# HIGHLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

## STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027



# HIGHLANDS HIGH SCHOOL

1500 Pacific Avenue Natrona Heights, PA 15065
Phone: 724.226.2400

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# HHS HANDBOOK STUDENT AND PARENT SIGNATURE

## 2026-2027

Student Name: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year!

Highlands High School is committed to cultivating a positive and nurturing learning environment that focuses on student success. As we begin the new school year, our goal is to develop and foster a growth mindset through dedication and hard work. We strive to provide an environment in which students are **R**espectful, **A**ccountable, **M**otivated, and **S**afe.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide students and parents with information regarding the academic and behavioral expectations of Highlands High School students. Upon reviewing this handbook, please sign below and return this form to your child's homeroom teacher no later than **Friday, September 4, 2026.**

I, _____ (guardian) and I, _____ (student), have read and understand the information shared in the student and parent handbook. I recognize that this handbook outlines expectations, programs, and consequences. I have asked clarifying questions to a Highlands High School staff or administrator.

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

_____ _____

Student Signature Date

# HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT INFORMATION

## Highlands School District Mission Statement

The mission of the Highlands School District is to create a quality, caring educational environment and to develop academic, vocational, and social programs that will enable students to achieve their highest potential in personal growth; and the family, the community, business, and industry will share in the responsibility to prepare students to function as effective citizens in an ever-changing global community.

## The Highlands Community

The Highlands School District is comprised of the municipalities of Fawn Township, Harrison Township, Brackenridge Borough, and Tarentum Borough. This area is approximately twenty-two square miles with a population of about 25,000. It is in the northeast corner of Allegheny County along the Allegheny River, about 18 miles from Pittsburgh. The Route 28 Expressway provides easy access to the Greater Pittsburgh area.

The immediate area contains major industries, including three primary research and development facilities. The four communities offer a mixture of urban and rural residential areas and a variety of recreational, educational, shopping, and health care facilities. Residents are within commuting distance of central Pittsburgh and West Pennsylvania colleges and universities, as well as a wide selection of business and technical schools.

## Organization of Schools

The Highlands School District is comprised of four school buildings and the Administrative Center, which is in the back wing of the High School. The breakdown of each building is below. Total enrollment is around 2,500 students.

- Early Childhood Center: Grades PK – K
- Highlands Elementary School: Grades 1 – 4
- Highlands Middle School: Grades 5 – 8
- Highlands High School: Grades 9 – 12

# Highlands Central Administration

1500 Pacific Avenue
PO Box 228,
Natrona Heights, PA 15065
Phone: 724.226.2400 · Fax: 724.226.8437

| Name | Title |
|---|---|
| Dr. Monique Mawhinney | Superintendent |
| Dr. Jenna Mozzocio | Assistant Superintendent |
| Mr. Paul Paradise | Executive Director of Business Affairs |
| Dr. Amber Dean | Director of Student Services |
| Dr. Michele Welter | Coordinator of Student Services |
| Dr. Rebecca Keenan | School Psychologist |
| Dr. Angela Kennedy | School Psychologist |
| Dr. Stanley Whiteman | Director of Building and Grounds |
| Mr. Jim Rounce | Director of Technology |
| Ms. Stacey Waffensmith | Director of Food Services |
| Ms. Katie Jo Stobert | Director of Athletics and Transportation |
| Mrs. Jennifer Goldberg | Coordinator of Communications |
| Officer Steve Guelich | School Police Officer |
| Mrs. Diane Faix | PIMS Coordinator |
| Mrs. Carmen Corna | School District Attendance Officer |

**Alma Mater**

Hail to thee, O' Highlands High School, We with reverence sing thy praise, May we ever keep thy memory, Bright and true throughout our day.

Gold and brown and white the colors, Of our Alma Mater proud, Let our zeal be fervent as we sing our glories loud.

Hail to thee, O' Highlands High School, We with reverence sing thy praise, May we ever keep thy memory Bright and true through all our days.

# SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

## Highlands High School School-Parent Compact 2026-2027

Highlands High School and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement, and how the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the Pennsylvania Core Standards. This school-parent compact is in effect during the 2026-2027 school year.

## School Responsibilities

Highlands High School will:

1. Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students to meet the state's student academic achievement standards as follows:
    - Provide engaging and rigorous learning experiences through educational best practices and research-based strategies.
    - Set high academic and behavior expectations.
    - Promote collaboration between staff, administration, parents, and community stakeholders.
    - Provide clear explanations of academic and classroom expectations to both students and parents.
    - Use differentiation of instruction and research-based interventions using progress monitoring and data collection.
    - Encourage lifelong learning through parent involvement activities.
    - Emphasize the respect and uniqueness of students and families.
    - Enable students to become responsible citizens by providing opportunities for success.
2. Hold parent-teacher conferences (at least annually in high school) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.
    - Parent conferences will be held yearly.
3. Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress.
    - State testing score reports will be mailed home to parents.
    - District Benchmark Assessment and Progress Reports will be given to parents via the classroom teacher or PowerSchool.
    - Quarterly progress reports and report cards are available via PowerSchool.
    - Provide PowerSchool information to check student grades, attendance, and/or teacher comments.

4. Provide parents with reasonable access to staff. Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows:
    - Back-to-School Night in September
    - Parent/Teacher Conferences in November
    - Learning Support and Speech IEP meetings throughout the year, as needed
    - Individual parent conferences as needed
    - Title I Night
    - Title I/PAC parent meetings/workshops
    - Email
5. Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities (*clearances needed; information can be obtained at goldenrams.com under RESOURCES*).
    - Parents may observe classrooms by request.
    - Parents are invited to Title I Night to participate in activities with their children.
    - Parents may volunteer to chaperone field trips.

## Parent Responsibilities

We, as parents, will support our child's learning in the following ways:

- Encourage proper study habits, including quiet study time at home.
- Promote my child's self-esteem by talking about schoolwork and activities.
- Reinforce respect for self and others.
- Stay informed about my child's progress by checking grades and attendance online, attending conferences, reviewing their folder/backpack daily, and communicating with the school as needed.
- Attend school events and/or volunteer to help in the classroom or at school activities.
- Encourage good reading habits by reading to or with my child.
- Limit my child's screen time (TV, tablets, etc.) and help select worthwhile programs.
- Encourage proper hygiene.
- Follow the district dress code.
- Encourage daily attendance and provide written excuses when a student is absent.

## Student Responsibilities

We, as students, will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and achieve the state's high standards. We will:

- Complete my work on time.
- Read at least 20 minutes a day outside of school time.
- Give to my parent/guardian all notices and information from my school every day.
- Work hard and challenge myself.
- Respect myself and others, and take responsibility for my behavior.

- Discuss with my parent/guardian what we did in school during the day.
- Limit my screen time (computer, TV, gaming device) and make time for reading.
- Be prepared for school every day — book bag, HW folder, pencil, etc.

## Highlands High School Will:

- Involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's parental involvement policy in an organized, ongoing, and timely way.
- Involve parents in the joint development of any school-wide program plan in an organized, ongoing, and timely way.
- Hold PAC (Parent Advisory Council) meeting(s) to inform parents of the school's participation in Title I programs, and to explain the Title I requirements, and the right of parents to be involved in Title I programs.
- Provide information to parents in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon the request of parents with disabilities, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand.
- Provide parents of participating children with information promptly about Title I programs that includes a description and explanation of the school's curriculum, the forms of academic assessment used to measure children's progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
- At the request of parents, provide opportunities for suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions about the education of their children.
- Provide to each parent an individual student report about the performance of their child on the district's benchmark assessments in Reading and Math, and, for students enrolled in Keystone Exam classes, the scores on their Biology, Algebra 1, and Literature exams.

# SECTION 1 — SCHOOL INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

## Highlands High School Front Office Staff

| Name | Title | Ext | Email |
|---|---|---|---|
| Patrick Baughman | Principal | x4605 | pbaughman@goldenams.com |
| Faith Foster | Assistant Principal | x4610 | ffoster@goldenams.com |
| Ryan Reitz | Dean of Students | x4615 | rreitz@goldenrams.com |
| Dr. Susie Gurrera | School Counselor (A–G) | x4653 | sgurrera@goldenrams.com |
| Beth Carrarini | School Counselor (H–O) | x4651 | bcarrarini@goldenrams.com |
| Marilyn Skwortz | School Counselor (P–Z) | x4652 | mskwortz@goldenrams.com |
| Jamie Mace | Secretary to the Principal | x4661 | jmace@goldenrams.com |
| Natalie Bayne | Secretary | x4660 | nbayne@goldenrams.com |
| Deanndra Wetzel | Secretary | x4650 | dwetzel@goldenrams.com |
| Mrs. Melissa Lentz | School Nurse | x4700 | mlentz@goldenrams.com |

The main phone number for the district is 724-226-2400; enter the extension number when prompted. To reach any staff member by email, the address is their first initial, last name @goldenrams.com.

# Bell Schedules

Highlands High School follows a bell schedule that provides students with a 30-minute lunch, eight academic periods separated by three minutes for class changes. Students can view their lunch periods on their schedule. The high school building opens to students at 7:10 AM.

## Regular Bell Schedule

| Period | A Lunch | Period | B Lunch | Period | C Lunch |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Homeroom | 7:40 – 7:55 | Homeroom | 7:40 – 7:55 | Homeroom | 7:40 – 7:55 |
| 1 | 7:58 – 8:40 | 1 | 7:58 – 8:40 | 1 | 7:58 – 8:40 |
| 2 | 8:43 – 9:25 | 2 | 8:43 – 9:25 | 2 | 8:43 – 9:25 |
| 3 | 9:28 – 10:10 | 3 | 9:28 – 10:10 | 3 | 9:28 – 10:10 |
| 4 | 10:13 – 10:55 | 4 | 10:13 – 10:55 | 4 | 10:13 – 10:55 |
| Lunch A | 10:58 – 11:28 | 5A | 10:58 – 11:40 | 5A | 10:58 – 11:40 |
| 5B | 11:31 – 12:13 | Lunch B | 11:43 – 12:13 | 6B | 11:43 – 12:25 |
| 6C | 12:16 – 12:58 | 6C | 12:16 – 12:58 | Lunch C | 12:28 – 12:58 |
| 7 | 1:01 – 1:43 | 7 | 1:01 – 1:43 | 7 | 1:01 – 1:43 |
| 8 | 1:46 – 2:30 | 8 | 1:46 – 2:30 | 8 | 1:46 – 2:30 |

## AM Activity Period Schedule

| Period | A Lunch | Period | B Lunch | Period | C Lunch |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Homeroom | 7:40 – 7:55 | Homeroom | 7:40 – 7:55 | Homeroom | 7:40 – 7:55 |
| Activity Period | 7:55 – 8:12 | Activity Period | 7:55 – 8:12 | Activity Period | 7:55 – 8:12 |
| 1 | 8:15 – 8:54 | 1 | 8:15 – 8:54 | 1 | 8:15 – 8:54 |
| 2 | 8:57 – 9:36 | 2 | 8:57 – 9:36 | 2 | 8:57 – 9:36 |
| 3 | 9:39 – 10:18 | 3 | 9:39 – 10:18 | 3 | 9:39 – 10:18 |
| 4 | 10:21 – 11:00 | 4 | 10:21 – 11:00 | 4 | 10:21 – 11:00 |
| Lunch A | 11:03 – 11:33 | 5A | 11:03 – 11:44 | 5A | 11:03 – 11:44 |
| 5B | 11:36 – 12:17 | Lunch B | 11:47 – 12:17 | 6B | 11:47 – 12:28 |
| 6C | 12:20 – 1:01 | 6C | 12:20 – 1:01 | Lunch C | 12:31 – 1:01 |
| 7 | 1:04 – 1:43 | 7 | 1:04 – 1:43 | 7 | 1:04 – 1:43 |

| Period | A Lunch | Period | B Lunch | Period | C Lunch |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 1:46 – 2:30 | 8 | 1:46 – 2:30 | 8 | 1:46 – 2:30 |

## PM Activity Schedule

| Period | A Lunch | Period | B Lunch | Period | C Lunch |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Homeroom | 7:40 – 7:55 | Homeroom | 7:40 – 7:55 | Homeroom | 7:40 – 7:55 |
| 1 | 7:58 – 8:37 | 1 | 7:58 – 8:37 | 1 | 7:58 – 8:37 |
| 2 | 8:40 – 9:19 | 2 | 8:40 – 9:19 | 2 | 8:40 – 9:19 |
| 3 | 9:22 – 9:57 | 3 | 9:22 – 9:57 | 3 | 9:22 – 9:57 |
| 4 | 10:00 – 10:39 | 4 | 10:00 – 10:39 | 4 | 10:00 – 10:39 |
| Lunch A | 10:42 – 11:12 | 5A | 10:42 – 11:21 | 5A | 10:42 – 11:21 |
| 5B | 11:15 – 11:54 | Lunch B | 11:24 – 11:54 | 6B | 11:24 – 12:03 |
| 6C | 11:57 – 12:36 | 6C | 11:57 – 12:36 | Lunch C | 12:06 – 12:36 |
| 7 | 12:39 – 1:18 | 7 | 12:39 – 1:18 | 7 | 12:39 – 1:18 |
| 8 | 1:21 – 2:00 | 8 | 1:21 – 2:00 | 8 | 1:21 – 2:00 |
| Activity Period | 2:00 – 2:30 | Activity Period | 2:00 – 2:30 | Activity Period | 2:00 – 2:30 |

## Two-Hour Delay Schedule

| Period | A Lunch | Period | B Lunch | Period | C Lunch |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Homeroom | 9:40 – 9:53 | Homeroom | 9:40 – 9:53 | Homeroom | 9:40 – 9:53 |
| 3 | 9:56 – 10:21 | 3 | 9:56 – 10:21 | 3 | 9:56 – 10:21 |
| 4 | 10:24 – 10:49 | 4 | 10:24 – 10:49 | 4 | 10:24 – 10:49 |
| Lunch A | 10:52 – 11:22 | 5A | 10:52 – 11:27 | 5A | 10:52 – 11:27 |
| 5B | 11:25 – 12:00 | Lunch B | 11:30 – 12:00 | 6B | 11:30 – 12:05 |
| 6C | 12:03 – 12:38 | 6C | 12:03 – 12:38 | Lunch C | 12:08 – 12:38 |
| 7 | 12:41 – 1:06 | 7 | 12:41 – 1:06 | 7 | 12:41 – 1:06 |
| 8 | 1:09 – 1:34 | 8 | 1:09 – 1:34 | 8 | 1:09 – 1:34 |
| 1 | 1:37 – 2:02 | 1 | 1:37 – 2:02 | 1 | 1:37 – 2:02 |
| 2 | 2:05 – 2:30 | 2 | 2:05 – 2:30 | 2 | 2:05 – 2:30 |

## Attendance Policy

A student's success is dependent on their attendance. A student with excessive absenteeism cannot be taught effectively and cannot keep up with the work missed in class. Highlands will enforce the state's attendance laws to eliminate absenteeism.

