NOTE: A homeless child may or may not be in the custody of a legal parent or guardian. It is the responsibility of local LEAs to eliminate barriers that homeless youth may face, including revising local enrollment policies to accommodate unaccompanied youth. In the event of natural disasters, which may cause a sudden influx of homeless students locating within our school district, we will make the enrollment of these youth an immediate priority and assist them and their caregivers in every way possible to make the enrollment process go as smoothly and quickly as possible.

Contact Information:

Robin Wilhite, District Liaison Supervisor
(318) 432-5330 (318) 432-5297(Fax)
Ouachita Parish Media Center
1600 North 7th Street, West Monroe, Louisiana 71291

State Coordinator
1-225-219-2949, 1-877-453-2721
State of L.A. Department of Education
1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802



**TITLE VI, TITLE IX, THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA),
AND SECTION 504 COMPLIANCE**

Title VI, Title IX, ADA, and Section 504 are federal laws which ensure that individuals will be free from discrimination based upon sex, race, national origin, or disabilities. The Ouachita Parish School Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

To resolve problems which students, employees, or applicants for employment may believe are the result of discriminatory practices, the Ouachita Parish School Board has established a grievance policy. For further information about these federal laws or the grievance process, contact:

Twainna Calhoun
Personnel Supervisor and Title IX Coordinator
Ouachita Parish School Board
1600 North 7th Street
West Monroe, LA 71291
(318) 432-5000

Dr. Gail Autrey
Director of Student Support Services
Ouachita Parish Student Support Services
800 Claiborne Street
West Monroe, LA 71291
(318) 432-5400

Jason Thompson
Personnel Director and Title VI Coordinator
Ouachita Parish Student Support Services
1600 North 7th Street
West Monroe, LA 71291
(318) 432-5000

Barry Johnson
Section 504/ADA Supervisor
Ouachita Parish Student Support Services
800 Claiborne Street
West Monroe, LA 71291
(318) 432-5400

Student Privacy & Education Records Policy

The Ouachita Parish School Board acknowledges and affirms that parents, guardians, and students eighteen (18) years of age or older (eligible students) have certain rights under the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974\(FERPA\)](#) and Louisiana law with respect to the privacy, inspection, review, and disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record.

However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- o School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- o Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- o Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- o Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- o Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; o Accrediting organizations;
- o To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- o Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law

<https://www.opsb.net/about-us/student-privacy/jr-15c-student-privacy-education-records-policy>

SIGN AND RETURN pages

- Handbook Acknowledgement
- Information



Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement of Student Handbook

*Please initial each line, sign at the bottom of the page,
and return to your child's teacher the first week of school.*

I have read, discussed with my child and will comply with the following included in this handbook:

_____ all of Highland's policies and Ouachita Parish School Board's policies listed in this handbook

_____ student dress code

_____ student code of conduct

_____ state attendance policy and tardy policy

_____ I understand that I cannot send any type of medication, prescription or over-the-counter, to school with my child.

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Teacher Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____