

HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY



PARENT HANDBOOK

2019-2020

**3100 Medway Street
Silver Spring, MD 20902
(240) 740-1770**

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Highland Elementary School
3100 Medway Street, Silver Spring, Maryland 20902
(240) 740-1770

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 2019-2020 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

Highland ES	240-740-1770
Highland FAX	301-929-2042
MCPS Emergency Announcements	301-279-3673
Transportation	301-840-8140
Head Start Office	301-230-0676
Hispanic Hotline	301-230-3073
MCPS Information	301-309-6277
Linkages to Learning	240-740-1763
Health Center	240-740-1758
Global Children's Center	301-972-5982

2019	
July 4	Independence Day—Offices and schools closed
August 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	Professional days for teachers
September 2	Labor Day—Offices and schools closed
September 3	First day of school for students
September 30	No school for students and teachers
October 4	Early release day for all students
October 9	No school for students and teachers
November 8	Early release day for all students; end of quarter planning
November 11 and 12	Early release day for all students
November 27	Early release day for all students
November 28 and 29	Thanksgiving—Offices and schools closed
December 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31	Winter Break—No school for students and teachers; Offices closed December 24 and 25
2020	
January 1	New Year's Day—Offices and schools closed
January 20	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—Offices and schools closed
January 24	Early release day for all students; end of quarter planning
January 27	Professional day for teachers; no school for students
February 17	Presidents' Day—Offices and schools closed
February 28	Early release day for all students
March 27	Early release day for all students; end of quarter planning
April 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13	Spring Break—No school for students and teachers; Offices closed April 10 and 13
April 28	No school for students and teachers
May 25	Memorial Day—Offices and schools closed
June 15	Last day of school for students; early release day for all students
June 16	Professional day for teachers

If the school year is disrupted by emergencies and schools are closed three or more days, dates in 2020 identified as possible make-up instructional days include: June 16-22, April 6, April 7 and January 27.

* This list of dates does not apply to Roscoe Nix Elementary School and Arcola Elementary School, which will follow the 2019–2020 Innovative School Year Calendar.

STAFF ROSTER

Office Staff

Scott Steffan – Principal
Michelle Piket- Assistant Principal
Miriam Stewart – Administrative
Secretary
Yaret Castro– School Secretary

Pre-Kindergarten

Melinda Scott– Pre-K Teacher
Elsi Flores – Pre K Para –Educator
Angie Mejia– Head Start Para-Educator
Jossianne Torres -Regan– Head Start
Teacher

Kindergarten

Jasmine Bell
Katherine Romero
Kelly Saah
Blanca Solano
Rhonda Singleton*
Austyn Waldron

First Grade

Renee Brooks
Kimberly Ferguson
Wendy Markin
Kelley Winckler*
Tracey Witthaus

Second Grade

Lauren Boland
Kara Clapper
Lauren Drye*
Lauren Haney
Alexa Kinloch
Molly Lee

Third Grade

Lisa Campbell/Mary Dixon LTS*
Mara Glenshaw
Kaitlyn Jessell
Connie Kang
Melanie Zimmerman

Fourth Grade

Rebekah Calano
Alison Clarke-Pentz/Jehan Cooke - LTS
Whitley Foster

Madison Moe
Kelly Scheidler*

Fifth Grade

Natasha Bremmerman
Kelley Clayton*
Michelle Leite
Charles Lund
Susan Williams

ESOL Teachers

Becca San Sebastian*
Sonya Vasilios
Holly Warner

Specialists

Ginger Smith/Kristen Morse - ART
Joe Ramienski/Joe Grundy - P.E.
Jonathan Dehart/Seth Glabman– General
Music
Christopher Poet– Instrumental Music
Jordana Oginz– Reading Specialist
Shelly Niverth– Staff Development
Courtney Thompson Lust - Counselor
Alexandra Moses*– Media Specialist
Shannon Dorsey – GT/MCC

Special Education Staff

Anne Tobin – Resource Teacher
Alex Shivers– Resource Teacher
Elizabeth Meier*– LAD Teacher
Claire Gaita – LAD Teacher
Megan Lancaster/Karen Nelson – Speech
Benito Vazquez – Pupil Personnel Worker
Cheryl Cunningham- Psychologist

Academic Intervention

Becca Fishman-Focus Teacher
Marousa Sofronas – Focus Teacher
Keri Healy –Focus Teacher
Jessica Chapman – Reading Support
Valerie Lee-Focus Teacher
Meghane Vaughan-Focus Teacher