The School Laws of Pennsylvania classifies all absences as unexcused or illegal except for the following reasons: illness of the pupil, death in the family, religious, vacation (maximum of school-approved five days per school year), and "exceptionally urgent reasons" such as quarantine, recovery from an accident, required court attendance, approved family educational trips, educational tours, etc.

Parents can access their child's attendance by logging into PowerSchool via the grades portal found on the home page at www.goldenrams.com.

## Absence Reporting/Information

- After an absence, a student MUST provide a written or email excuse to the school. The excuse must include the student's full name, date(s) of absence(s), reason(s) for absence(s), the date(s) the excuse was written, and the signature of the parent/guardian or doctor. The excuse must be submitted upon return to school, or the absence will be classified as illegal. A student signing for their parent or guardian is unacceptable, and the excuse will not be counted. Excuses can be emailed to hhsattendance@goldenrams.com.
- An automated call will be made to parent/guardian contacts of students who are marked absent in homeroom. If a student comes to school late you will receive a call.
- If a student has three illegal absences, parents will receive a Notice of Truancy in the mail notifying them of the illegal days and encouraging them to participate in an attendance improvement meeting.
- After the 6th illegal absence, a letter will be sent in the mail with a date and time for a Student Attendance Improvement Plan conference. If parents cannot attend due to work, they should contact the school office within 48 hours of the meeting to reschedule. Failure to participate in the meeting and/or continued absences may result in a citation with the local magistrate.
- When a student reaches an 8th excused absence, a Warning Letter will be mailed to notify parents that all absences beyond 10 require a doctor's excuse or the absence will be considered illegal.

Truancy is defined as three unexcused absences; habitually truant is defined as six unexcused absences.

- If a student has 10 days of consecutive non-attendance, they will be withdrawn from the Highlands School District. Re-enrollment is required to attend Highlands School District in the future.
- Please contact the District Attendance Officer if you have any questions about the policy at 724.226.2400 ext. 3007.

A parent is allowed to provide up to ten absence excuses per school year. Every subsequent absence will require a doctor's excuse with a specific date from the office. Excuses which detail future absences will not be accepted. School personnel may contact a parent/guardian to verify that an excuse is valid.

## Early Dismissals

Students requiring an early dismissal during school hours, a request from the parent/guardian must be presented to the main office written or emailed. Phone requests will not be honored.

For these and all early dismissals, parents/guardians must report to the front office of the school with state identification to be provided to the office staff to verify identification.

## Absence for Vacation/Educational Tour or Trip

Absences due to family vacations/educational tours will only be considered legal if the following conditions are met:

- Submit a request on the required district Educational Trip Form, detailing the nature and dates of the vacation to the building principal at least one week in advance of the departure date. Forms can be obtained from the main office.
- The length of the vacation does not exceed five (5) school days. Any days exceeding five will result in illegal absences and will not be approved.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that the child completes any missed schoolwork before they return to school.
- Students referred to the magistrate for attendance issues may not receive permission to attend.
- The principal of the school shall exercise discretion whether to excuse the student. Consideration shall be given to the length of the tour or trip, the number of requests made during the school year, and whether the educational tour or trip is likely to advance the academic growth of the student.

## Attendance Requirements for Extracurricular Activities

Daily attendance is expected of all student-athletes. According to PIAA regulations, students participating in athletic practices/and or competitions on a given day must be present and accounted for in classes for a minimum of four consecutive periods in a school day. Exceptions may be provided with a corroborating, signed doctor's excuse. Daily attendance is monitored each day by the athletic director, and coaches are notified of student's ineligible to participate. Highlands High School will monitor student attendance and excessive tardiness may result in being assigned social probation and can impact a student's participation in extracurricular activities.

## Illness During School Hours

A student requesting to see the school nurse for illness or injury must:

- Ask the teacher's permission to see the nurse. If the nurse is not present, the student should report to the office.
- If the nurse determines that a student should be sent home, the nurse or a member of the office staff will contact the home to arrange transportation. If a student is sent home from school by the nurse, it is counted as an attended day of school. A student requesting to go home without nurse or administrative permission may be marked as an illegal absence or tardy.
- If the parent/guardian or emergency contact cannot be reached, the student will remain in school.
- When picking up a student, the parent/guardian or emergency contact must report to the main office with state identification. The parent/guardian must sign the student out.
- Parents may request the child's homework assignments during an extended absence and should plan for the work to be picked up after a 24-hour notice.

## Tardy to School

A written or email excuse is required when a student arrives at school after 7:40 AM. If an excuse is not provided to the school, the tardy will be marked as illegal.

- Students who arrive between 7:40 AM and 9:40 AM will be marked tardy.
- Any student arriving between 9:30 AM and 11:00 AM will be marked absent for a half day.
- Students who arrive after 11:00 AM will be marked absent for the whole day.
- Students who leave school before 9:40 AM will be marked absent for the day.
- Students who leave school between 9:40 AM and 11:00 AM will be marked absent for half a day.
- Students who leave after 11:00 AM will be given full credit for the day.

**After more than 3 (three) UNEXCUSED tardies to school, students will be subject to disciplinary action.**

# Tardy to Class

A student is tardy to class when they arrive after the class start time. Students with a pass entering after the start time will be excused. When tardy the following will occur:

**Tardy (arrives late to class 5 mins or less)**

- First offense — warning
- Second offense — warning
- Third offense — document in SWIS and assign detention

**Class cut (arrives late to class more than 5 minutes past start time with a pass)**

- First offense — contact parent/guardian, can assign detention
- Second offense — contact parent/guardian and assign detention

**Class cut (arrives late to class more than 5 minutes past start time without a pass or doesn't attend class)**

- First offense — contact parent/guardian and assign detention
- After-School Detention
- After School Alternative (ASA)
- Rams Reflection Room

# Make-up Work

Students are responsible for all assignments missed during an excused absence; students will not receive credit for missing work due to an illegal absence unless the classroom teacher permits.

Parents may request make-up work by contacting the main office at 724.226.2400, ext. 4650, for excused absences that exceed three (3) school days. Students are encouraged to check Google Classroom for missed work as well. Please allow 24 hours to receive work.

# Highlands Virtual Academy (HVA)

As an alternative to the traditional school environment, Highlands students in grades 7-12 may choose to enroll in the Highlands Virtual Academy. Students will complete course requirements using an online platform. Participation in HVA is a privilege that allows students to work remotely while meeting specific attendance and course completion requirements. Students who do not meet the attendance and course requirements with a passing grade may be required to return to the brick-and-mortar school environment. Highland's teachers review and support the learning of students enrolled in HVA courses. Students enrolled in HVA may also attend Forbes Road Career and Technology School. Full-time and part-time HVA students are responsible for meeting all of Highlands School District's graduation requirements to earn a diploma.

To register for HVA, students/parents should contact their school counselor. Interested students must also attend an orientation along with their parent/guardian. For more information about HVA, please visit www.goldenrams.com/hva.

# Cafeteria

## School Breakfast and Lunch Program

Highlands will continue to offer FREE breakfast and FREE lunch for all enrolled students. The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act, passed in 2010, qualified schools for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). This allows all students to receive free breakfasts and lunches every school day. The purpose of this program is to improve overall student health by providing students with nutritious and healthy food options. Highlands will be following the HHKFA regulations by offering students whole-grain-rich breads, low-fat, low-sodium, and lower-sugar foods. Students are offered a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.

The school district has a no-charge policy. A “closed lunch” program is in effect; students may bring their lunch or receive a free lunch from the school cafeteria, but all students must eat in the cafeteria. Pizza and/or fast food deliveries are not permitted.

**ASK YOUR CHILD:** What did you eat today? Did you try anything new? What vegetable or fruit choices did you have? What drink did you have? Children’s nutrition and diet drive more than just their health and physical attributes. It also keeps their brains in high gear, allowing them to remain more focused and learn more! Please encourage your child to ditch the brown bag and jump in line for a nutritious and delicious meal in our café!

**QUESTIONS?** Please contact the Food Services Director, at 724.226.2400, ext. 4180.

## Transportation Procedures

Transportation of pupils is governed by Sections 1361 and 1362 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code (24 P.S. 1361 and 1362). In addition to authorizing free transportation of pupils at the discretion of the board, the statutes allow the State Board of Education to adopt regulations governing such transportation.

In the interest of a safe, orderly, and pleasant ride on the school bus, students are expected to be courteous, cooperative, and restrained. Students are to ride their assigned bus. Students may not ride another bus without a written request from a parent and a signed permission slip from the building administration.

Audio-video cameras are installed for use on all buses. Footage is periodically reviewed to ensure the safe and orderly transportation of students. The following specific regulations are required from each student.

The following regulations are presented so that each student knows what is expected of them. If any student makes a nuisance of themselves on the bus, jeopardizing the safety of the entire group, then transportation for them will be revoked.

Failure to follow the bus rules can result in suspension from riding any bus to and from school. BUSING IS A PRIVILEGE.

- Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before entering/exiting the bus.
- Except when assigned by a teacher or driver, to promote order, there are no reserved seats on the bus. Students will take seats available as they board the bus and will not “save” a seat for any other student.
- Students must always remain in their seats when the bus is moving.
- For their safety, students are not permitted by state law to place their hands, arms, or heads out of the bus window.
- Students must avoid unnecessary conversation with the driver, as it is dangerous.
- Outside of ordinary conversation, appropriate behavior is expected.
- Emergency doors are to be used only in an emergency and not as an ordinary exit off the bus.
- Eating, smoking, vaping, and/or the use of abusive language are prohibited on the bus.
- The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus. Situations that need attention on the bus should be reported to the driver immediately. They will bring a written account of the infraction to the attention of the building administration.
- Students should not tamper with or deface anything on the bus. Financial responsibility rests with the student for any damage done to the bus.
- Students must be on time. Students should arrive at the bus stop five minutes before the scheduled pickup time.

## Bus Misconduct

Video cameras are installed on all buses that transport Highlands High School students. Video recordings will be reviewed periodically by building principals to ensure the safe and orderly transport of students.

Misbehavior on a school bus or van may result in the removal of the student from the vehicle for a minimum of three days and a maximum of the rest of the school year for severe or continuing offenses. Parents/guardians will be notified of bus misbehavior. Students may be assigned specific seats on the bus at any time.

Building principals have the right to address behaviors on a case-by-case basis. With a bus suspension, parents/guardians must provide transportation to and from school. Absence from school on a day of bus suspensions will be considered an illegal absence.

- 1st offense — a written warning including a behavior contract
- 2nd offense — 3-day bus suspension
- 3rd offense — 10-day bus suspension
- 4th offense — 45-day bus suspension
- 5th offense — removal from the bus for the duration of the school year

# Activity Bus

A bus is available to transport students participating in after school activities that end by 3:45 PM. You can request more information by contacting the School Counseling office at 724-226-2400 x4650.

# Student Driving

**Student Driver Definition:** Any student in 11th or 12th grade who is in good standing, has obtained a valid Pennsylvania State Driver's License, and is not on social probation.

**Good Standing:** Students must be in good standing with the school to receive and maintain their parking permits. Parking permits may be temporarily revoked for the following reasons:

a. Failing three or more classes
b. Repeated tardiness to school/class
c. Excessive school/class absences
d. Leaving school without permission
e. Reckless driving, speeding, or driving in a manner that is dangerous to oneself or others (these actions are subject to prosecution under the Pennsylvania Motor Vehicle Code)
f. Unauthorized entry into a car during school hours
g. Excessive or significant violations of school regulations

*For permits to be reinstated, students must attend after-school tutoring, not be failing three or more classes, and/or meet with the administration to create an Improvement Plan.*

**Vehicle Definition:** Any motor vehicle registered with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

**Parking:** To park on school property, student drivers must obtain a parking permit by filling out the parking permit application. All students who drive automobiles to school must park in the assigned area.

**Violations:** Students who violate school rules may lose driving privileges and/or face disciplinary actions by the administration. All cars are to remain in the parking area during the hours that school is in session. The speed limit for all vehicles on school property will be 15 miles per hour.

Copies of all required documentation must be uploaded into the Google Form application on the school's website, and the $10 fee must be paid before the parking permit will be given.

*Please note: Applications may be denied at the discretion of building administration.*

The following is a list of student parking stipulations:

1. Any student vehicle parked on school property during school hours must be registered with the school and must display an approved parking permit. Violators may be towed at the owner's expense.
2. The permit must be displayed on the rearview mirror and must be visible from the front of the vehicle.
3. The cost of a student parking permit is $10 for each vehicle registered. If you register more than one vehicle, you will still only be assigned one parking space. This is a NONREFUNDABLE fee that can be paid in cash or a check made payable to Highlands High School.
4. Parking permits will be assigned on a first-come/first-served basis, based on available space. No student spaces will be reserved.
5. Upon arriving in the morning, park and exit the vehicle immediately. Loitering in cars or the parking lot is prohibited. Take all your school materials with you. Students cannot return to their cars during school hours. Be sure to turn off your lights and lock the car.
6. All school rules are enforced while on school property, including while the student is in their vehicle. This includes, but is not limited to, our no vaping and smoking policy, as well as our no weapons policy.
7. The use of motor vehicles on campus is restricted to coming to school at the beginning of the student's day and to leaving campus at the end of the student's school day. Students are not permitted to be in or near the vehicles during school hours without permission from school administration.
8. Parking privileges may be revoked for any driving or school rule violations while on school property. Driving infractions may include speeding, reckless driving, and driving/parking in unauthorized areas.
9. Any violation may result in a loss of parking privileges, suspension from school, a ticket for a moving violation, and/or towing at the owner's expense.
10. Any loss in parking privileges will result in the forfeiture of the registration fee. A new permit must be purchased once building administration has indicated that the parking privileges may be restored.
11. Lost registration permits must be replaced by the purchase of a new permit for a $10 fee.
12. Parking permits are non-transferable. Placing a registration permit on a vehicle other than the car to which it is registered will result in loss of parking privileges for both students for one semester and possible towing at the owner's expense.
13. Once driving privileges have been suspended, any student who continues to drive and park in school lots without approval will face disciplinary action from school administration and possible towing at the owner's expense.
14. The school does not assume responsibility for any theft or damage to automobiles, mopeds, motorcycles, or bicycles. For your protection, lock your vehicle. Any student's vehicle left overnight is not Highlands' responsibility.

