

# **HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY**



## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2011-2012**

**3100 Medway Street  
Silver Spring, MD 20902  
(301) 929-2040**

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**Highland Elementary School  
3100 Medway Street, Silver Spring, Maryland 20902  
(301) 929-2040**

At Highland, a diverse, multicultural environment, it is our vision to provide students with the best education. We will provide the school community with the tools to become lifelong learners. Our students are expected to be respectful, responsible, and ready to learn.

This mission focuses on the following principles:

- Effective skills and strategies
- Self-discipline and respect for others
- High expectations for our futures
- Acquisition of the English language
- Parent and community involvement
- A positive learning and working environment

**Welcome from the Principal**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year! We hope that you will take time to read this handbook together with your child, so that you will both understand our school rules and policies. The information is essential in getting us off to a good start by helping to establish guidelines early and allowing us to work together to consistently follow these standards. We hope you will find this handbook useful.

Highland is a special place for students. We invite parents to visit our school and see the outstanding and exciting learning experiences that occur in our building.

I know that this coming school year will be an exciting one for all of us.

Sincerely,

Mr. Scott R. Steffan  
Principal

**IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

<b>Highland ES</b>	<b>301-929-2040</b>
<b>Highland FAX</b>	<b>301-929-2042</b>
<b>MCPS Emergency Announcements</b>	<b>301-279-3673</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>301-840-8140</b>
<b>Head Start</b>	<b>301-230-0676</b>
<b>Hispanic Hotline</b>	<b>301-230-3073</b>
<b>MCPS Information</b>	<b>301-309-6277</b>
<b>Linkages to Learning</b>	<b>301-946-1680</b>

## SCHOOL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mon, August 22	Professional day for teachers	No school for students.
Tue, August 23	Professional day for teachers	No school for students.
Wed, August 24	Professional day for teachers	No school for students.
Thu, August 25	Professional day for teachers	No school for students.
Fri, August 26	Professional day for teachers	No school for students.
Mon, August 29	First day of school for students	
Mon, September 05	Holiday - Labor Day	Offices & schools closed.
Wed, September 28	Early release day K-12. Planning and grades.	Students dismissed after lunch.
Thu, September 29	Rosh Hashanah	No school for students and teachers. (Note: Yom Kippur is Sat., October 8)
Fri, October 21	MSEA Convention - MCAAP Fall Conference	No school for students and teachers.
Fri, October 28	1st marking period ends	
Mon, October 31	Professional day for teachers	No school for students. Some 10-month employees work.
Thu, November 10	Early release day K-8. Parent conferences. Report cards distributed.	Students dismissed after lunch.
Fri, November 11	Early release day K-8. Parent conferences.	Students dismissed after lunch.
Wed, November 23	Early release day prior to Thanksgiving, K-12	Students dismissed after lunch.
Thu, November 24	Holiday - Thanksgiving	Offices & schools closed.
Fri, November 25	Holiday - Thanksgiving	Offices & schools closed.
Mon, December 26	Holiday - Christmas	Offices & schools closed.
Tue, December 27	Winter break	No school for students and teachers.
Wed, December 28	Winter break	No school for students and teachers.
Thu, December 29	Winter break	No school for students and teachers.

Fri, December 30	Winter break	No school for students and teachers.
Mon, January 02	Holiday - New Year's Day	Offices & schools closed.
Mon, January 16	Holiday - Martin L. King, Jr. Day	Offices & schools closed.
Fri, January 20	2nd marking period ends	
Mon, January 23	Professional day for teachers	No school for students. Some 10-month employees work.
Wed, February 01	Report cards distributed	
Mon, February 20	Holiday - Presidents' Day	Offices & schools closed.
Fri, March 02	Early release day K-12. Planning and grades.	Students dismissed after lunch.
Thu, March 29	3rd marking period ends	
Fri, March 30	Professional day for teachers	No school for students.
Mon, April 02	Spring break	No school for students and teachers. (Note: Passover begins April 6)
Tue, April 03	Holiday - Primary Election	Offices & schools closed
Wed, April 04	Spring break	No school for students and teachers.
Thu, April 05	Spring break	No school for students and teachers.
Fri, April 06	Holiday - Easter	Offices & schools closed.
Mon, April 09	Holiday - Easter	Offices & schools closed.
Thu, April 12	Report cards distributed	
Mon, May 28	Holiday - Memorial Day	Offices & schools closed.
Tue, June 12	Last day of school for students	
Wed, June 13	Professional day for teachers	
Thu, June 21	Report cards mailed	