Building Service Staff

Rodolfo Castillo– Building Service
Manager
Leonel Valenzuela– Assistant Manager

Santos Hernandez– Building Service Worker
Rosa Rodriguez – Building Service Worker
Christopher Geerman – Building Service Worker

Supporting Services

Oscar Buitrago – Parent Community Coordinator
Angela Caseres –Paraeducator/ Lunch Hour Aide
Kandice Davis - paraeducator
Maria Davis – Special Education Para/Head Start
Katie Gerard –Paraeducator/Lunch Hour Aide
Kirstin Goldston– Media Assistant
Shelley Harvard Campbell – Special Ed. Para
Lea Kauffman – Focus Para
Vanessa Miranda – Special Education Para/Lunch Aide
Glenda Orellana Sanchez– Special Education Para
Molly Padgett* – Special Education Para
Tina Privette– Special Education Para
Jessica Rivera-Zelaya-Parent Community Coordinator
Cecilia Shannon – Special Education Para
Siobhan Tuohey- Math Focus Para

Kimberly Weedon – Special Education Para

Lunch/Recess Staff

Debra Davis – Cafeteria Manager
Mei Jiang– Cafeteria Worker
Phanomrat Mookkung – Lunch Hour Aide
Carmen Garcia – Lunch Hour Aide

Health Room

Patricia Rehfield -School Nurse
Christine Tondari- Health Tech

Linkages to Learning

Kelitha Armstrong- Site Coordinator
Alea Bell- Mental Health Therapist
Vicmarie Arocho- Case Manager

GENERAL PROCEDURES

ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

ABSENCE - Please call **(240) 740-1771** 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 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 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 **8:35 a.m.** Staff members are not available to supervise student until that time.

TARDINESS - Students arriving after 9:00 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. **Parents**

will not be permitted to walk students to their classroom after 9:00 a.m. 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. PARENTS MUST PICK UP STUDENTS BEFORE 3:05 P.M. OTHERWISE THEY WILL NEED TO WAIT UNTIL THE REGULAR DISMISSAL TIME OF 3:25 P.M.

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. The decision to close schools is made by the Chief Operating Office 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 12:55 PM. If Montgomery County Public Schools are opening 2 hours late, Highland will open at 11:00 A.M.

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 3:25 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 in the 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 12:55. 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:
Open 2 hours late	Open at 11:00 AM
Closes 2 hours early	Close at 1:25 PM
Early Release Day	Dismiss at 12:55 PM
Are CLOSED	BE CLOSED

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.

MAP Testing

Map (Measures of Academic Progress) is a computerized adaptive assessment program that provides teachers, students, and parents with an accurate assessment of students' progress in mastering mathematics and reading skills. When administered at regular intervals over time, it is possible to find out whether an individual student, or an entire grade level, is making satisfactory progress in these basic skill areas. Teachers can use the

assessment results for instructional planning for individual students or an entire class.

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 backpacks 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 ABUSE & NEGLECT

Our staff has been trained to identify physical and behavioral indicators of neglect and child abuse. In Maryland, the child abuse and neglect law requires that all persons report suspected abuse or neglect directly to Montgomery County Child Protective Services. **Never leave children unattended at home or in parked vehicles. Please familiarize yourself with Family Law 5-801 which states:**

A person who is charged with the care of a child under the age of 8 years may not allow the child to be locked or confined in a dwelling, building,

enclosure, or motor vehicle while the person charged is absent and the dwelling, building, enclosure, or motor vehicle is out of sight of the person charged unless the person charged provides a reliable person at least 13 years old to remain with the child to protect the child. **A child under 8 years old is not permitted to stay home alone.**

CHILD CARE

Global Children’s Center provides before and after school child care on site. Please call Global for more information at: 301-972-5982.

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* the first Monday of the month. 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 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.

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 former St. Catherine’s School (Avalon 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. Our alternate location is Albert Einstein HS.

ESOL INSTRUCTION

English for Speakers of Other Languages is a program for students who receive English language instruction. Our school’s focus is on English development and acquisition. All students are mainstreamed for the majority of the school day.

FAMILY CONCERNS

While it is not our intent to pry into your personal life, we do find it helpful to be notified if your family is under any unusual stress or if you have any legal custody concerns. Please keep us informed about new joys (i.e., birth of baby, new home, adoption, etc.) and difficult transitions (i.e., divorce, custody changes, difficult living situations, etc). Sharing important “family changes” can help us better understand your child’s needs so we can better support your child through these life changes.

Please let us know how we can best support you and your family! You are welcome to call the office (240-740-1770), schedule an appointment with an administrator, our Parent Community Coordinator, or our school counselor.

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.