15. When parking on campus, the student agrees that they will not display any article on/in their vehicle that may be perceived as intimidating or offensive to others. Failure to comply may result in the removal of the student's parking privileges.
16. Under the provisions of Board Policy 218 Student Discipline, disciplinary actions may be imposed for the following reasons:
    a. No parking permit displayed
    b. Vehicle not registered
    c. Unauthorized use of another student's permit
    d. Vehicle parked improperly
    e. Inappropriate behavior related to a vehicle on school property
17. Students receiving suspension, in school or out of school, may lose parking privileges as noted below:
    a. First suspension — 5 days loss of parking privilege
    b. Second suspension — 10 days loss of parking privilege
    c. Third suspension — loss of privilege for one 9-week period
    d. Fourth suspension — loss of privilege for the remainder of the school year
18. School financial obligations must be cleared to receive or retain a parking permit.

# School Safety

# Mandated Reporting

Under Subchapter B: Provision and Responsibilities for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse, a mandated reporter, in section 6311, is defined as a "[person] required to report suspected child abuse," and in subsection a4, more specifically, "a school employee" is listed as an example of a mandated reporter.

Section C further details the responsibilities of the school employee: whenever a person is required to report in the capacity as a member of the staff of a medical or other public or private institution, school, facility, or agency, that person shall report immediately in accordance with section 6313 and shall immediately thereafter notify the person in charge of the institution, school, facility, or agency or the designated agent of the person in charge. Upon notification, the person in charge or the designated agent, if any, shall facilitate the cooperation of the institution, school, facility, or agency with the investigation of the report. Any intimidation, retaliation, or obstruction in the investigation of the report is subject to the provisions of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4958 (relating to intimidation, retaliation, or obstruction in child abuse cases). This chapter does not require more than one report from any such institution, school, facility, or agency.

All concerns of abuse will be reported on the Child Abuse Hotline (1.800.932.0313) or filed online at the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Information Solution website. This is the law. All teachers, school nurses, and social workers are bound by law to report concerns of neglect or abuse that are brought to their attention.

## Safety Drills

There are safety drill instructions posted in every room. At the beginning of the year, students and staff will review the proper procedures for each safety drill. These drills will be conducted every month. Any student who willfully fails to comply with drill instructions may be subject to discipline at the discretion of building administration.

## Metal Detectors

All bags (including, but not limited to, book bags, sports bags, lunch boxes/bags, fanny packs, and purses) and belongings will be checked at the security tables before entering the school. To expedite security procedures, students must remove items from their pockets, including belts, watches, and jewelry that trigger metal detectors. These items will be placed on the security tables for inspection. In addition, students will be asked to remove their shoes if the metal detector is activated. All students and visitors must pass through the metal detectors before entering the building. If a person refuses to pass through the metal detectors, they may be denied entry into the school building.

## Bookbags/Backpacks

Students are permitted to carry standard-sized book bags in high school. All bags will be searched upon daily entry into the building. Athletic bags and purses will also be searched upon entry into the high school. Bags should be clean, easily searchable, and clutter-free to ensure quicker and safer entry into school.

## Search Refusal

If a student refuses to be searched for any reason, the student may be subject to consequences in accordance with the Highlands High School Discipline Code. Upon refusal to be searched, the student will be assumed guilty, and the subsequent discipline will correspond to the appropriate Behavioral Consequence Level for the suspected offense as detailed in this Student Handbook.

## Video Cameras

For supervision, safety, and security, video cameras and recorders may be used on campus and school buses.

Students may not use recording devices or phone cameras during school under any circumstances.

## Visitors

Visitors must have a government-issued photo ID. All visitors should have a scheduled appointment and are required to sign in and out in the Main Office of the High School. They will be issued a name tag before they can tour or visit the appropriate individual. All visitors are required to sign out at the Main Office and return the name tag.

# Process for Addressing Complaints or Concerns

A parent or student who has a complaint or concern should first speak directly with the teacher involved. If necessary, the matter may then be brought to the principal. Do not rely on hearsay or “second-hand” information. Parents should make an appointment to ensure adequate time to discuss the problem with the teacher/principal.

The Highlands School District is committed to communication with parents and the community. Open lines of communication are essential to the educational process. District staff members will make a concerted effort to respond to inquiries in a timely fashion.

Please note that staff members are not permitted to contact parents during instructional time and, thereby, will not respond to you immediately during the school day. In the event of an emergency during the school day, please contact the Main Office. Parents are advised to contact their child’s teacher(s) or the educator in charge of the class or program via voicemail or email when a question or concern arises. Should your child’s teacher(s) not be able to assist in fielding the inquiry or addressing the problem, please follow the Chain of Command below.

# Chain of Command for Matters Involving:

**Attendance** 1. Main Office 2. School Counselor/Nurse 3. Principals

**General Information on School Programming** 1. School Website 2. Main Office 3. Principals 4. Assistant Superintendent 5. Superintendent 6. Board of Education

**Student Activities** 1. School Website 2. Supervising Staff Member 3. Main Office 4. Athletic/Activities Coordinator 5. Building Principals

**Credential Support** (Access, Usernames, Passwords for school website, school network, Google Account, Edgenuity) 1. Classroom Teacher 2. Main Office 3. School Counselor 4. Edgenuity Lead Teacher 5. Building Principals 6. Director of Technology 7. Assistant Superintendent 8. Superintendent

**Instruction/Curriculum/Student Progress** 1. Classroom Teacher 2. Building Principals 3. Assistant Superintendent 4. Superintendent 5. Board of Education

**Student Discipline based on Board Policy** 1. Classroom Teacher 2. Dean of Students 3. Building Principals 4. Assistant Superintendent 5. Superintendent 6. Board of Education

**Athletics** 1. Coach 2. Athletic Director 3. Building Principals 4. Assistant Superintendent 5. Superintendent 6. Board of Education

**Facilities/Grounds/Buildings** 1. Director of Facilities — 724-226-2400 2. Superintendent 3. Board of Education

**Transportation** (busing information, personnel) 1. Main Office 2. Building Principals 3. Director of Transportation — 724-226-2400 4. Superintendent 5. Board of Education

**Transportation** (Student Concerns) 1. Main Office 2. Counselor 3. Dean of Students 4. Building Principals 5. Director of Transportation 6. Assistant Superintendent 7. Superintendent 8. Board of Education

**Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying** 1. Safe2Say 2. School Counselor 3. Dean of Students 4. Building Principals 5. Assistant Superintendent 6. Superintendent 7. Board of Education

# Emergency School Closings

The decision to delay starting times, cancel school, or dismiss students early due to weather factors or other emergencies is based solely on the safety and welfare of students. These situations necessarily require the understanding and cooperation of parents.

Parents, who are not ordinarily at home at times of morning delays, school cancellations, or early dismissals, should make arrangements at the start of the school year for their children to be supervised at home or for them to report to a pre-arranged, safe place when such an emergency occurs.

- Announcements of school emergencies will be broadcast on local radio and TV stations, the SchoolMessenger automated phone system, the district's mobile app and website (www.goldenrams.com), Facebook, and Twitter.
- Due to a two-hour delay, starting times at schools and bus pick-up times will be adjusted accordingly for K-12 students. Parents of Pre-Kindergarten students will be informed of the delay procedures at the beginning of the school year.
- Early dismissals due to an emergency will be ordered only when necessary.
- Please do not call the schools. This procedure is always followed. Additional information or changes during an emergency will be broadcast if necessary.
- In the case of a remote learning day due to inclement weather, students will be notified via the SchoolMessenger system; we will operate on a one hour delay. Students are expected to log in to their homeroom by 8:45 am. Students will attend classes through Zoom for the remainder of the day.

*Please note: The success of the SchoolMessenger automated phone system depends on accurate contact information obtained from school records. If your information has changed at any time during the school year, please notify the central registration office at 724.226.2400, ext. 5635 or mbonnett@goldenrams.com.*

## Forbes Road Career & Technology Students

**For FRCTC Morning-only Students:**

- If Highlands High School has a two-hour delay and Forbes is canceled, our buses will pick students up and bring them to Highlands High School.
- If Highlands has a one-hour delay, the buses will run one hour later, and students will still go to Forbes Road.
- If Forbes Road CTC cancels but Highlands has school, then buses will pick up students to bring them to Highlands according to the district schedule.
- Listen to KDKA or WPXI or check www.goldenrams.com, http://kdka.com/schoolclosings/ or http://www.wpxi.com/closings/ for all cancellations or delays.

**For FRCTC Full-Day Students:**

- Please follow guidance from Forbes Road CTC on attendance during delays or school cancellations.

# SECTION 2 — STUDENT SERVICES AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMMING

The Highlands School District Student Services Department is committed to providing a continuum of services to meet the needs of all students. The Student Services Department can be reached at 724.226.2400 ext. 5650.

## School Counseling Department

In partnership with the school community, school counselors deliver a school counseling program to support all Highlands School District students. The School Counselors will assist students in applying academic achievement strategies, practicing interpersonal skills, and planning for college and career readiness.

The School Counselor roster distribution is as follows:

- Dr. Gurrera (Last Names A–G)
- Ms. Carrarini (Last Names H–O)
- Ms. Skwortz (Last Names P–Z)

## Special Education Services

The Highlands School District offers a full continuum of services. Students' Individual Education Programs (IEPs) are developed by their IEP teams, including parents/guardians and, when appropriate, the student. If you have a question or concern about your child's IEP, please contact their IEP Case Manager. If you believe your child may be eligible, please contact your child's school counselor.

## Gifted & Talented Education

The Highlands School District recognizes that gifted students have special educational needs that should be met within the context of educating the whole child through a variety of services and options. Students needing Gifted Education receive services based on their Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP). These plans are developed by their GIEP teams, including parents/guardians and, when appropriate, the student. If you have a question or concern about your child's GIEP, please contact their GATE teacher. If you believe your child may be eligible, please contact your child's school counselor.

## 504 Services

Highlands School District provides eligible students with services aligned to their disability-related needs, allowing them equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate. If you have questions or concerns or believe your child may be eligible, please contact your child's school counselor.

## English as a Second Language

ESL instruction is available to students with limited proficiency in speaking, listening to, reading, or writing English due to their status as immigrants, refugees, foreign exchange students, or American-born children from non-English speaking homes. Parents of children who may require ESL instruction should alert the registration department when enrolling their child or contact our School Counseling department if a need arises.

## Student Assistance Program (SAP)

SAP services are available to all Highlands School District students. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Student Assistance Program (SAP) is designed to assist school personnel in identifying any issues (including academic problems, emotional/social issues, and alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use/abuse) that pose a barrier to a student's learning and success in school. SAP Teams are a specially trained group of teachers, school counselors, administrators, and a liaison from a local mental health agency. If you believe your child could benefit from these services, please contact your child's counselor.

# Compliance Notifications

Annual Compliance Notifications include the following and additional notifications that can be found on the District's website.

# Child Find Notice of Special Education Services & Program

Each school district and other public agencies in the commonwealth must establish and implement procedures to identify, locate, and evaluate all children who need special education programs and services because of the child's disability. This notice aims to help locate these children, provide assistance to parents, and outline the parents' rights regarding the confidentiality of information gathered during this process. The content of this notice has been written in English but can be translated into other languages or transcribed into braille. If a person does not understand any of these notices, they should contact Dr. Amber Dean at 724-226-2400 ext. 5651 and request an explanation.

# IDEA and Chapter 14

Individualized services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially designed instruction due to the following conditions:

- Autism/pervasive developmental disorder
- Blindness or visual impairment
- Deafness or hearing impairment
- Developmental delay
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple disabilities
- Neurological impairment
- Other health impairments
- Physical disability
- Serious emotional disturbance
- Specific learning disability
- Speech or language impairment

If you believe your school-aged child may require special education services and related programs, or a young child (age 3 to school-age) may need early intervention, screening and evaluation processes designed to assess the needs of the child and their eligibility, these services are available to you at no cost upon written request. You may request screening and evaluation, whether your child is enrolled in the district's public-school program or not.

Requests for evaluation and screening are to be written to the building principal. Additional information is available on the district's website. Questions and concerns should be addressed to Dr. Amber Dean, 724-226-2440 ext. 5651.

## Section 504/Chapter 15

In compliance with state and federal law, the School District will provide to each eligible student with a disability, without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations that are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities. Additional information is available on the district website. Questions and concerns should be addressed to the Section 504 Coordinator, Dr. Michele Welter, 724-226-2440 ext. 5658.

## Gifted Education and Chapter 16

Specially designed instruction is provided for students who are identified as intellectually gifted in accordance with Chapter 16 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code. These individuals have demonstrated cognitive and academic performance, which has been determined to be significantly beyond age/grade level norms. After thoroughly evaluating each gifted learner's educational needs, a team of qualified professionals and the parents develop a Gifted Individualized Educational Plan (GIEP). Questions and concerns should be addressed to Dr. Amber Dean at 724-226-2440 ext. 5651.

## Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and specific physical exams. Additional information is available on the district website.

## Notification of Rights Under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools

All school records are handled in strict compliance with Federal and State laws and regulations. Additional information is available on the district website.

## Homebound Instruction

If a student is unable to attend school due to a temporary mental or physical illness or other urgent reason (lasting 10 days or more), the parent/guardian should contact their counselor or administrator to request the homebound form. This form requires input from the treating physician indicating the medical or psychological issue and when the student will return. The District approves Homebound Instruction based on a review of these records. Homebound instruction may not exceed three months unless the District has approval from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The school counselor will provide you with the required Physician's Statement and the Physician's Input form. For additional information, please contact Dr. Amber Dean at 724-226-2400 ext. 5651.

# Title IX Information

The Highlands School District does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, genetic information, or other legally protected categories in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices. The announcement of this policy is in accordance with State Law, including the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, and with federal law, including Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The district has established Title IX personnel to respond to concerns and sexual harassment and assault reports promptly. All investigations into sexual harassment and assault reports will be impartial, free of bias and conflicts, and will not prejudge the facts for either side. The district strives to maintain an environment where all students, staff, and the greater community feel safe.

Complaints or questions regarding nondiscrimination in school, classroom, and employment should be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator.

# Students Experiencing Homelessness

In compliance with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Highlands School District continues to attempt to identify all children within the District who may be experiencing homelessness. If you know of families or individual students that may qualify for this service, please contact a high school principal.

# Suicide Awareness and Prevention Policy

The Highlands School District recognizes the need to protect its students' health, safety, and welfare, promote healthy development, safeguard against the threat or attempt of suicide among school-aged youth, and address barriers to learning. This policy supports other federal, state, and local efforts to provide youth with prevention education, early identification and intervention, and access to all local resources to promote health and prevent personal harm or injury. For additional information, please contact Dr. Amber Dean, District Suicide Prevention Coordinator, 724-226-2400, ext. 5651.