## Highland Elementary – Staff Listing 2011-2012

### Office Staff

Scott Steffan – Principal  
Michelle Pickett- Assistant Principal  
Miriam Stewart – Administrative Secretary  
Helen (Carol) Waldecker – School Secretary

### Pre-Kindergarten

Melinda Scott– Pre-K Teacher  
Elsi Flores – Pre K Para –Educator  
Aura Rivera – Head Start Para-Educator  
Miriam Goldstein – Head Start Teacher

### Kindergarten

Lauren Eng\*  
Kim Hall  
Kelly Hilliard  
Wendy Markin  
Jamie Goldstein

### First Grade

Becca Fishman\*  
Renee Hudson  
Elizabeth Keys  
Jordana Oginz

### Second Grade

Becky Beadling  
Susan Cybulski  
Holly Garofano\*  
Elke Herzfeld

### Third Grade

Mara Sofronas  
Robin Weber  
Kelley Winckler\*

### Fourth Grade

Claire Swenson  
Jennifer Pellicci  
Alison Clarke-Pentz\*

### Fifth Grade

Erin Radzinski  
Adrienne Gadoci\*  
Lisa Davila

### ESOL Teachers

Mara Glenshaw  
Jodi Goldreich  
Deverie Jensen  
Molly Lee  
Susan Miranda  
Marva Nieves  
Sonya Vasilios  
Alissa Casey

### Specialists

Ron Kemp - P.E.  
Ashley Newby – Art  
Carla Ingram – Music  
Michael Martin – Instrum. Music  
Meghane Vaughan – Reading Specialist  
Natalie Hambrecht – Staff Development  
Courtney Thompson – Counselor  
Christie Kodama – Media Specialist  
Shannon Dorsey – GT/MCC

### Special Education Staff

Anne Tobin – Resource Teacher  
Susan Wells – Resource Teacher  
Mary Dickson – LAD Teacher  
Claire Gaita – LAD Teacher  
Cheryl Hahn – Speech  
Benito Vasquez – Pupil Personnel Worker  
Cheryl Cunningham- Psychologist

### Academic Intervention

Brian Freiss – Math Support  
Valerie Lee – Reading Support  
Tracey Witthaus – Reading Intervention  
Keri Healy – Reading Intervention  
Alissa Casey – Reading Intervention  
Jessica Chapman – Reading Recovery  
Natalie Hambrecht – Reading Support  
Katherine Anthony- Focus Teacher

### Building Service Staff

Danny Conner – Building Service  
Manager  
Maria Galeas – Assistant Manager  
Jung Kim– Building Service Worker  
James Lee – Building Service Worker  
Santos Hernandez – Building Service  
Worker

### Supporting Services

Christopher Adams – Special Education  
Para  
Molly Padgett – Special Education Para

Donna Falcone – Media Assistant  
Julie Schultz – Instructional Data Assistant  
John Alcoba– Parent Community  
Coordinator  
Kimberly Weedon – Special Education  
Para  
Shelley Harvard Campbell – Special Ed.  
Para  
Maria Berry – Special Education  
Para/Head Start  
Joanna Donohue – Special Education  
Para  
Nancy Lee – Special Education Para  
Carol Lange – General Education Para  
Mary Smith– Special Education Itinerant  
Para  
Maria Aabel- Special Education Itinerant  
Para

Lunch/Recess Staff

Debra Foley – Cafeteria Manager  
– Cafeteria Worker  
Angela Caseres – Lunch Hour Aide  
Rama Verma – Lunch Hour Aide  
Phanomrat Mookkung – Lunch Hour Aide

Health Room

Jody Menick-School Nurse  
Christine Tondari- Health Tech

Linkages to Learning

Alvaro Ortiz- Site Coordinator  
Priscilla Villavicencio- Mental Health  
Therapist  
Jenny Santos- Case Manager

## GENERAL PROCEDURES

### ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

**ABSENCE** - Please call and let us know if your child is going to be absent. You must send a note to the classroom teacher on the day the child returns to school indicating the reason for absence. The Maryland State Department of Education closely monitors attendance at each school. It is essential for children to come to school unless they are ill or there is an unusual circumstance such as a death in the immediate family.