Prices for student lunches are as follows:

Lunch (including milk) \$2.55

Milk \$.40

Price for Reduced Lunch \$.40

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

Lunch/Recess Schedule 2019-2020 (TENTATIVE SCHEDULE)

	Lunch	Recess
Kindergarten	12:30-1:00	1:00-1:30
Grade 1	11:30-12:00	12:00-12:30
Grade 2	11:50-12:20	12:20-12:50
Grades 3	12:00-12:30	12:30-1:00
Grade 4	12:20-12:50	12:50-1:20
Grade 5	1:00-1:30	1:30-2:00

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.

HEAD LICE

Students who have head lice will be sent home and may not return to school until the infestation has been treated successfully. To return to school, the student must be free of lice and nits (the small lice eggs on the hair strands close to the scalp). Parents should accompany their children upon their return to school for a post-treatment inspection in the health room.

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.

HEALTH ROOM

Every school has a health room staffed by a health technician. The technician works with a community health nurse, who may have responsibility for more than one school. Students are referred to the health room for treatment of minor injuries, other physical complaints or illnesses, and to receive prescribed medications.

If a student is sick or injured at school, health room staff will make every effort to reach the parent or the emergency contact person named on the student's information card. In the event of an emergency, the principal or other staff member will call 911 and will accompany the child if he or she is transported to the hospital.

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. Linkages to Learning is now housed in the School Based Health Center. For more information, call **240-740-1763** or check 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 240-740-1758.**

PARENT INVOLVEMENT - PTA

The Highland PTA is very active, sponsoring many activities that support students, teachers, and parents. PTA meetings are typically 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, Ms. Jessica Rivera-Zelaya.

- **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**.

2019-2020 PTA Executive Board

President	Jenny Vasquez-Robles
Vice President	Vanessa Miranda
Treasurer	Sujata Bijou
Secretary	Keli Tenorio

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 K–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 learning 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.

SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CENTER

The SBHCs help children and families become healthy, achieve academic success and become socially secure in their communities. Nurse practitioners and physicians join with school staff, social service and mental health professionals and other providers to assure that students and families have access to the care and services they need. **Parents must sign permission for their child to be treated at the Health Center.**

Comprehensive health services are available to eligible children attending Highland, their eligible siblings, and to selected community children in the Care for Kids program. The following services will be provided:

Primary health care, routine, sports and camp physical examinations, Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) and immunizations, Diagnosis, treatment, referral and case management of children with acute and chronic illnesses, Treatment of minor injuries, Prescription and dispensation of medications and Laboratory testing.

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. If parents are picking up students early, we ask that you arrive before 3:05 p.m. The end of the day in the classroom is a busy time, and it is very difficult to call a child up to the office after 3:05 p.m.

TITLE I

Highland Elementary is designated as a Title I school. Title I is part of the [No Child Left Behind Act of 2001](#). The legislation provides federal funds to help students in schools with high economic needs achieve high standards. The specific objective of the Title I program is to enable all students to meet state and local student performance standards set by the [Maryland State Department of Education](#). [Title I Schools in Montgomery County Public Schools](#) receive the following services when they become eligible for the Title I program:

- Technical assistance from an instructional specialist on a consistent basis
- Additional teaching professionals and/or paraeducators
- Extended Learning Opportunities : Summer Adventures in Learning
- Family Involvement funds

Use of supplemental funds which may be used for instructional materials, professional development, or schoolwide initiatives

TOYS

Students should not bring personal toys from home 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

My Child's Teacher: _____

My Child's Specialist Schedule:

Special	Day of Week	Time
ART		
MUSIC		
P.E.		
MEDIA		

My Child's Lunch Time: _____

A Checklist of Parental Involvement

The parent is the child's most important teachers. We recognize this and act as partners to provide parents with support and assistance in becoming involved with their child's education. Home-school partnerships help strengthen a child's academic performance. Parental involvement is critical to a child's success in school!

I stress the importance of education and expect my child to do his/her best in school.	
I expect my child to show respect to the teacher and all classmates.	
I discuss daily work assignments and appropriate classroom behaviors with my child.	
I make sure my child is at school every day and arrives on time.	
I make sure my child has all the materials needed to complete school and homework.	
I communicate with the school and my child's teacher about my child's progress.	
I take an active part in school activities, such as parent/teacher conferences, Back to School Night, PTA meetings and workshops on helping my child at home.	
I make sure my child stays healthy by eating well and getting adequate exercise and sleep.	
I help my child develop a good self-image by providing care, discipline, support, interest and concern.	
I help my child develop a positive attitude toward school and learning.	