# Highlands School District Annual Notice of Student Services

# Nursing Services

Please see the Health Services and Procedures section of the handbook.

## Health Suite

1. The health suite is under the supervision of the school nurse, Mrs. Lentz, who can be reached at 724.226.2400, ext. 4700.
2. The nurse's suite is supervised by a certified school nurse. If students are ill, they must secure a pass from their teacher and report directly to the nurse's suite.
3. The school nurse is usually available for first aid and consultation services every day.
4. If a student finds the health suite closed, they should report to the main office. First aid is one of the school health services. It should be emphasized that first aid is immediate, temporary care. Beyond such treatment, the student is referred to their family for any continuing care. The school nurse does not have the authority to diagnose, treat, or prescribe medications for injuries that occur beyond school hours.
5. The purpose of the nurse suite is to evaluate the condition of students who become ill in school and to give immediate first aid for injuries that occur during school hours.
6. Any request to change dressings, rewrap ace bandages, etc., that have been applied by the parent or doctor must be accompanied by a signed note from the parent/guardian or a written order from the doctor.
7. Between classes, students must obtain a pass from their next class teacher. Under no circumstances should students leave school on their own decision due to illness.
8. Students are not permitted to remain in the restrooms if they are ill. Instead, they must report to the nurse's office.
9. Students returning to class will be given a pass from the nurse. Students who become ill while school is in session must be seen by the nurse to be dismissed. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.
10. Only the nurse or an administrator has the authority to excuse a student from school because of illness.

## Examinations

Pennsylvania requires each student to receive a comprehensive health examination conducted upon original entry, sixth grade, and eleventh grade. Families may have these examinations completed by their family physician. Forms are available on the Highlands School District website.

## Screenings

As school law requires, hearing tests will be conducted at the 11th-grade level, and vision screening tests will be conducted at the 9th and 11th-grade levels. In addition, incoming students who have not had a screening exam will be evaluated. In addition, a yearly screening program consisting of weight and height measurements is completed on every student. Abnormal screening results will be communicated to parents/guardians.

Please contact the school nurse if you choose to opt your child out of health screenings. In accordance with the school policy, the parents/guardians of students who are to receive physical and dental examinations or screenings shall be notified. The notice shall include the

date and location of the examination or screening, and notice that the parents/guardians may attend. In addition, the notice shall encourage the parent/guardian to have the examination or screening conducted by the student's private physician or dentist at the parent's/guardian's expense to promote continuity of care. Such a statement may also include notification that the student may be exempted from such examination or screening if it is contrary to the parent's/guardian's religious beliefs.

## Immunizations

All students shall be immunized against specific diseases in accordance with state law and regulations, unless specifically exempt for religious or medical reasons.

Immunization requirement information is available on the Highlands School District website.

## Medication in School

1. Medications, whether prescription or non-prescription, are not permitted in school without the written approval of the school nurse or administration. Failure to follow the procedures below may result in disciplinary action according to the Code of Conduct.
2. Medications, whether prescription or non-prescription, will not be administered in school unless the student submits the Direct Medication Order Form of a licensed health provider that is accompanied by a parent's/guardian's completed and signed Highlands Medication Administration Permission Form. This paperwork must be in place before any medications are dispensed to students. Highlands School District does not supply any medications.
3. Prescription medication must be presented in the original pharmacy bottle and be accompanied by a Medication Administration Consent Form.

4. Prescription medication shall be delivered in its original packaging and labeled with:
    - Name, address, telephone, and federal DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) number of the pharmacy.
    - Student's name.
    - Directions for use (dosage, frequency, and time of administration, route, special instructions).
    - Name and registration number of the licensed prescriber.
    - Prescription serial number.
    - Date originally filled.
    - Name of medication and amount dispensed.
    - Controlled substance statement, if applicable.
5. Non-prescription medications (over the counter) must also be presented in the original labeled container with the child's name on it and written permission from the parent/guardian, as well as a doctor's note.
6. Unlabeled medications will not be given at school.

7. Medications are to be kept in the Nurse's office. Students are not permitted to carry their medications with them throughout the day.
8. Students caught carrying prescription or non-prescription medications into the building, without written permission from a parent/guardian, will be dealt with according to the Code of Conduct.
9. It is the parents' responsibility to supply and deliver all medications with proper instructions from a physician and the Highlands Medication Administration Permission Form to the main office to be administered during school hours.

## Inhalers & Epinephrine Auto-Injectors (Policy 210.1)

Before any student is permitted to possess or use an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector in the school setting, the School Board shall require the following:

1. A written statement from the parent/guardian requesting the school to comply with the doctor's order.
2. A written statement from the parent/guardian acknowledging that the school is not responsible for ensuring that the medication is taken, and its employees are responsible for the benefits or consequences of the prescribed medication.
3. A written statement from the licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner, or physician assistant stating:
   - Name of drug
   - Dosage prescribed
   - The time medication is to be taken
   - Length of time the medication is prescribed
   - Diagnosis or reason for medication is needed
   - Potential serious reactions or side effects of the medication
   - Emergency response instructions
   - If the child is qualified and able to self-administer the medication
4. A written acknowledgment from the school nurse that the student has demonstrated that s/he is capable of self-administration of the asthma inhaler and/or epinephrine auto-injector in the school setting. Determination of competency for self-administration shall be based on the student's age, cognitive function, maturity, and demonstration of responsible behavior.
5. A written acknowledgement from the student that s/he has received instruction from the student's licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner, or physician assistant on proper safety precautions for the handling and disposal of the asthma inhaler and/or epinephrine auto-injector, including acknowledgement that the student will not allow other students to have access to the prescribed medication and that s/he understands appropriate safeguards.
6. The district reserves the right to require a statement from the licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner, or physician assistant for the continued use of a medication beyond the specified period.

7. A written request for student use of an asthma inhaler and/or epinephrine auto-injector shall be submitted annually, along with required written statements from the parent/guardian and an updated prescription. If there is a change in the student's prescribed care plan, level of self-management, or school circumstances during the school year, the parent/guardian and the licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner, or physician assistant shall update the written statements.
8. The student shall notify the school nurse immediately following each use of an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector.
9. Students are prohibited from sharing, giving, selling, and using an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector in any manner other than as prescribed during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored activities.

Violations of this policy, provisions of a Service Agreement or IEP, or demonstration of unwillingness or inability to safeguard the asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector may result in loss of privilege to self-carry the asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector and disciplinary action in accordance with Board policy and applicable procedural safeguards.

If the district denies a student's request to self-carry an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector or the student has lost the privilege of self-carrying an asthma inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector, the student's prescribed medication shall be appropriately stored at a location near the student. The school nurse and other classroom teachers shall be informed of where the medication is stored and the means to access the medication.

## Student Possession and Use of Diabetes Medication & Monitoring Equipment

Before student possession or use of diabetes medication and monitoring equipment, the Board shall require the following:

1. A written request from the parent/guardian that the school comply with the instructions of the student's health care practitioner. The request from the parent/guardian shall include a statement relieving the district and its employees of responsibility for the prescribed medication or monitoring equipment and acknowledging that the school is not responsible for ensuring that the medication is taken or the monitoring equipment is used.
2. A written statement from the student's health care practitioner that provides:
    - Name of the drug.
    - Prescribed dosage.
    - Times when medication is to be taken.
    - Times when monitoring equipment is to be used.
    - The length of time for which medication and monitoring equipment are prescribed.

- Diagnosis or reason for medication and monitoring equipment is needed.
- Potential severe reactions to medication may occur.
- Emergency response.
- Whether the child is competent and able to self-administer the medication or use monitoring equipment and practice proper safety precautions.
- A written acknowledgement from the school nurse that the student has demonstrated the ability to self-administer the medication and use the monitoring equipment.

3. A written acknowledgement from the student that s/he has received instruction from the student's health care practitioner on proper safety precautions for the handling and disposal of the medications and monitoring equipment, including acknowledgement that the student will not allow other students to have access to the medication and monitoring equipment and that s/he understands appropriate safeguards.

The written request for student possession and use of diabetes medication and monitoring equipment shall be reviewed annually, along with the required written statements from the parent/guardian and the student's health care practitioner. If there is a change in the student's prescribed care plan, level of self-management, or school circumstances during the school year, the parent/guardian and the student's health care practitioner shall update the written statements.

Students are prohibited from sharing, giving, selling, and using diabetes medication and monitoring equipment in any manner other than as prescribed during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored activities.

Violations of this policy, provisions of a Service Agreement or IEP, or demonstration of unwillingness or inability to safeguard the medication and monitoring equipment may result in loss of privilege to self-carry the diabetes medication and monitoring equipment. They may result in disciplinary action in accordance with Board policy and applicable procedural safeguards.

If the district prohibits a student from possessing and self-administering diabetes medication and operating monitoring equipment, or if a student is not capable of self-administering diabetes medication or operating monitoring equipment, the district shall ensure that the diabetes medication and monitoring equipment are appropriately stored in a readily accessible location in the student's building. The school nurse and other designated school employees shall be informed of where the medication and monitoring equipment are stored and the means to access them.

# Administration of Naloxone

To ensure the health and safety of its students and staff, the Highlands School District will maintain and administer an opioid antagonist in its schools, specifically Naloxone, for use during emergencies to any student or staff member experiencing a known or suspected opioid overdose, regardless of a previous history of opioid abuse. In compliance with school board

policy, the District's medical director has issued a non-patient-specific order to the school nurse to administer Naloxone on-site.

Administration shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving the use of controlled substances immediately, as soon as practicable. Any student who experiences a drug overdose shall be referred to the district's Student Assistance Program.

Additionally, administration shall immediately report incidents involving the use of controlled substances on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity, to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations.

## Emergency Numbers

Please ensure the school has several alternate contacts available during the school day in case of an emergency, illness, or accident. It is also necessary for the school to be notified of changes in home or emergency numbers as soon as they occur.

## Medical Excuses

When submitting a doctor's excuse for an absence, these excuses should be turned into the student's homeroom teacher, who will file this with the attendance office.

## Homebound Instruction

If a student anticipates being confined at home because of illness for three weeks or more, the parent or guardian should request a homebound instruction application from the Counseling Office or Highlands Administration Center. Highlands School District provides this service at no cost. In select cases, with building administration approval, virtual schooling and/or HVA may be an option for homebound instruction.

## Student Insurance

In the event of medical emergencies, expenses incurred are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

The responsibility for arranging for any insurance needs lies with the respective student or parents/guardians, not with the school.

A student insurance policy covering school accidents with school day coverage or 24-hour coverage is available for purchase each fall. Application forms can be printed from the Highlands School District website, and the completed and signed application and check are then returned to the student's homeroom teacher in a sealed envelope.

Late registrants can acquire an application form during student registration or by calling the company directly.

This insurance does not cover interscholastic sports in any form, including practice sessions or travel to and from such activities or practices. Before students can compete on a school team, they must show proof of insurance coverage.

All accidents or injuries on school grounds should be reported to the main office and the nurse. Failure to report any accident or injury may cause insurance coverage to be voided. School insurance claim forms may be picked up in the main office.

**NOTE:** It is recommended that all students purchase insurance coverage.

## Obligations

Students are responsible for returning all property belonging to the district that has been distributed to them (i.e., Chromebooks, calculators, uniforms, textbooks, etc). This equipment must be in good working order. If the item is damaged, altered, or lost in any way, the student is financially responsible for the item's replacement. Students are required to fulfill all financial obligations annually. Obligations must be current to participate in after-school activities, school dances, sports, or graduation Commencement. Legal action may be pursued by the district for unfulfilled obligations.

## Instructional Programming

## Graduation

For students to receive a high school diploma and to participate in commencement exercises, they must complete all the Highlands School District Board of Directors' requirements before graduation day. By the day of commencement exercises, students who have not completed all requirements and/or have not fulfilled all obligations will not be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremony.

## Credit Breakdown

Highlands High School, which operates on a six-day course rotation, offers both full and half credit courses.

A credit is a unit of measurement that represents a minimum of 200 minutes of classroom work per week for 36 weeks and the completion of that work with a minimum final grade of 60%. To earn a half credit, a class or course that meets 3 periods each rotation for 36 weeks, or every day for one academic semester, has a value of 0.5 credits, and the student must earn a minimum final grade of 60%.

## Requirements for Graduation

Graduation requirements are based primarily on standards set by the Department of Education and the Highlands School Board of Directors and Administration.

Students will also have to complete volunteer hours to meet the Highlands High School graduation requirements.

Currently, the minimum 24 credits required for graduation and participation in Commencement exercises are:

- English: 4 credits
- Social Studies: 3 credits
- Science: 3 credits
- Mathematics: 3 credits
- Electives: 7 credits
- PE/Health/Aquatics: 2 credits
- Arts/Humanities: 2 credits
- Students must complete 5 volunteer hours per year and submit the signed community service/volunteer form.

## Percentage Grading System

Percentage grades are used for each nine-week grading period as well as semester and final averages.

Weighted grades will be reflected in the nine-week, semester, and final averages. This is designed to encourage students to work to their fullest potential and to better prepare our students for post-secondary study.

- A: 90% – 100%
- B: 80% – 89%
- C: 70% – 79%
- D: 60% – 69%
- F: 59% or lower

If a student receives a failing grade (less than 60%) for the final average in a required subject, that course must be repeated. Students who fail subjects can retake the course the following year or make special arrangements with their school counselor and principal to make them up in summer school (depending on course availability).

The grade earned in summer school will not replace the failing or otherwise low grade received during the regular school term. Both grades will be entered on the permanent record and transcript forms with a notation indicating the summer school grade. Both grades are considered in determining class rank.

## Weighted Grades & Quality Point Average

In the computation of a student’s grade point average, weighted grades will apply to some courses as identified in the program of studies. The percentage earned in all AP courses will be

multiplied by 1.1, indicated by an “A” on the report card. The percentage earned in all Honors courses will be multiplied by 1.05, indicated by a “C” on the report card.

## Final Grade Computation

The final grade for a full-year course is computed in the following way:

- 1st Nine Weeks: 25%
- 2nd Nine Weeks: 25%
- 3rd Nine Weeks: 25%
- 4th Nine Weeks: 25%

*Any final exam will be calculated into the 4th nine weeks marking period grade.*

## Grade Level Classification

Below is the number of earned credits required for students to be classified in a designated grade:

- Tenth Grade (Sophomore): Must have earned at least 5 credits
- Eleventh Grade (Junior): Must have earned at least 11 credits
- Twelfth Grade (Senior): Must have earned at least 17 credits
- Total Credits Needed for Graduation: Earned at least 24 credits

## Progress Reports & Report Cards

Every student enrolled in the Highlands School District will be issued a report card that will be available online through PowerSchool every nine weeks. Student progress may be tracked daily through this site. The aim of the report cards and student progress data is to:

- Inform the parents of the student’s progress.
- Help the student to self-appraise.
- Help the teacher study each student’s achievement of the Pennsylvania standards.
- Enable the home and school to work together in helping the student.