Parents are strongly encouraged not to remove children from school for long periods of time during the school year to take vacations or visit other countries. Absences of several weeks seriously damage student academic progress and sometimes make it difficult for children to advance to the next grade. Teachers cannot prepare packets to substitute for the instruction that takes place in the classroom over several weeks. Parents are strongly encouraged to plan extended trips to coincide with school vacation times. Parents who take students out of school for extended periods of time will be asked to sign a form documenting that they understand the negative effects of excessive absences.

Absences are recorded on the report card in elementary, middle, and high school. School counselors and pupil personnel workers are available to assist families in situations where students are having difficulty with school attendance. Students are responsible for making up any work missed during an absence, regardless of the reason for the absence; talk with your child's teacher or guidance counselor if you have questions about making up missed work.

Elementary school students with excessive absences and/or tardies, both lawful and unlawful, may be referred for appropriate intervention. At the discretion of the principal/designee, students who demonstrate a pattern of absences may be referred to appropriate staff and/or outside agencies for interventions designed to increase regular attendance.

### **ARRIVAL**

Students should not arrive on school ground before 8:20 a.m. Staff members are not available to supervise student until that time.

**TARDINESS** - Students arriving after 8:50 AM **MUST BE SIGNED IN AT THE OFFICE BY AN ADULT** and receive a late pass to proceed to class. Teachers will not admit a tardy student without a late pass. Students arriving at school after the start of the school day must sign in at the office. To be excused, all late arrivals must be explained in a note signed by a

parent. **Three unexcused tardies (late arrivals) is equivalent to one unexcused absence in high school.** Tardies are recorded on the report card at all grade levels.

### **EARLY DEPARTURE**

**PARENTS MUST REPORT TO THE OFFICE AND SIGN OUT THE STUDENT. NO CHILD CAN BE SENT TO THE DOOR TO WAIT FOR EARLY PARENT PICK-UP.**

### **EARLY OR EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL SYSTEM**

There is always the possibility that our school will have to close early because of water cutoff, loss of electricity, boiler failure, inclement weather, or any one of a number of unanticipated problems. **THIS IS IMPORTANT** - We urge all parents to be sure that they have made plans for such emergencies when they will not be at home, such as designating a neighbor to receive the child after dismissal or having another responsible adult in the home. **IN THE EVENT OF AN EARLY CLOSING, STUDENTS WILL BE SENT TO THEIR REGULAR AFTER-SCHOOL LOCATION UNLESS WE RECEIVE WRITTEN NOTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVE PLANS IN ADVANCE.** On days forecast for snow/ice, parents are encouraged to monitor local TV and radio stations for a possible early closing of Montgomery County Public Schools.

*Please do not call the school office to ask about the schedule. Sometimes office staff is not available and/or phone lines are busy. It is much quicker to check the radio or TV announcements. If Montgomery County Public Schools are closed, Highland ES is closed. If Montgomery County Public Schools close early, Highland will dismiss students at 12:35 PM. If Montgomery County Public Schools are opening 2 hours late, Highland will open at 10:50.*

### **DELAYED OPENING**

Occasionally it will be necessary to delay the opening of school. When the decision is made by the superintendent of schools to delay the opening, announcements will be given to TV and radio stations usually no later than 6:00 a.m. These announcements will give pertinent information regarding the delayed opening of schools. Parents must listen to local radio and TV stations during periods of inclement weather. In the event of a delayed opening, the school day will end at the regular time unless otherwise announced.

