

# HIGHLANDER HILLTOP 5/7

Good afternoon Highlander families,

I wanted to take this opportunity to express a huge thank you to all of the parents in the community for showing such a huge outpouring of love and appreciation toward our teachers and staff here at the Middle School, this past week. Each day, there was a new treat or surprise waiting for us, and on average our staff members have gained about 3.2 pounds over the course of the week. I want to especially give a shout to Tina Brennan, the PTO president, who spent a ton of time over the past two weeks organizing and facilitating all of these incredible gifts for our staff.



The incredible level of support that the community shows for education is what attracts such wonderful educators into our district. Those educators have gone above and beyond this year, working to close the learning gap caused by COVID and school closures from last spring. I'm looking forward to the SBAC tests over the next three weeks, as I anticipate that it will show the growth that students have made over the past year, and help inform some of our next steps to ensure all students succeed at the highest levels.

Finally, I am excited to announce that Ryan Modon is the winner of our Portland Middle School Highlander Logo competition. Thank you to all of the students, staff, and parents who voted and provided some wonderful feedback. Mr. Toussaint will be working with Tyler to use that feedback to continue to fine tune and create variations of that logo, so that it can be flexibly across all aspects of Portland Middle School. Here are just some of the possibilities:



-Chuck



FROM THE NURSES OFFICE:

## Religious Exemption Update:

We're still getting up to speed with what the new law (House Bill 6423) means. So far I can tell you that we are not able to accept any new religious exemption forms dated after April 28, 2021. Pre-existing religious exemptions from in-state only will be grandfathered in through grade 12. You will NOT need to re-submit on entering 7th grade. More information will be forthcoming as we get official documentation hopefully in the next month.

### **Grade 8 News:**

Grade 8 students are exploring our geometry unit and have been making connections with triangles using the Pythagorean Theorem and angle relationships. When we finish this we will be applying the volume formulas for spheres, cones and cylinders.

## **SBAC Testing**

With SBAC quickly approaching you may ask “What can I do to best support my child so they can do their best during SBAC testing? Well, here are a few helpful hints to follow so that your student will shine during SBAC testing!

- Have your child eat a healthy breakfast.
- Have your child go to bed a bit earlier than normal so they are not tired. Your body and mind need rest!
- Ensure that your child is present on the SBAC days so they don't have to make the test up. Your child should experience SBAC with their peers.
- Have your child be on time for school.
- Have your child come to school with a positive attitude and a smile!
- Encourage your child to put their best effort forward!

**We believe in you Portland Middle School students! You got this!!**

**Pictures from a great Staff Appreciation Week!  
Thanks again PTO!**