## Academic Awards Celebration

Each year, the top academic achievers in grades 9 through 12 are recognized at a reception. These students are selected by Grade Point Average based only on the previous three nine-week periods of that year; prior grade point history will not be averaged into the GPA.

Students who earn the Vocational Education Award are also recognized. Honors Cords for Commencement will be distributed at this ceremony. Qualifying students for the ceremony will be notified via mail.

# National Honor Society

All students in 10th and 11th grade who have earned a 93% or better average at the end of the third quarter, as indicated on the computer print-out grade report, will be given an application, instructions, and a deadline date for submission.

1. The 93% average for each grade level will be computed as follows:
   - Grade 12 – cumulative 7 semesters (grades 9, 10, 11, and 1st semester of grade 12)
   - Grade 11 – cumulative 5 semesters (grades 9, 10, and 1st semester of grade 11)
   - Grade 10 – cumulative 3 semesters (grade 9 and 1st semester of grade 10)
2. Students who receive the application will be invited to a meeting where National Honor Society regulations and requirements will be explained. Students seeking induction must display adherence to the four pillars of the National Honor Society: Scholarship, Service, Character, and Leadership.
3. Students must complete and return the applications, including all references, essay, and proof of community service hours, by the deadline; applications will be dated as received, and late applications will not be accepted.
4. The Honor Society advisory committee, composed of faculty members, evaluates all application packets. The Honor Society sponsor may not serve on the committee. The committee will determine which candidates qualify for admission and will submit the list to the sponsor.
5. The National Honor Society sponsor will notify, in writing, all students who were not accepted for admission before posting the list of accepted candidates; after which, the list of accepted candidates will be publicly posted.
6. A student who is not accepted as a candidate may submit an appeal to the sponsor. The sponsor may reveal the area(s) in which the committee deemed the student deficient. To maintain the integrity of the application process, teacher ratings will not be shared with students or their parents.
7. Members must maintain a 93% average to remain in good standing, or they could be removed from the National Honor Society.
8. Students applying for induction into the National Honor Society must also demonstrate current involvement in at least 2 Highlands High School School-sponsored activities listed below. For any questions regarding school-sponsored activities, please contact the National Honor Society sponsor.

**School Activities for NHS Admission**

- Athletics
- Audio-Visual, Stage Crew
- Cheerleaders
- DECA
- International Club

- Sophomore Class Officers
- Junior Class Officers
- Senior Class Officers
- Band Front
- Yearbook Committee
- Marching Band
- PBIS Student Committee
- Spring Musical
- Superintendent's Advisory Committee
- Book Club
- HOPE Squad

## Homework

Students will be required to complete homework assignments regularly throughout each week. The value and purpose of homework is to be an enrichment activity specifically designed for practice and reinforcement of skills presented in the classroom.

## Tutoring

Tutoring is available to any student. An activity bus will transport participating tutoring students home following the tutoring session. More information is available at the School Counseling office.

## Progress Reports/Report Cards

Student progress is available via PowerSchool for all parents of elementary and secondary students. Parents/Guardians can check and track current levels, growth, and grades in assigned subjects. The reports itemize specific academic challenges and strengths and/or provide parents with the opportunity to schedule a conference with the teacher. Report cards are also available online via PowerSchool at the end of each nine-week marking period. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to check daily and weekly progress of their student(s). If you need your login information, please contact Michaela Bonnett at mbonnett@goldenrams.com.

## Keystone Testing

Highlands School District participates in the Keystone Testing guidelines per the Pennsylvania State Department of Education. These tests are taken after Biology, Algebra, and English 10. State testing is offered in the spring, with make-ups provided during the winter months of the following school year. In accordance with Act 158 of PDE's Education Code, Keystone Testing is part of one possible pathway to graduation. For more information on the pathways, contact your school counselor.

## Student Schedule Changes/Course Drop Policy

Every effort is made to accurately schedule students in the required and elective courses that fit their educational plans. All schedule changes must have been made before July 1st. After July 1, the only requests for schedule changes that will be honored are those resulting from errors made by the school counseling department or if the student opts to take a more challenging course in that curriculum (e.g. A.P. Physics chosen over Physics). Please contact your student's School Counselor with any questions or concerns.

## Withdrawing from School

When a student is withdrawing from school (after the age of 18), the parent or guardian must go to the School Counseling Office to authorize the withdrawal. Please note that all withdrawal procedures must be in accordance with Pennsylvania State Law. Withdrawal procedures will include returning all textbooks and materials to teachers, who will then complete the necessary withdrawal information and a mandatory meeting with the building principals. All obligations must be cleared at this time.

## Technology/Computers

All students are provided with a Chromebook, which they should bring to school every day. A parent or guardian must complete and sign the technology usage agreement before students receive their Chromebook. Students are responsible for the safekeeping of their device.

Students are not permitted to tamper with equipment or the network in any way. Tech insurance, at the parent/guardian's expense, is offered upon the distribution of the Chromebook. If a parent/guardian denies the insurance, they must sign a waiver stating so at the time of the insurance being offered.

Students who do not follow our technology policies will face consequences, including potential loss of technology privileges or charges for repairs. If a student needs to borrow a Chromebook temporarily, they must return it to the technology department. Students who forget their Chromebooks at home will not be supplied with an additional device.

Students/families who refuse to pay their fees for repaired Chromebooks will have an obligation put on the student's account. Failure to pay for the obligation could result in the withholding of the student's diploma upon graduation.

## Athletic Programs

The athletic program at Highlands High School exists to provide wholesome activities for students and offer competition with other schools. We encourage both active participation and spectator support. The athletic program meets the requirements of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) and Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Association (WPIAL). Highlands High School offers the following sports.

| Fall | Winter | Spring |
|---|---|---|
| Golf | Basketball | Baseball |
| Soccer | Wrestling | Girls Softball |
| Football | Swimming | Track and Field |
| Girls Tennis | Bocce | Boys Tennis |
| Girls Volleyball | | |

## Attendance Requirements for Extracurricular Activities

Daily attendance is expected of all student-athletes. According to PIAA regulations, students participating in athletic practices and/or competitions on a given day must be present and accounted for in classes for a minimum of four consecutive periods in a school day. Exceptions may be provided with a corroborating, signed doctor's excuse. Daily attendance is monitored each day by the athletic director, and coaches are notified of students ineligible to participate.

## Grade Requirements for Extracurricular Activities

The Highlands School District developed the following position statement to provide students with opportunities to work to their fullest potential, motivate them to be more effective in the classroom, encourage them to stay in school, and participate in a tutoring program designed to improve their grades. The Highlands School District has developed the following guidelines that govern student participation in athletics.

1. The Athletic Director will run eligibility reports at 11 am every Friday during the impacted athletic season.

2. A student failing more than one subject on any given Friday, at the time the eligibility report is generated, will be ineligible for one week, beginning the Sunday following the Friday and continuing to the following Sunday.
3. Students academically ineligible may still attend practices and participate in team activities. However, they are not permitted to compete that week. Team rules about participation in practice and team activities are subject to the head coach's and/or building administration's discretion.

## Lockers

Student lockers are the property of the school district. They may be searched by school officials if there is reasonable suspicion, as stipulated in the student rights, discipline, and drug and alcohol policies.

## Library

The library is located at the front of the building, across the courtyard from the gym and near B-Wing. If a student wishes to use the library during a study hall, they must sign up on the library website and report directly to the library during their assigned study hall.

Students are responsible for the materials they sign out. There are no fees for materials not returned on time. However, students will be billed for lost or damaged materials at replacement cost. Failure to fulfill obligations will impact a student's ability to participate in social activities (i.e., Homecoming, prom, and graduation) and will result in a student being placed on social probation.

The use of the library is a privilege that may be revoked if the student misuses the facility or its materials. Appropriate behavior is expected.

## Safe2Say

Safe2Say Something is a youth violence prevention program run by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General. The program teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, from individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and to "say something" BEFORE it is too late.

**THREE WAYS TO SUBMIT AN ANONYMOUS TIP:**

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

**HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:**

- Submit an anonymous tip report through the Safe2SaySomething system
- Crisis center reviews, assesses and processes all submissions

- Crisis center sends all submissions to school administration and/or law enforcement for intervention
- If needed, crisis center may contact tipster anonymously through the app

## Positive Behavior Supports (PBIS)

Highlands School District promotes a district-wide philosophy supported by procedures and policies that contribute to the promotion of a RAMS for Life attitude. We expect our students to be Respectful, Accountable, Motivated, and Safe in all school settings.

The administration, teachers, and support staff teach students what these behaviors look like, recognize those students who display these behaviors, and encourage and support students who struggle. A large portion of this philosophy depends on consistency, communication, and cooperation among all stakeholders.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, or PBIS, is an evidence-based, three-tiered framework that is designed to improve school-wide behavior and morale, which, in turn, correlates to a positive influence on academics.

Highlands High School has a dedicated team of educators and students who work together to provide positive responses to positive behavior. As a team, we meet regularly to help support the academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs of all students. The three-tiered approach supports everyone — students, educators, and staff — in all school settings.

- **Tier 1:** All students are supported here, where expectations are set for all students in all school settings. Typically, roughly 85% of the student body experiences success at this level. Here, building-wide expectations are set, taught, demonstrated, and followed through upon. Language is clear in establishing, as a team of students and educators, what we want our school to look like.
- **Tier 2:** This is a smaller group of students who need additional small-group support. On average, according to PBIS.org, about 10% of our students will need some sort of Tier 2 support. There is re-teaching of expectations and deeper collaboration between staff and students on how this small group can be successful.
- **Tier 3:** An intensive, individualized approach is utilized in Tier 3, where anywhere between 1–5% of the student body resides. Intervention planning with families and other stakeholders enables the development of one-on-one interventions aimed at helping students achieve maximum success in the school setting.

*Information comes from www.pbis.org.*

# Student Dress Code Policy

## Definition of Dress Code

A dress code is a set of standards that establishes appropriate, safe, and non-disruptive attire for students during the school day and at school-sponsored events. Its purpose is to maintain a respectful learning environment, ensure student safety, and prepare students for professional expectations, while still allowing for individual expression within reasonable limits.

## You May Wear

- Shirts, blouses, and tops (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under and around the arms), that cover the torso, with straps at least one inch wide
- Pants, jeans, and slacks worn at the waist, free of holes above mid-thigh (for example, a skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress, or shorts)
- Skirts and shorts of any style, provided they reach at least mid-thigh in length, for both male and female students
- Sweaters, jackets, and sweatshirts (wearing the hood overhead is allowed, but the face and ears must be visible to school staff, and individual teachers may require no hoods be worn in their classrooms)
- School-appropriate athletic wear
- Shoes (no slippers or shoes with wheels)

## You May Not Wear

- Skirts, shorts, or dresses shorter than mid-thigh, for both male and female students
- Clothing with holes, tears, or cutouts above mid-thigh or in areas that expose undergarments
- Tank tops with straps narrower than one inch, halter tops, or off-the-shoulder tops
- Clothing displaying profanity, weapons, drugs, alcohol, hate speech, or sexually suggestive images or language
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous or used as a weapon
- Pajamas, slippers, or other sleepwear
- Sagging pants worn below the waistline
- Sunglasses, or bandanas worn indoors, unless for a religious or medical reason
- Visible undergarments or see-through clothing

## Spirit Dress Day Exceptions

On designated Spirit Days (e.g., Homecoming Week, pep rallies, themed school events), students may deviate from standard dress code guidelines within the following limits:

- Costumes, face paint, wigs, and themed accessories are permitted as long as they do not depict weapons, violence, drugs, alcohol, or hate symbols
- Pajama Day attire is allowed but must still meet basic coverage standards (no sheer or overly revealing sleepwear)
- Sports jerseys, team colors, and school spirit wear may be worn regardless of standard color/logo restrictions, if applicable
- Costumes must not include masks that fully conceal the face, for safety and identification purposes
- Skirts, shorts, and dresses must still meet the mid-thigh length requirement, even on Spirit Days

Administration reserves the right to deem any costume or themed outfit inappropriate and require a change, using the same standard dress code guidelines.

## Dress Code Enforcement

Dress code enforcement shall not be affected by a student's racial identity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity.

The building administration will make the final decisions about the appropriateness of dress. Failure to adhere to staff directives about the dress code will result in disciplinary consequences.

1. **First Offense:** Verbal warning from staff and a request to correct the issue immediately (e.g., changing clothes, borrowing appropriate attire, or covering up).
2. **Second Offense:** Parent/guardian notified; and a request to correct the issue immediately (e.g., changing clothes, borrowing appropriate attire, or covering up).
3. **Third Offense:** Parent/guardian notified; and a request to correct the issue immediately (e.g., changing clothes, borrowing appropriate attire, or covering up). Detention along with a formal meeting between the student, parent/guardian, and administration.
4. **Continued Violations:** Parent/guardian notified; and a request to correct the issue immediately (e.g., changing clothes, borrowing appropriate attire, or covering up). Rams Reflection Room (RRR) along with a formal meeting between the student, parent/guardian, and administration.

# SECTION 3 — STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

A primary goal of Highlands High School is to promote constructive and respectful behaviors. Highlands High School endorses the use of restorative practice. This approach is rooted in the idea that misbehavior damages relationships (between students, or between a student and the classroom/school community), and that lasting behavior change comes from accountability and connection — not just consequences. It draws on restorative justice traditions and is often used alongside traditional discipline systems, not always as a full replacement.

Instead of asking “What rule was broken and what punishment fits?”, restorative practices ask:

- Who was harmed, and how?
- What do they need to feel repaired?
- Who is responsible for making that repair, and how can they do it?

The procedures and consequences described below are designed to modify unacceptable behavior, not to punish. Students will be expected to make appropriate decisions concerning their behaviors. Building principals have the right to address behaviors on a case-by-case basis. The following guidelines serve as a framework for behavior throughout the school.

## Cafeteria Expectations

When in the cafeteria, students are expected to meet the following expectations:

- Students will remain in the cafeteria during their assigned lunch period.
- Students are to remain seated until dismissed by staff at the end of the lunch period.
- Students will clean up after themselves and place all garbage in the appropriate receptacles before leaving the cafeteria.
- All students are provided with a thirty-minute lunch period.
- Students will refrain from throwing food items.
- Students are permitted to use their cell phones and headphones during their lunch period.
- Students without headphones will keep phone volume at a 5 or less in respect of others around them.