School breakfast is not available on delayed opening mornings.

**DISMISSAL**

Dismissal on regular school days is at 3:05 PM. Parents picking up students in K-2 should pick up their children at the All Purpose Room. Students in Grades 3-5 may use the drop off/pick up area on the lower parking lot.

Throughout the school year, the County has designated certain school days as early dismissal days. On these days, AM Pre K is dismissed at 10:45. All Head Start, K-5 students are dismissed at 12:35. Parents are strongly encouraged to write these dates down and plan in advance for the supervision of children.

**DELAYED OPENING /EARLY DISMISSAL**

**If Montgomery County Public Schools:**

**Highland will:**

<b>Open 2 hours late</b>	<b>Open at 10:50 AM</b>
<b>Closes 2 hours early</b>	<b>Close at 12: 35 PM</b>
<b>Early Release Day</b>	<b>Dismiss at 12:35 PM</b>
<b>Are CLOSED</b>	<b>BE CLOSED</b>

**ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**MCPS Assessment Program (MCPSAP PR)**

The Montgomery County Public Schools Assessment Program—Primary Reading (MCPSAP-PR) informs instructional practice and measures individual student progress. The assessment is administered to all kindergarten through Grade 2 students three times a year within a designated testing window.

**MSA (Maryland School Assessment)**

Assessments are administered annually in the spring and measure students’ achievements in reading and mathematics. The testing window is March 12-21.

**MAP-R**

The Measures of Academic Progress in Reading (MAP-R) is a formative assessment that all students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 take on the computer to measure reading progress.

**TN 2**

MCPS second graders take the TerraNova 2 in the spring. This test assesses reading, language mechanics, mathematics, and mathematics computation.

### **Gifted and Talented (G/T) Screening**

Countywide screening to identify children for Accelerated and Enriched Instruction (AEI) takes place in the spring of Grade 2. Students may be re-screened in subsequent years at the request of a school or parent.

Students who are new to MCPS also are screened. Parents are told whether their child is identified for AEI and can review the results with the school.

### **BACKPACKS**

All students are encouraged to have backpacks to carry books, notebooks and other school supplies. Parents should check back packs regularly, particularly those of young children, since schools often send notices, newsletters and other information home with students.

### **CELL PHONES**

Our school policy on portable communication devices, and specifically cell phones, has always been that students are permitted to bring them to school with the permission of their parent(s) or guardian(s). Students must, however, hand over cell phones to their teachers upon entering the classroom in the morning and will have them returned by the teacher at dismissal. At no time is it appropriate for students to have a cell phone or portable communication device during the instructional day. Any violation of this policy will be met with disciplinary action.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE**

New address and telephone numbers must be reported to the office immediately. An emergency card is on file in the office which contains important information and must show current address, telephone numbers and emergency contacts. Please let us know when your child's day care arrangements change.

### **CHILD CARE**

Highland does not provide child care; Information on child care can be found at:

- Locate Child Care, 301-279-1773
- The Montgomery County Child Care Resource Network, 240-777-3110
- The Child Care Information Resource Book, available in county public libraries

The State and Federal governments have made funding available to assist qualifying parents in meeting their child care expenses. For information on how the Montgomery County Child Care Subsidy Program may be able to help you in paying for child care, please call 240-777-1155.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Each month, families receive a Highland Highlights newsletter, in English and Spanish, from the principal. The newsletter will highlight past events and inform you of upcoming events in school and in the community. Please be certain to ask your child for the Highland Highlights each Friday. Your child's teacher is the first contact regarding classroom concerns. It is always best to set up an appointment before coming to school for a conference with either the teacher or the principal.

### **CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM**

During the school year, students may be photographed or videotaped for a variety of reasons such as; publicity of school programs, training tapes, or classroom presentations. This form is used to ask parents for written permission to use the students' likeness if the material will be used outside of MCPS.

### **DISCIPLINE**

We are excited about our behavior program at Highland called Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (P.B.I.S.). The staff at Highland is focused on working with students and their families to promote positive behavior in all school settings. We have three school expectations which are reinforced daily.

**Be Respectful**

**Be Responsible**

**Be Ready to Learn**

When school expectations are met, students have an opportunity to be recognized for their efforts by earning Hawk tickets. When school expectations are not followed, specific consequences occur based on Highland's discipline policy. To ensure a safe and orderly learning environment, all Montgomery County public schools follow discipline guidelines described in [A Student's Guide to Rights and Responsibilities](#). Certain infractions result in required disciplinary action throughout the school system. Violations of the law will be reported to the Montgomery County Police Department.

### **DRESS CODE**

Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing to school. Clothing that offends others or disrupts learning is inappropriate. Clothing that includes references to gangs, drugs, alcohol, and sex is not acceptable.

### **DROP OFF AND PICK UP AREAS**

Parents who choose to drive their children to school may drop them off in the student drop-off loop in the parking lot. Parents should not double park in front of the school or leave their cars unattended.

**Under no circumstances should parents pull into the bus drop off driveway in front of the school during designated times, nor may they park at the curbs designated as fire lanes.** Please be reminded that you should not pass a stopped school bus with red warning lights flashing. This is a major traffic infraction and may result in a fine.

In the morning all students should be dropped off at the traffic circle in the lower parking lot. In the afternoon, parents who are picking up students should park in the parking lot or on neighborhood streets and walk to the All-Purpose room to pick up their students. Drivers should follow the traffic directions of any staff members who are on duty.

### **EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT TEAM (EMT)**

Students who are experiencing academic, behavioral, or social challenges in school may be referred to EMT by staff or parents. The EMT Committee generally consists of the child's classroom teacher, counselor, reading specialist, resource teacher, speech/language pathologist and the principal. Parents are invited and strongly encouraged to attend EMT meetings. A parent conference is usually held with the classroom teacher prior to scheduling an EMT. Parents are notified in writing of a scheduled EMT.

The meeting is a "brainstorming" session which brings together parents, teachers, various specialists and an administrator who work together to address the needs of the child. This team may suggest strategies and/or decide that additional information is needed in order to develop a plan for the student. At the conclusion, next steps are summarized and parents receive a copy of the notes which are taken by one of the committee members. Parents are invited to attend any follow-up meetings which are necessary.

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Emergency information forms will be sent home the first day of school.

**These forms must be returned the following day.**

Parents will also be asked to complete an "Authorization to Pick-up Student" form which will allow other adults, designated by the parent, to pick up the student in case of an emergency.

Students will be sent to their regular afternoon care arrangement in the event of an emergency closing during the school day **unless we receive written notification in advance.** Parents are responsible for appropriate day care in

this situation. It is important to monitor local radio or television channels for information about emergency closings.

#### **Parent-Student Reunification Plan**

Sometimes an incident occurs that results in a large number of parents coming to the school building at the same time to pick up their children. At Highland, we have developed a parent-student reunification plan to make this process as smooth and safe as possible. In order for the plan to work, we need parents to do the following:

- Parents should patiently and cautiously follow the traffic direction of staff members in the parking lot.
- Parents should report to tables that will be set up in the All Purpose Room (Cafeteria).
- Persons that are picking up students should be prepared to show photo ID.
- Students will be brought to parents. **Parents should not go directly to classrooms.**

#### **ENROLLMENT AND RESIDENCY**

All qualified school-aged individuals, whether U.S. citizens or noncitizens, who have an established residence in Montgomery County are admitted free to Montgomery County Public Schools. Registration takes place at the school your child will attend. All new students or students who are reentering MCPS after withdrawing must provide proof of age, legal identity of the parent or guardian, residency, and immunizations. Students are assigned to public schools based on their place of residence or in accordance with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and are expected to attend their assigned school. All individuals, who do not have an established residency in Montgomery County, will be considered nonresident students and will be subject to paying tuition unless an exception is made under the terms of this policy.

If parents live apart, 'parent' shall mean 1) the parent to whom legal custody is awarded or 2) if legal custody is not awarded, the parent with whom the child regularly resides; and the child's residence shall be determined accordingly. A qualified student residing with a court-appointed guardian who has an established residence in Montgomery County shall be presumed to be a resident student provided that all the guardianship was obtained for reasons concerning the child and not for the primary purpose of attending school or for the convenience of the persons involved.