## Student Publications

Student publications, such as the Yearbook, are school-sponsored and school-controlled. The content is subject to review and approval before publication by school administrators. This includes posters and wall décor for classrooms and hallways. Students may not distribute written materials to the student body without the permission of the building administration.

## Food Deliveries

Highlands does not accept deliveries of food from outside entities (i.e., pizza deliveries, DoorDash, GrubHub, etc.). Any deliveries will be declined, and the district will not reimburse.

## Cell Phones and Electronic Items

The Highlands School Board authorizes student possession of cell phones and other personal electronic devices, such as calculators, laptop computers, handheld computers, cameras, MP3 players, mobile phones, tablets, headphones (over the ears or in the ears) or any other devices designed to communicate, create, or store information. While the district does not prohibit bringing these devices to school, the district does not recommend it. Students assume all risks of damage, theft, loss, or misuse of such devices.

Students are permitted to use their phones and headphones (one ear open) in the hallways and during their lunch period. Students are not permitted to use cell phones and headphones in the classroom unless instructed to do so by staff. These items are to be placed out of sight and to be silenced.

- Students are expected to use all devices responsibly.
- Students are prohibited from making calls or FaceTime calls on their devices during the day. Students who need to make phone calls may do so from the office.
- Students are prohibited from using external speakers on school grounds and during transportation.
- Students are prohibited from posting pictures and/or negative comments about other students/staff during school time (this includes the bus ride to and from school) that disrupt the normal function of the school day. Failure to comply with this directive will result in disciplinary action.
- Students are prohibited from producing and sharing videos of the school and/or other students/school staff during the school day (i.e., student altercations, TikTok Videos).

## Bullying/Cyberbullying

Bullying is a form of aggression where (1) the behavior is intended to harm or cause distress, (2) the behavior occurs repeatedly over time, and (3) there is an imbalance of power or strength among the parties.

Bullying violates a student's rights and can adversely affect a student's education. Depending upon the severity of the bullying offense, the following consequences may be enacted for a student found to be bullying:

Cyberbullying or bullying using technologies such as cell phones, networking websites, or email is a federal crime. Anyone committing cyberbullying may be reported to the local police department in addition to being disciplined through the school.

# Drugs and Alcohol

The Highlands School District recognizes its responsibility to educate, prevent, and intervene in the use and abuse of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, vapes, and mood-altering substances by students. We are committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and drug-free environment for all members of our school community.

Possession, use, distribution, or being under the influence of any controlled or prohibited substance — including drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, nicotine, and vaping devices — is strictly prohibited:

- On school property
- During school hours
- At any school-sponsored activity or event
- While traveling to and from school or school-related events

This is considered a serious violation of Highlands School District Policy 227. This policy also applies to student behavior off school property or outside school hours if such conduct negatively impacts the safety, welfare, or learning environment of the school community, as outlined in the District's Code of Conduct.

# Prevention and Education

To address and reduce substance use, the District implements the following strategies:

- Comprehensive classroom instruction and health education curriculum
- Partnerships with local agencies and community resources
- Ongoing staff training and consistent administrative procedures
- Access to counseling, intervention services, and cessation programs
- Clearly defined and consistently enforced disciplinary and rehabilitative policies

# Testing and Intervention

When a student exhibits behavior, symptoms, or other observable indicators that provide reasonable suspicion of drug or alcohol use (including THC), the building principal or designee may require the student to undergo immediate drug or alcohol testing. Testing methods may include, but are not limited to:

- Urine or saliva analysis
- Breathalyzer tests
- Searches of student belongings, conducted in accordance with District policy and legal guidelines

Refusal to submit to drug or alcohol testing when there is reasonable suspicion will be treated as a violation of the district's substance use policy. In such cases:

- The refusal may result in the same disciplinary consequences as a confirmed positive test.
- The student may be temporarily excluded from school and/or extracurricular and athletic activities.
- The student may be required to participate in counseling, cessation education, or rehabilitative programs before returning to school-based activities.
- Additional actions may be taken as necessary to ensure student and school safety.

## Consequences and Required Support

Students found in possession of or under the influence of prohibited substances may be subject to:

- Disciplinary action as outlined in the District Code of Conduct
- Mandatory participation in drug/alcohol counseling, cessation education, or rehabilitative programs
- Temporary removal or exclusion from educational, extracurricular, or athletic programs until conditions for reinstatement are met

Students found in possession of or using tobacco, nicotine products, or vapes may also be required to complete a cessation or remediation program in addition to disciplinary consequences.

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the District shall take all steps required to comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including those under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The Highlands School District is committed to supporting students in making safe and healthy choices. It will continue working collaboratively with families, staff, and community partners to reduce the risks and impacts of substance use on our schools.

For more information, please refer to School Board Policy 227: Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia, available on the District website.

## Open Containers

Students are not permitted to bring any open containers into school. Students are only permitted to bring sealed, unopened, nonalcoholic beverages, and refillable water bottles if the bottles are empty when entering the building. This includes parents/guardians dropping off items for students.

## Tobacco/Vape

State law defines the term tobacco product to broadly encompass not only tobacco but also vaping products, including Juuls and other electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes). Tobacco products, for purposes of this policy and in accordance with state law, shall be defined to include the following:

1. Any electronic device that delivers nicotine or another substance to a person inhaling from the device, including, but not limited to, electronic nicotine delivery systems, an electronic cigarette, a cigar, a pipe, and a hookah.
   - Any product containing, made, or derived from either:
     a. Tobacco, whether in its natural or synthetic form, or
     b. Nicotine, whether in its natural or synthetic form, is regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration as a deemed tobacco product.
2. Any component, part, or accessory of the product or electronic device listed in this definition, whether it is sold separately.
3. Any product containing, made or derived from tobacco or nicotine that is intended for human consumption, whether smoked, heated, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed, or ingested by any other means, including, but not limited to, a cigarette, cigar, little cigar, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff, and snus.

Any student caught with tobacco, nicotine, and/or vapes may be subject to completing cessation remediation.

## Weapons

The definition of “weapon” includes, but is not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, martial arts device, brass or metal knuckles, firearm, hand gun, shotgun, rifle, chemical agent (such as mace or pepper spray), explosive device, or any other tool, instrument, or implement capable of inflicting injury or a look-alike item.

The definition of “firearm” includes firearms of any type which will or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, any destructive device, pellet gun, BB gun, or look-alike firearm, whether capable of operation, loaded or unloaded.

Students suspected of possessing a weapon are subject to a search of pockets, lockers, coats, book bags, purses, and cars parked on school property. Regulations also permit the use of reasonable force by school officials to obtain a weapon or an otherwise dangerous object. If a student resists a search, the local police will be called for assistance.

## Vandalism

The standard repair and maintenance of school equipment and buildings is a costly item in the school budget. When school property is damaged or destroyed through vandalism, it is inconvenient for students and staff of the affected building and places an unfair burden on the taxpayer. Parents/guardians are financially responsible for the cost of damage if it has been done deliberately by their child. It is the policy of the Highlands School Board that students who willfully cause damage to school property shall be subject to disciplinary measures. Students and others who damage or deface school property may be prosecuted and punished under the law. Parents/Guardians shall be held accountable for the actions of their child. *(School Board Policy 224)*

## Class Cuts

For a student to achieve their highest potential, they must attend class regularly. Therefore, choosing not to attend class is irresponsible behavior. Students will be considered illegally absent and will not have the opportunity to complete any missed assignments during the period they did not attend. A grade of zero will be applied in the gradebook for all work assigned during that period.

- **Tardy (5 mins or less)**
  - First offense — warning
  - Second offense — warning
  - Third offense — document in SWIS and assign detention
- **Class cut (6 or more minutes without a pass and student arrives to class)**
  - First offense — contact family, can assign detention
  - Second offense — contact family and assign detention
- **Class cut (6 or more minutes without a pass and does not arrive to class)**
  - First offense — contact family and assign detention
  - If a student fails to attend within a given period, they may be subject to suspension.

## Cheating or Plagiarism

Cheating involves giving or receiving unauthorized help by talking, by using written notes, or by any other visual, oral, tactile, or electronic means. Using AI tools (such as ChatGPT or other text generators) to complete assignments without explicit teacher approval is considered academic dishonesty and plagiarism. All submitted work must reflect the student's thinking unless collaborative or AI-assisted work is explicitly allowed.

Plagiarism is the intentional stealing of words or ideas from someone else and submitting them as one's work. Plagiarism is a crime: both inside and outside school. Internet "cut and paste" is one example of plagiarism.

The following will occur when a student is caught and reported cheating or plagiarizing:

- The student will receive a zero grade on the activity, project, or test on which the cheating occurred, with no opportunity for make-up work.
- Teachers will notify the parent and refer the student to the building administration.
- Members of a meritorious organization (i.e., National Honor Society) will also receive a one-year suspension from the organization from the date of the infraction. A second offense will result in permanent expulsion from meritorious organizations.
- Forfeiture of any meritorious awards (e.g., valedictorian, salutatorian during periods of suspension or expulsion).
- A summary of the situation will be handed into the office so that it can be placed in the student's discipline file.

## Behavioral Consequence Levels

One of the primary goals of Highlands High School is to promote constructive and respectful behaviors. The procedures and consequences are designed to modify unacceptable behavior, not to punish. Students are expected to make appropriate decisions concerning their behaviors. School administration has the right to address behaviors on a case-by-case basis.

The examples provided in this Code of Conduct are not to be construed as limiting the behaviors that may require disciplinary action by school personnel. The following misconduct/response structure includes four levels.

Levels I, II, III, and IV represent a continuum of misbehaviors based on the seriousness of the act and the frequency of the occurrence, determined by school administration. Any student found in violation of Board Policy and District rules and regulations will receive appropriate disciplinary action.

# Level 1 Behaviors

**Definition of Behaviors:** Misbehavior on the part of the student which impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. These misbehaviors are usually handled by individual staff members, but sometimes require the intervention of other school support personnel.

**Examples of Level 1 Misbehaviors include, but are not limited to:**

- Classroom/school disturbance or disruptive/inappropriate classroom/school behavior
- Non-defiant failure to complete or carry out directions
- Using Bluetooth speakers, cell phones, cameras, and other electronic devices without authorization
- Eating outside cafeteria or in unauthorized area(s)
- Failing to have or return required forms, books, library books, materials, and equipment
- Littering
- Running or shouting in the halls
- Unauthorized presence in the halls or other school areas
- Inappropriate display of affection
- Unauthorized sale of non-harmful items
- Classroom tardiness and first offense class cut
- Violation of Dress Code
- Inappropriate language

**Examples of Disciplinary Actions, but not limited to:**

- Private conversation with student
- Verbal warning or written reprimand
- Special Assignment
- Detention
- Denial of privileges
- Confiscation
- Rams Reflection Room

# Level 2 Behaviors

**Definition of Behaviors:** Frequent or serious misbehavior that disrupts the learning environment of the school. These infractions, which usually result from the continuation of Level I misbehaviors, require the intervention of administrative personnel because the execution of Level I disciplinary options has failed to correct the situation.

**Examples of Level 2 Misbehaviors include, but are not limited to:**

- Extreme Level I misconduct
- Continuation of Level I misconduct
- Abusive, obscene, or disrespectful language, writing, or gestures
- Using forged notes or excuses
- Unsafe/disorderly bus conduct
- Unsafe/disorderly cafeteria conduct
- Violation of school attendance policies (e.g. tardiness; truancy; leaving school property without permission; 2nd offense cutting class; unexcused absence)
- Failure to serve detentions within reasonable time
- Unauthorized possession or use of school property, facilities, lockers
- Hazing
- Bullying/Cyberbullying
- Plagiarism/Cheating
- Misbehavior during field trips or school programs
- Open defiance of authority; willful refusal to do as requested; or any form of insubordination
- Repeated violation of dress code

**Examples of Disciplinary Actions, but not limited to:**

- Parent Contact
- Parent/Student/Teacher conference
- Behavior Contract
- Modified day
- Detentions
- Denial of privileges/extracurricular activities
- ASA
- Rams Reflection Room
- Out of school suspension
- Confiscation
- Restitution of damaged property
- Citation

# Level 3 Behaviors

**Definition of Behaviors:** Frequent or serious misbehaviors that tend to disrupt the learning climate of the school and/or acts directed against people or properties that endanger the health or safety of others in the school.

**Examples of Level 3 Misbehaviors include, but are not limited to:**

- Continuation of or extreme Level II misconduct
- Vandalism
- 3rd offense truancy
- Petty theft
- Fighting
- Assault
- Minority, ethnic, or racial slurs or intimidation
- Trespassing on or in school property when closed
- Destruction of the property of others
- Lewdness or indecent exposure
- Possession or use of tobacco, matches, e-cigarettes, lighters, vapes, vaping material, etc.
- Harassment
- Sexual harassment; inappropriate use of electronic devices
- Throwing objects that can cause harm or damage.
- Gross disrespect towards staff member

**Examples of Disciplinary Actions, but not limited to:**

- Parent Contact
- Detention
- Confiscation
- Temporary removal from area (i.e. class, cafeteria, etc.)
- Rams Reflection Room
- Out of school suspension
- ASA
- Denial of privileges/extracurricular activities
- Temporary removal or full removal from bus
- Restitution of property or damages
- Referral to police or district magistrate
- Citation

# Level 4 Behaviors

**Definition of Behaviors:** Frequent or serious misbehaviors that tend to disrupt the learning climate of the school. Acts directed against persons or property which could, or do, pose a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others in the school. Such acts will require administrative action which could result in the immediate removal of the student from school and the possible intervention of law enforcement authorities.

**Examples of Level 4 Misbehaviors include, but are not limited to:**

- Continuation of, or extreme Level III misconduct; extortion
- Bomb threat or threatening phone calls
- Possession/use/transfer of dangerous weapons
- Fighting
- Assault
- Lighted or ignited objects
- Theft or possession/sale of stolen property
- Arson or attempted arson
- Hacking, cracking, or tampering with the network/computers
- Inappropriate use of electronic devices
- Transfer/sale/possession/purchase/procurement, distribution/use or under the influence of unauthorized substances (e.g., drugs, alcohol, or drug paraphernalia)
- Possession, sale, or use of firecrackers, cherry bombs, or other fireworks
- Disorderly conduct
- Unauthorized use of fire alarm or equipment
- Repeated incidents of bullying/cyberbullying
- Retaliation against a student for reporting bullying or extortion, or for assisting in an investigation

**Examples of Disciplinary Actions, but not limited to:**

- Expulsion
- Citation
- Confiscation
- Rams Reflection Room
- Out of school suspension
- Permanent removal from bus
- Restitution for damages to or loss of property
- ASA
- Referral to police or district justice
- Referral to outside agency

# Definitions of Consequences

## Social Probation

Students who are placed on the social probation list will be restricted from special privileges and participating in extracurricular activities until their names are removed.