For more information, please refer to MCPS Policy JED.

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/policy/jed.shtm>

### **EVACUATION**

In the event that the building must be evacuated, students will be escorted to St. Catherine's School located on Claridge Rd. Parents would be contacted to pick up students. Again, it is very important that the school office have up-to-date information.

### **ESOL INSTRUCTION**

English for Speakers of Other Languages is a program for students who receive English language instruction from an ESOL teacher on a regularly scheduled basis. All students are mainstreamed for the majority of the school day.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Throughout the year grade levels plan and attend off-campus trips related to the instructional program. Families are notified and give written permission for students to participate in field trips. All children are encouraged to take part in these educational activities. However, students may not be permitted to attend if there are concerns about safety or an inability to comply with school rules. In this situation, parents may be asked to accompany their child. If an adult is unavailable to come on the trip, the child should attend school. Chaperones are not permitted to bring younger siblings/children due to liability coverage. Families should contact Mr. Steffan if they need financial assistance to help meet the cost of a trip. The Highland PTA provides scholarship funding to help pay for the cost of field trips.

### **FOOD SERVICE**

All students at Highland Elementary have the opportunity to eat breakfast at school each morning at **no charge**. Students eat in their classrooms. Breakfast includes milk, juice or fruit, and an entrée such as a muffin or cereal and graham crackers. This program, which is called Maryland Meals for Achievement (MMFA), is funded with money from the Federal School Breakfast Program and with State funds awarded to our school by the Maryland State Department of Education. *In order to comply with the regulations of this program, food is not permitted to be taken out of the school and is only to be consumed by students attending Highland ES.*

Lunch is served daily in the cafeteria. The lunch menu is published monthly and given to each child to take home as a daily guide in deciding whether to purchase lunch.

<b>Prices for student lunches are as follows:</b>	
<b>Lunch (including milk)</b>	<b>\$2.50</b>
<b>Milk</b>	<b>\$ .40</b>
<b>Price for Reduced Lunch</b>	<b>\$ .40</b>

**In the event children lose or forget their money, they will be provided with a peanut butter and jelly sandwich for lunch.**

Highland offers a convenient and flexible computerized cash register system in the cafeteria. Each student is issued a PIN number for use in making purchases from the cafeteria. Parents are encouraged to deposit money in their child's account eliminating the need for students to carry cash.

Highland ES also participates in the free and reduced price meals (FARMs) program. The cost of reduced price lunch for qualified students will be 40¢. Parents or guardians must **re-apply for the program each year.** **Applications will be sent home the first week of school and given to new families as they enroll. We urge you to complete the application and send it in if you might be eligible. Title I teacher assistant positions are based on the percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced meals. All inquiries, applications, approvals and disapprovals for the program are confidential.**

**Regular Lunch/Recess Schedule 2011-2012**

	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Recess</b>
Kindergarten	12:25-12:50	12:50-1:15
Grade 1	11:25-11:50	11:50-12:15
Grade 2	11:50-12:15	12:15-12:40
Grade 3	12:00-12:25	12:25-12:50
Grade 4	11:15-11:40	11:40-12:05
Grade 5	11:00-11:25	11:25-11:50

**FUNDRAISERS**

Each school year, the Highland PTA sponsors several fundraiser activities to raise money for school activities. Students are not required to participate, but all who participate will receive a small recognition. Students should only sell items to friends and relatives. Under no circumstances should a student go to a stranger's house to sell a product.

### **GIFTED AND TALENTED INSTRUCTION**

Highland Elementary follows the Montgomery County Public Schools policy on gifted and talented instruction through providing differentiated lesson plans, accelerated instruction, and opportunities for enrichment. Students are screened for G/T identification in second grade and re-screened in grades 3, 4, and 5 at parent request or teacher recommendation.