All students on the social probation list will report to the office during school functions (examples: pep rallies, assemblies, etc).

A student may be placed on the social probation list for:

- Being insubordinate towards professional staff, school administrators, or adults during school or at a school function
- Fighting on school property or at a school function
- Having violated the drug and alcohol policy on school property or at a school function
- Making no attempt towards payment of school obligations
- Being habitually tardy and/or cutting class
- Being absent from school more than 10 times and required to present doctor's excuses upon return to school
- As indicated on the Code of Conduct: Disciplinary Action Consequences

A student's name will remain on the social probation list until the building administration is convinced that the student has demonstrated acceptable behavior and is making a serious attempt to act in a socially responsible manner at school or during school events.

## Detention

- Detention is held Monday through Thursday from 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM.
- Report for detention promptly; no one will be admitted after 2:40 PM.
- You must complete your schoolwork and work during the entire detention.
- If any of the above rules are broken, further disciplinary action will result.

## Rams Reflection Room (RRR)

The Rams Reflection Room is staffed with a certified Behavior Specialist. Students assigned to the RRR will work through the behavior of concern using a restorative practice framework. The process used and length of time will depend on the reason for referral to the RRR and the individual needs of the student. The individual plan will be clearly stated as part of the disciplinary process.

## After-School Alternative (ASA)

The After-School Alternative (ASA) program is designed to help students maintain grades and attendance when an Out-of-School suspension is assigned. The student will be required to report to the High School Office for the ASA session that will run from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The student will receive all their schoolwork for that day at ASA. Failure to report to ASA will result in the student facing further disciplinary action. ASA will be assigned at the discretion of building administration.

- Students must be in the classroom by 2:40 p.m. Any student arriving after 2:40 p.m. will be turned away.
- Students should bring materials to complete schoolwork.
- Students will work for the duration of the class. If a student does not work on assignments, they will be asked to leave and could face further disciplinary action.
- One 10-minute break will be given at 4:15 p.m.
- All school rules apply. Students demonstrating noncompliant or disruptive behavior will be asked to leave and could face further disciplinary action.

# SECTION 4 — PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Students do better in school when their family takes an active role in their education. There are many ways for us to look at parent involvement, and at least four different categories of involvement have been encouraged by successful schools. At Highlands, parents are encouraged to become as active as possible, including:

Ensuring regular attendance, getting the child to the school bus or the school building on time, calling to report your child is sick, making sure the child completes homework and assignments, congratulating a child’s success, supporting the school’s discipline, and attending the Back to School Night and Teacher Conference days.

Communicating by sending in an excuse or doctor’s excuse when a child has missed a day of school, calling the child’s teacher when there is a concern, returning calls from the school, and keeping emergency contacts up to date with working/current phone numbers and related information.

Academic support including looking at and helping with class work or homework papers to assess your student’s knowledge and abilities. This will help you when contacting teachers or tutors for assistance with any academic challenges.

Being involved in district decision making by attending public meetings and open forums of the District-wide Title I PAC, monthly school board meetings, and working with other families to help create an action plan for your school.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents can schedule conferences with teachers and principals any day of the school year by calling the school to make an appointment. In addition, the district has scheduled several parent-oriented events throughout the year when parents can exchange ideas and get information concerning the schools and their children.

In addition, Back to School Nights are scheduled in September at each school. Since time limits at these events prohibit lengthy discussions on serious problems, parents are invited to make appointments in advance to discuss issues at a time convenient for both parties.

## Volunteers

Highlands School District welcomes parents and community members into the District as volunteers. The District believes it is essential to include the community in its mission to build foundations for the futures of our students. Many programs, extracurricular activities, events, and experiences would not be possible without the graciousness of volunteers.

The District anticipates a cordial relationship with you, as a volunteer, and thanks you for your time and dedication to our youth. Building administration reserves the right to deny the ability to volunteer in the school to any individual.

## Qualifications for Volunteers

- Minimum of 18 years of age unless the volunteer is a high school student in a peer-mentoring position.
- Adhere to all regulations, policies, and procedures of the Highlands School District.
- Maintain confidentiality when volunteering within the schools.
- Provide State Criminal Record Check and State Child Abuse clearances, as well as an FBI clearance or Arrest/Conviction Form. Information about how to obtain the necessary clearances is posted on the school website at www.goldenrams.com/volunteer.

# APPENDICES: HSD ATTENDANCE POLICY 204

**Book:** Policy Manual · **Section:** 200 Pupils · **Title:** Attendance · **Code:** 204 · **Status:** Active · **Adopted:** August 21, 2017

## Purpose

The Board recognizes that attendance is an essential factor in educational success, and supports a comprehensive approach to identify and address attendance issues.

# Authority

Attendance shall be required of all students during the days and hours that school is in session, except that authorized district staff may excuse a student for temporary absences upon receipt of satisfactory evidence of mental, physical, or other urgent reasons that may reasonably cause the student's absence.

The Board shall establish and enforce attendance requirements, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, Board policy and regulations.

# Definitions

**Compulsory school age** shall mean the period of a child's life from the time the child's parents/guardians elect to have the child enter school, and which shall be no later than eight (8) years of age until the child reaches seventeen (17) years of age. The term does not include a child who holds a certificate of graduation from a regularly accredited, licensed, registered, or approved high school.

**Habitually truant** shall mean six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year by a child subject to compulsory school attendance.

**Truant** shall mean having incurred three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year by a child subject to compulsory school attendance.

**Person in parental relation** shall mean a:

1. Custodial biological or adoptive parent.
2. Noncustodial biological or adoptive parent.
3. Guardian of the person of a child.
4. Person with whom a child lives and who is acting in a parental role of a child.

This definition shall not include any county agency or person acting as an agent of the county agency in the jurisdiction of a dependent child as defined by law.

**School-based or community-based attendance improvement program** shall mean a program designed to improve school attendance by seeking to identify and address the underlying reasons for a child's absences. The term may include an educational assignment in an alternative education program, provided the program does not include a program for disruptive youth established pursuant to Article XIX-C of the Pennsylvania Public School Code.

## Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall annually notify students, parents/guardians, staff, local children and youth agency, and local Magisterial District Judges about the district's attendance policy by publishing such policy in student handbooks, newsletters, district website, and other efficient communication methods.

The Superintendent or designee, in coordination with the building principal, Attendance Officer, and Home and School Visitor shall be responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop regulations for the attendance of students which:

1. Govern the maintenance of attendance records in accordance with law.
2. Detail the process for submission of requests and excuses for student absences.
3. Detail the process for written notices, School Attendance Improvement Conferences, School Attendance Improvement Plans, and referrals to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program, the local children and youth agency, or the appropriate judge.
4. Ensure that students legally absent have an opportunity to make up work.

## Guidelines

## Compulsory School Attendance Requirements

All students of compulsory school age who reside in the district shall be subject to the compulsory school attendance requirements.

A student shall be considered in attendance if present at any place where school is in session by authority of the Board; the student is receiving approved tutorial instruction, or health or therapeutic services; the student is engaged in an approved and properly supervised independent study, work-study or career education program; or the student is receiving approved homebound instruction.

The following students shall be excused from the requirements of attendance at district schools, upon request and with the required approval:

1. On certification by a physician or submission of other satisfactory evidence and on approval of the Department of Education, children who are unable to attend school or apply themselves to study for mental, physical, or other reasons that preclude regular attendance.
2. Students enrolled in nonpublic or private schools in which the subjects and activities prescribed by law are taught.
3. Students attending college who are also enrolled part-time in district schools.

4. Students attending a home education program or private tutoring in accordance with law.
5. Students fifteen (15) or sixteen (16) years of age whose enrollment in private trade or business schools has been approved.
6. Students fifteen (15) years of age, and fourteen (14) years of age who have completed the highest elementary grade, engaged in farm work or private domestic service under duly issued permits.
7. Students sixteen (16) years of age regularly employed during the school session and holding a lawfully issued employment certificate.

## Excused/Lawful Absence

For purposes of this policy, the following conditions or situations constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:

1. Illness, including if a student is dismissed by designated district staff during school hours for health-related reasons.
2. Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state, commonwealth, or territory.
3. Quarantine.
4. Family emergency.
5. Recovery from an accident.
6. Required court attendance.
7. Death in family.
8. Participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or countywide 4-H, FFA, or combined 4-H and FFA group, upon prior written request.
9. Observance of a religious holiday observed by bona fide religious group, upon prior written parental request.
10. Non-school-sponsored educational tours or trips, if the following conditions are met:
    a. The parent/guardian submits a written request for excusal prior to the absence.
    b. The student's participation has been approved by the Superintendent or designee.
    c. The adult directing and supervising the tour or trip is acceptable to the parents/guardians and the Superintendent.
11. College or postsecondary institution visit, with prior approval.
12. Other urgent reasons. Urgent reasons shall be strictly construed and do not permit irregular attendance.

The district may limit the number and duration of non-school-sponsored educational tours or trips and college or postsecondary institution visits for which excused absences may be granted to a student during the school year.

## Temporary Excusals

The following students may be temporarily excused from the requirements of attendance at district schools:

1. Students receiving tutorial instruction in a field not offered in the district's curricula from a properly qualified tutor approved by the Superintendent, when the excusal does not interfere with the student's regular program of studies.
2. Students participating in a religious instruction program, if the following conditions are met:
    a. The parent/guardian submits a written request for excusal. The request shall identify and describe the instruction, and the dates and hours of instruction.
    b. The student shall not miss more than thirty-six (36) hours per school year in order to attend classes for religious instruction.
    c. Following each absence, the parent/guardian shall submit a statement attesting that the student attended the instruction, and the dates and hours of attendance.
3. School age children unable to attend school upon recommendation of the school physician and a psychiatrist or school psychologist, or both, and with approval of the Secretary of Education.

## Parental Notice of Absence

Absences shall be treated as unlawful until the district receives a written excuse explaining the absence, to be submitted within three (3) days of the absence.

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts.

## Unexcused/Unlawful Absence

For purposes of this policy, absences which do not meet the criteria indicated above shall be considered an unexcused/unlawful absence.

An out-of-school suspension may not be considered an unexcused absence.

**Parental Notification** — District staff shall provide notice to the person in parental relation upon each incident of unexcused absence.

## Enforcement of Compulsory Attendance Requirements

**Student is Truant** — When a student has been absent for three (3) days during the current school year without a lawful excuse, district staff shall provide notice to the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student within ten (10) school days of the student's third unexcused absence.

The notice shall:

1. Be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the person in parental relation;
2. Include a description of the consequences if the student becomes habitually truant; and
3. When transmitted to a person who is not the biological or adoptive parent, also be provided to the child's biological or adoptive parent, if the parent's mailing address is on file with the school and the parent is not precluded from receiving the information by court order.

The notice may include the offer of a School Attendance Improvement Conference.

If the student incurs additional unexcused absences after issuance of the notice and a School Attendance Improvement Conference was not previously held, district staff shall offer a School Attendance Improvement Conference.

## School Attendance Improvement Conference

District staff shall notify the person in parental relation in writing and by telephone of the date and time of the School Attendance Improvement Conference.

The purpose of the School Attendance Improvement Conference is to examine the student's absences and reasons for the absences in an effort to improve attendance with or without additional services.

The following individuals shall be invited to the School Attendance Improvement Conference:

1. The student.
2. The student's person in parental relation.
3. Other individuals identified by the person in parental relation who may be a resource.
4. Appropriate school personnel.
5. Recommended service providers.

Neither the student nor the person in parental relation shall be required to participate, and the School Attendance Improvement Conference shall occur even if the person in parental relation declines to participate or fails to attend the scheduled conference.

The outcome of the School Attendance Improvement Conference shall be documented in a written School Attendance Improvement Plan. The Plan shall be retained in the student's file. A copy of the Plan shall be provided to the person in parental relation, the student, and appropriate district staff.

The district may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until after the date of the scheduled School Attendance Improvement Conference has passed.

## Student is Habitually Truant

When a student under fifteen (15) years of age is habitually truant, district staff:

1. Shall refer the student to:
    a. A school-based or community-based attendance improvement program; or
    b. The local children and youth agency.
2. May file a citation in the office of the appropriate judge against the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.

When a student fifteen (15) years of age or older is habitually truant, district staff shall:

1. Refer the student to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program; or
2. File a citation in the office of the appropriate judge against the student or the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.

District staff may refer a student who is fifteen (15) years of age or older to the local children and youth agency, if the student continues to incur additional unexcused absences after being referred to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program, or if the student refuses to participate in such program.

Regardless of age, when district staff refer a habitually truant student to the local children and youth agency or file a citation with the appropriate judge, district staff shall provide verification that the school held a School Attendance Improvement Conference.

## Filing a Citation

A citation shall be filed in the office of the appropriate judge whose jurisdiction includes the school in which the student is or should be enrolled.

Additional citations for subsequent violations of the compulsory school attendance requirements may only be filed against a student or person in parental relation in accordance with the specific provisions of the law.

## Special Needs and Accommodations

If a truant or habitually truant student may qualify as a student with a disability, and require special education services or accommodations, the Director of Special Education shall be notified and shall take action to address the student’s needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations, and Board policy.

For students with disabilities who are truant or habitually truant, the appropriate team shall be notified and shall address the student’s needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations, and Board policy.

## Discipline

The district shall not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment, or transfer for truant behavior.

# APPENDICES: HSD ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY 237

**Book:** Policy Manual · **Section:** 200 Pupils · **Title:** Electronic Device · **Code:** 237 · **Status:** Active · **Adopted:** March 21, 2016 · **Last Revised:** May 15, 2017 · **Last Reviewed:** April 6, 2017

## Authority

The Board authorizes student possession of cell phones and other personal electronic devices, such as pagers, calculators, personal digital assistants (PDAs), laptop computers, handheld computers, cameras, MP3 players, mobile phones, tablets, or any other devices designed to communicate, create, or store information. While the district does not prohibit bringing these devices, the district does not recommend it.

Owners assume all risks of damage, theft, loss, or misuse of such devices.

Students may only be permitted to utilize such devices in the classroom with the consent of the teacher.

Students may not use such devices on school property and school-sponsored activities to access and/or view Internet websites that are otherwise blocked to students at school, such as but not limited to Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube.

The following shall also be prohibited while using such devices on school grounds:

1. Sending and/or displaying offensive messages.
2. Using obscene language.
3. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others.
4. Violating copyright laws.
5. Using another individual’s password/access codes.
6. Trespassing in digital files, work, or folders.

Cameras of any type shall be prohibited in restrooms, locker rooms, swimming pool areas, or during testing.

The Board prohibits possession of laser pointers and attachments by students in district buildings; on district property; on district buses and vehicles; and at school-sponsored activities.

Devices shall be powered off or silenced during the school day, unless otherwise permitted by district procedures, rules, and/or regulations. Use of personal or district technology devices that disrupt the instructional day or includes possession, viewing, sending, or sharing video or audio information which has sexual, violent, or threatening content on school grounds, school events,

or school buses shall be prohibited and shall result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the electronic device.

## Definition

Electronic devices shall include all devices that can take photographs; record audio or video data; store, transmit, or receive messages or images; or provide a wireless, unfiltered connection to the Internet. Examples of these electronic devices include, but shall not be limited to, radios, CD players, DVD players, handheld game consoles, mobile phones, tablets, laptops, as well as any new technology developed with similar capabilities.

## Electronic Images and Photographs

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

## Off-Campus Activities

This policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would otherwise violate the Code of Student Conduct if any of the following circumstances exist:

1. The conduct occurs during the time the student is traveling to and from school or traveling to and from school-sponsored activities, whether or not via school district furnished transportation.
2. The student is a member of an extracurricular activity and has been notified that particular off-campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.
3. Student expression or conduct materially and substantially disrupts the operations of the school, or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to materially and substantially disrupt the operations of the school.
4. The conduct has a direct nexus to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity, for example, a transaction conducted outside of school pursuant to an agreement made in school, that would violate the Code of Student Conduct if conducted in school.
5. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property.
6. There is otherwise a nexus between the proximity or timing of the conduct in relation to the student’s attendance at school or school-sponsored activities.

## Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall annually notify students, parents/guardians, and staff about the Board's electronic device policy by publishing such policy in the student handbook, on the district website, and in other publications mailed to addresses on file.

## Guidelines

Parents/Guardians and students shall sign the acceptable use waiver acknowledging review of Board policy, register applicable equipment with the district, and sign related forms.

Sending text, image, sound, video, or files for the purpose of cheating shall be grounds for confiscation and/or inspection of transmitted data.

If a device shall be confiscated, it shall only be released and/or returned to a parent/guardian.

Students may not:

1. Employ the district network for commercial or any non-educational purposes.
2. Intentionally waste resources, such as excessive downloading or creating viruses.

Exceptions to the prohibitions set forth in this policy may be made for health, safety, or emergency reasons with prior approval of the building principal or designee, or when use is provided in a student's individualized education program (IEP) and other reasons determined appropriate by the building principal.

The building administrator may grant approval for possession and use of a telephone paging device/beeper by a student for the following reasons:

1. Student is a member of a volunteer fire company, ambulance, or rescue squad.
2. Student has a need due to the medical condition of an immediate family member.
3. Other reasons determined appropriate by the building principal.

District staff shall not be authorized to share, distribute, or download any content from a student's electronic device.

If the district confiscates a student's device, it shall not be responsible for loss of data or damage to the device.

# APPENDICES: HSD TOBACCO/NICOTINE POLICY 222

**Book:** Policy Manual · **Section:** 200 Pupils · **Title:** Tobacco/Nicotine · **Code:** 222 · **Status:** Active · **Adopted:** January 18, 2016 · **Last Revised:** April 15, 2019

## Purpose

The Board recognizes that tobacco, nicotine, and nicotine delivery products present a health and safety hazard that can have serious consequences for both users and nonusers and the safety and environment of the schools.

## Definitions

For purposes of this policy, **tobacco** includes a lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, cigarillo, little cigar, pipe, or other smoking product or material and smokeless tobacco in any form including chewing tobacco, snuff, dip, or dissolvable tobacco pieces.

For purposes of this policy, **nicotine** shall mean a product that contains or consists of nicotine in a form that can be ingested by chewing, smoking, inhaling, or through other means.

For purposes of this policy, a **nicotine delivery product** shall mean a product or device used, intended for use, or designed for the purpose of ingesting nicotine or another substance. This definition includes, but is not limited to, any device or associated product used for what is commonly referred to as vaping or juuling.

## Authority

The Board prohibits possession, use, or sale of tobacco, nicotine, and nicotine delivery products by students at any time in a school building and on any property, buses, vans, and vehicles that are owned, leased, or controlled by the school district.

The Board also prohibits possession, use, or sale of tobacco, nicotine, and nicotine delivery products by students at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property.

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement, and Board policies.

## Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall notify students, parents/guardians, and staff about the Board's tobacco/nicotine policy by publishing information in student handbooks, parental newsletters, Code of Student Conduct, posters, and by other efficient methods, such as posted notices, signs, and on the district website.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

## Guidelines

## Reporting

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving possession, use, or sale of tobacco, nicotine, or nicotine delivery products immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all incidents of possession, use, or sale of tobacco, nicotine, and nicotine delivery products by students to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form.

## Additional Provisions — Tobacco Only

The Superintendent or designee may report incidents of possession, use, or sale of tobacco by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the school police, school resource officer (SRO), or to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement, and Board policies.

A student convicted of possessing or using tobacco in violation of this policy may be fined up to fifty dollars ($50) plus court costs, or admitted by the court to alternative adjudication in lieu of imposition of a fine.

# APPENDICES: HSD WEAPONS POLICY 218.1

**Book:** Policy Manual · **Section:** 200 Pupils · **Title:** Weapons · **Code:** 218.1 · **Status:** Active · **Adopted:** January 18, 2016

## Purpose

The Board recognizes the importance of a safe school environment relative to the educational process. Possession of weapons in the school setting is a threat to the safety of students and staff and is prohibited by law.

## Definitions

**Weapon** — the term shall include but not be limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon, and any other tool, instrument, or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

**Possession** — a student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student's locker; and under the student's control while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.

## Authority

The Board prohibits students from possessing and bringing weapons and replicas of weapons into any school district buildings, onto school property, to any school-sponsored activity, and onto any public vehicle providing transportation to school or a school-sponsored activity or while the student is coming to or from school.

The Board shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law and Board policy. The Superintendent may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement, and Board policies.

## Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall react promptly to information and knowledge concerning possession of a weapon. Such action shall be in compliance with state law and regulations and with the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement officials and the district's emergency preparedness plan.

## Guidelines

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report incidents involving weapons on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement, and Board policies.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving weapons as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.

In accordance with state law, the Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all incidents involving possession of a weapon to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form.

The Superintendent or designee shall report all incidents regarding expulsion for possession of a weapon to the Department of Education.

The building principal shall annually inform staff, students, and parents/guardians about the Board policy prohibiting weapons and about their personal responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare of the school community.

An exception to this policy may be made by the Superintendent, who shall prescribe special conditions or administrative regulations to be followed.

In accordance with federal law, possession or discharge of a firearm in, on, or within 1,000 feet of school grounds is prohibited. Violations shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

## Transfer Students

When the school district receives a student who transfers from a public or private school during an expulsion period for an offense involving a weapon, the district may assign that student to an alternative assignment or may provide alternative education, provided the assignment does not exceed the expulsion period.

# APPENDICES: HSD CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE/PARAPHERNALIA POLICY 227

**Book:** Policy Manual · **Section:** 200 Pupils · **Title:** Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia · **Code:** 227 · **Status:** Active · **Adopted:** January 18, 2016

# Purpose

The Board recognizes that the abuse of controlled substances is a serious problem with legal, physical, and social implications for the whole school community. As an educational institution dedicated to the holistic well-being of each student, the utilization of curriculum, classroom activities, community support and resources, strong and consistent administration and faculty efforts, and rehabilitative and disciplinary processes shall enable the schools to strive to prevent abuse of controlled substances.

# Definitions

For purposes of this policy, **controlled substances** shall include all:

1. Controlled substances prohibited by federal and state laws.
2. Look-alike drugs.
3. Alcoholic beverages.
4. Anabolic steroids.
5. Drug paraphernalia.
6. Any volatile solvents or inhalants, such as but not limited to glue and aerosol products.
7. Substances that when ingested cause a physiological effect that is similar to the effect of a controlled substance as defined by state or federal laws.
8. Prescription or nonprescription (over-the-counter) medications, except those for which permission for use in school has been granted pursuant to Board policy.

For purposes of this policy, **under the influence** shall include any consumption or ingestion of controlled substances by a student.

For purposes of this policy, **look-alike drug** shall include any pill, capsule, tablet, powder, plant matter, or other item or substance that is designed or intended to resemble a controlled substance prohibited by this policy, or is used in a manner likely to induce others to believe the material is a controlled substance.

**School Property** — for the purposes of this policy, shall include not only actual buildings, facilities, and grounds on the school campus, but shall also include buses, school bus stops, school parking areas, and any facility being used for a school function.

**Student Assistance Program (SAP) Team** — a multi-disciplinary team comprised of school personnel, teachers, staff, administrators, nurses, guidance counselors, probation officers, etc. The team shall be trained to understand and work on the issues of adolescent chemical use, abuse, and dependency, and shall play a primary role in the identification and referral process of students.

## Authority

The Board prohibits students from aiding in the procurement, using, possessing, distributing, and being under the influence of any controlled substances during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity on or off school property, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and to and from school-sponsored activities.

The Board may require participation in drug counseling, rehabilitation, testing, or other programs as a condition of reinstatement into the school's educational, extracurricular, or athletic programs resulting from violations of this policy.

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement, and Board policies.

## Off-Campus Activities

This policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would otherwise violate the Code of Student Conduct if any of the following circumstances exist:

1. The conduct occurs during the time the student is traveling to and from school or traveling to and from school-sponsored activities, whether or not via school district furnished transportation.
2. The student is a member of an extracurricular activity and has been notified that particular off-campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.
3. Student expression or conduct materially and substantially disrupts the operations of the school, or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to materially and substantially disrupt the operations of the school.
4. The conduct has a direct nexus to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity, for example, a transaction conducted outside of school pursuant to an agreement made in school, that would violate the Code of Student Conduct if conducted in school.
5. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property.
6. There is otherwise a nexus between the proximity or timing of the conduct in relation to the student's attendance at school or school-sponsored activities.

## Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall:

1. Establish procedures to appropriately manage situations involving students suspected of using, possessing, being under the influence, or distributing controlled substances.
2. Disseminate to students, parents/guardians, and staff the Board policy and administrative regulations governing student use of controlled substances.
3. Provide education concerning the dangers of abusing controlled substances.
4. Establish procedures for education and readmission to school of students convicted of offenses involving controlled substances.

## Guidelines

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and referral for prosecution.

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents and may report discretionary incidents involving possession, use, or sale of controlled substances on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement, and Board policies.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving possession, use, or sale of controlled substances as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.

In accordance with state law, the Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all incidents of possession, use, or sale of controlled substances to the Office for Safe Schools.

In all cases involving students and controlled substances, the need to protect the school community from undue harm and exposure to drugs shall be recognized. No student may be admitted to a program that seeks to identify and rehabilitate the potential abuser without the intelligent, voluntary, and aware consent of the student and parent/guardian.

## Anabolic Steroids

The Board prohibits the use of anabolic steroids by students involved in school-related athletics, except for a valid medical purpose. Body building and muscle enhancement, increasing muscle bulk or strength, or the enhancement of athletic ability are not valid medical purposes. Human Growth Hormone (HGH) shall not be included as an anabolic steroid.

Students shall be made aware of the dangers of steroid use; that anabolic steroids are classified as controlled substances; and that their use, unauthorized possession, purchase, or sale could subject students to suspension, expulsion, and/or criminal prosecution.

## Reasonable Suspicion/Testing

If based on the student's behavior, medical symptoms, vital signs, or other observable factors, the building principal has reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of a controlled substance, the student may be required to submit to drug or alcohol testing. The testing may include but is not limited to the analysis of blood, urine, saliva, or the administration of a Breathalyzer test.

# APPENDICES: Bullying/ Cyberbullying POLICY 227

**Book:** Policy Manual · **Section:** 200 Pupils · **Title:** Bullying/Cyberbullying

· **Code:** 249 · **Status:** Active · **Adopted:** March 21, 2016 **Last Revised:** June 16, 2025

## Purpose

The Board is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for district students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Board prohibits bullying by district students.

## Definitions

**Bullying** means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:[1]

Substantially interfering with a student's education.

1. Creating a threatening environment.
2. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

**Bullying**, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

**School setting** means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.[1]

## Authority

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by district students.[1]

The Board encourages students who believe they or others have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee.

Students are encouraged to use the district's report form, available from the building principal, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy.

The Board directs that verbal and written complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventative action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Board directs that any complaint of bullying brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be bullying under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies.

When a student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, district staff shall report the student to the threat assessment team, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[2][3]

## Discrimination/Harassment

Every report of alleged bullying that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination or harassment shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator. If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination or harassment are identified, the Title IX Coordinator shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination or harassment as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.[4][5]

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, this policy and the district's legal and investigative obligations.

## Retaliation

Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of bullying or participation in an investigation of allegations of bullying is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

## Delegation of Responsibility

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that this policy and administrative regulations are reviewed annually with students.[1]

The Superintendent or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.[1]

District administration shall annually provide the following information with the school safety and security incident report:[1][6]

1. Board's Bullying Policy.

2. Report of bullying incidents.

3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.

## Guidelines

The Code of Student Conduct, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.[1][7][8]

This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within each school building and on the district website.[1]

## Education

The district may develop, implement and evaluate bullying prevention and intervention programs and activities. Programs and activities shall provide district staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.[1][9][10][11]

## Consequences for Violations

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include:[1][7][12]

1. Counseling within the school.
2. Parental conference.
3. Loss of school privileges.
4. Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus.
5. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
6. Detention.
7. Suspension.
8. Expulsion.

# APPENDICES: SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

This Student-Parent Handbook operates in accordance with Highlands School District Board of Directors policies. It is designed to support and reinforce the expectations set forth by the Board.

Please visit the district's BoardDocs site to view these and all other district policies, which include but are not limited to the following:

| Policy Number | Policy Title / Summary |
|---|---|
| 103 | Nondiscrimination / Title IX |
| 200 | Enrollment |
| 204 | Attendance |
| 209 | Health Examinations / Screenings |
| 209.1 | Food Allergy Management |
| 210.1 | Possession / Use of Asthma Inhalers & Epi-Pens |
| 218.1 | Weapons |
| 220 | Student Expression / Media |

| Policy Number | Policy Title / Summary |
|---|---|
| 226 | Student Use of Medications |
| 229 | Student Fundraising |
| 233 | Suspension & Expulsion |
| 236.1 | Threat Assessment |
| 237 | Education of Students with Disabilities |
| 246 | School Wellness |
| 247 | Hazardous Materials |
| 249 | Bullying/Cyber Bullying |
| 252 | Dating Violence |
| 806 | Child / Student Abuse |
| 810 | Transportation Safety |
| 817 | Privacy |
| 824 | Acceptable Use of Technology |