### **HEALTH IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM**

The Maryland State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene legal regulations for the Health Immunization Program states that children **MAY NOT** be allowed to attend school until evidence of immunizations against DPT, polio, measles and rubella, is presented. Students entering kindergarten through fifth grades **MUST HAVE** 4 DPTs, 3 OPVs, 1 MMR (after the first birthday) and either a second MMR or a second measles vaccine. All students new to Montgomery County must provide proof of a physical examination within the last nine months.

### **HOMEWORK**

Students will be assigned homework in the elementary grades. Teachers assign homework three to five nights per week to help students practice skills, enrich learning, and develop study, organizational, and time management skills. If you have questions or concerns about your child's homework, please be sure to contact your child's teacher.

### **ILLNESS**

To prevent the spread of communicable diseases, parents are asked to keep children at home when a student has a fever, is vomiting or has a contagious condition. Children who do not feel well have difficulty paying attention or completing assignments. Health room staff are not available to provide long-term care for sick children. Parents must make arrangements to pick up a sick child as soon as possible in the event that a student becomes ill while at school. The primary role of health room staff is to provide emergency first aid.

### **LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAM**

The library media program provides access to ideas, information and learning opportunities. Students visit the media center either in whole class groups with their teachers, as a member of a small group working on a project, or individually as their time permits. Students are permitted to check out books only if they have returned all previously checked-out

books. The library media center is open before class and during the school day, including lunch, when students can work independently.

### **LINKAGES TO LEARNING**

This program operates at more than 20 MCPS elementary and middle schools with high percentages of low-income families. The program offers counseling services, health and parent education activities, social services programs and other services to help children succeed. For more information, call 301-946-1680 or check [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/linkages/index](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/linkages/index).

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Found articles of clothing, lunch boxes, and other items are displayed throughout the year in the all-purpose room (cafeteria). Children are encouraged to check the display for missing possessions. Eyeglasses, wallets, keys, and other small or valuable items are secured in the school office. Please label all clothing. If items are labeled, we will get them to the students eliminating the need to search the lost and found area. Periodically throughout the year, unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

### **MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL**

There are strict rules that govern the administering of medication at school. The school nurse/health technician cannot give medication to a student without a note from the child's doctor. Students should never carry medication to, from or at school. **If your child has any allergies or requires medication, please call the health room at 301-929-2040.**

### **PADI**

#### **(PROGRAM OF ASSESSMENT, DIAGNOSIS AND INSTRUCTION)**

PADI is a program designed to promote the academic and thinking skills of kindergarten, first and second grade students in diverse populations, primarily Title I schools. Kindergarten or Grade 1 students participate in a Diagnostic Battery that includes measures of reasoning, problem solving and creativity. This program finds potential ability among these students. Unleashing potential is an important part of instruction.

The instructional focus is nurturing critical and creative thinking skills. The instruction builds on student's strengths as revealed and bypasses the limitations language deficits may pose. Affective and cognitive goals of the project aim to increase the students' self-concept as learners. The challenges posed by the instruction further reveal the potential

of these students, a concept we call “identification through instruction.” Dramatic changes in the achievement and learning of these students are often reported.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT - PTA**

The Highland PTA is very active, sponsoring many activities that support students, teachers, and parents. PTA meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 9:00 a.m. in the school’s cafeteria. The PTA sponsors Family Fun Nights throughout the school year. The PTA also holds book fairs, International Night, and many other wonderful events. PTA membership is only \$10 per family.

#### **How to be involved in your child’s school:**

- **Join local parent organizations:** Be active in your school’s PTA/PTSA by attending meetings and participating in activities.
- **Volunteer to help:** Volunteer in the school or at home. Parents often can help in the classroom or school media center, with after-school or special activities such as chaperoning field trips, or prepare classroom materials at home. Ask your child’s teacher or the volunteer coordinator, Mr. John Alcoba.
- **Attend all parent-teacher conferences:** Be sure to attend all regularly scheduled parent conferences and request a conference if needed.
- **Attend school functions, including:** Back-to-School Night, where you will learn about the instructional program and meet your child’s teachers. Ask the teachers about the best way to contact them—telephone, e-mail or notes sent to the school—and give them your e-mail address if you have one.
- **Attend Parent conferences**  
Teachers of pre-kindergarten–Grade 5 hold regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences in the fall at the end of the first marking period. Teachers may have a second conference in the spring. The teacher will contact you to arrange a time. A typical conference is 20 minutes. Watch for a notice that will come home in the Highland Highlights.
- **Become a resource:** Offer to share your expertise/ experience with students through classroom demonstrations, special projects, mentoring/tutoring, career days, International Night participation and other activities.
- **Be a decision maker:** Ask the principal about participating in any school committees or serving on the **School Improvement Team**.

### **2011-2012 PTA Executive Board**

President           Mara Espada  
Vice President    Phanomrat Mookkung  
Treasurer         Kirsten Goldston  
Secretary         Sonia Hernandez

### **PARTIES**

Simple, low-key parties are held at school for a Fall Festival and Valentine's Day. Parents who do not wish for their children to participate should send a note to their child's teacher. Simple, low-key observances of birthdays are permitted during lunch time. Parents should contact classroom teachers to arrange an appropriate time.

### **REGISTRATION**

Parents wishing to register a child at school should contact the main office. The main materials needed to complete registration are proof of residence, birth certificate, immunization records, and student forms to be filled out by the parent. Registration for pre-school age children takes place at the Rocking Horse Road Center. Please call 301-230-0676 for more information. All international students not continuously enrolled in a U.S. school for the past two years must register at the International Student Admissions Office at the Rocking Horse Road Center. Please call 301-230-0686 for an appointment.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards for Grades 1–12 are issued four times a year at the end of each marking period, which consists of about nine weeks of study. Report cards reflect academic performance compared to grade-level or course standards in each subject. Report cards also contain evaluations of work/study skills. For the first three marking periods, report cards are sent home with students about two weeks after the end of the marking period. Report cards for the fourth marking period are mailed to parents after school ends in June.

Report cards are distributed according the schedule below:

<b>Marking Period</b>	<b>Marking Period Ends</b>	<b>Report Card Distribution</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	October 28, 2011	November 10, 2011
2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 20, 2012	February 1, 2012
3 <sup>rd</sup>	March 29, 2012	April 12, 2012
4 <sup>th</sup>	June 13, 2012	June 21, 2012

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

All students are expected to demonstrate appropriate respect for other students. Inappropriate sexual comments, gestures, drawings, graffiti, etc. will not be tolerated. Consequences can include loss of privileges and suspension. Parents will be notified if there is a report of behavior that includes sexual harassment.

### **STUDENT PICK-UP**

Only parents and/or persons authorized in writing by parents may pick up their child from school. Parents may designate these other individuals on the yellow emergency cards that must be completed at the beginning of each school year. Prior to the pick-up time, parents also may send the school a note authorizing a specific individual to pick up their child. Schools typically contact parents by telephone to confirm such arrangements. We may ask the individual to show a photo identification card before releasing a student. *Parents must report to the office and sign out the student if the student is leaving early. No child can be sent outside to wait for parent pick-up.*

In the afternoon, parents who are picking up students should park in the parking lot or on neighborhood streets and walk to the All-Purpose room to pick up their students.

### **TOYS**

Students should not bring personal toys to school. Toys brought to school often lead to distraction (from lessons) and disappointment (when items are lost). During indoor and outdoor recess, students are provided with all of the equipment and materials necessary to enjoy time with their friends. Please remind your children that all toy items, including trading cards, yo-yos, video games, and action figures, should remain at home.

### **VISITORS**

Parents are encouraged to visit the school and may observe in their children's classrooms. Parents should arrange a visit ahead of time by calling their child's teacher or the principal beforehand, since the class may be having a test or be out on a field trip. As you enter the building, please report to the office to sign the logbook and receive a visitor badge.

### **WEAPONS POLICY**

Weapons of any kind, including toy weapons, pocket knives, firecrackers, "poppers", water guns, etc. are strictly prohibited. Possessions of dangerous items can result in suspension and even expulsion from school.

## **NOTES AND INFORMATION**