

HIGHLANDER HILLTOP 2/19

Happy snow filled Friday,

Mother nature has not been kind to us this February in terms of snow disruption. I hope you are all dug out, and ready for a relaxing weekend. We held our February PTO meeting last night, where Mr. Toussaint came and discussed different tools that parents can utilize to support their child in middle school. He shared a wonderful folder that includes video tutorials for many of the frequently used tools, like Aspen and Google Classroom. I will be putting this folder on our website, but wanted to link it [here](#) as well. Next week I will be working with the PTO to send out a survey to collect contact information for the middle school PTO email list. I hope to see all of you next month, when our topic will be focused on social media and its impact on middle school aged children.

Stay Safe, Stay Healthy, Stay Warm,
Mr. Hershon

 [@ChuckHershon](#)



Friday February 26, Portland Public Schools will celebrate PJ Day. PJ Day kicked off its 10th anniversary this year with a mission to not only raise money, but to honor the brave kids fighting cancer at Connecticut Children's Hospital. Let's honor these brave children and raise money to support the continued fight against childhood cancer. Donate \$1.00 or more and wear your PJ's on Friday, February 26th. [Click here to donate!](#)

Wanna learn more? - [Click here to watch a short video about PJ Day!](#)

A message from the Community: Portland's Task Force on Solidarity will be hosting a community forum on Monday, February 22nd at 7pm (via Zoom B on the town website) www.portlandct.org. The forum will focus on questions for our town representatives in regards to solidarity, diversity, equity and inclusion in our community. Representatives of our Youth Services Dept, Board of Education, and our Board of Selectmen will be in attendance. If you have questions for our police department they can also be submitted and the questions will be sent to our police department and will be answered for you. **All questions for the forum must be submitted prior to the forum.** If you would like to submit a question to be read at the forum please email your question(s) to PortlandTFS@gmail.com. All questions must be received by noon on February 22nd for consideration in the forum.

NEWS FROM OUR UNIFIED ARTS TEAM

FACS: Students in 7th grade Family & Consumer Science have started learning about the benefits of nutrients. Perhaps they are asking to add some protein to their breakfast? Some students have also recently tried our Orange Julius recipe at home!

Entrepreneurship: Mrs. Lutkus' 8th grade Entrepreneurship students are thinking like Entrepreneurs & planning out a business.



World Language: 7th grade world language students are learning about what it means to be proficient in a language and learning polite meetings and greetings in both Spanish and French. French students have taken a virtual tour of Paris and Spanish students have visited Madrid virtually.

In 8th grade students are wrapping up a unit about places around my town and my school and will soon be learning various activities so they can express what they are going to do.

Music : 7th and 8th grade band students are hard at work preparing music for our next virtual performance.

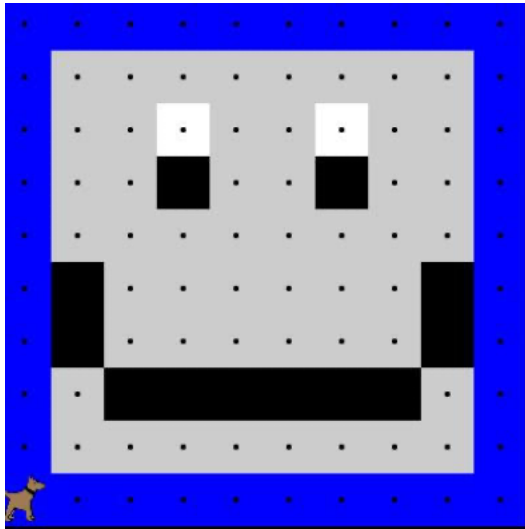
Music Tech students are working on familiarizing themselves with the editing tools within our digital audio workstation, and will be discussing what role music plays in their lives as they begin to produce their own podcast episode.

PE/Health: students in 7th grade recently completed a unit discussing the HIV/AIDS virus. They learned of 2 young influential people, Ryan White and Joey Dipaolo who showed tremendous courage and activism surrounding this virus/disease. In 8th grade, students finished a unit discussing 9 of the most common STI's the focus was on common effects, treatment and prevention.



Both grades will be returning to the gym for next week to learn the skills and strategies in the game of Badminton. An in-class doubles tournament is tentatively scheduled in 2 weeks.

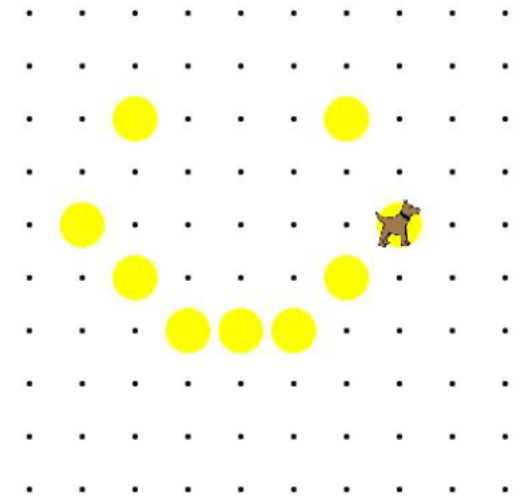
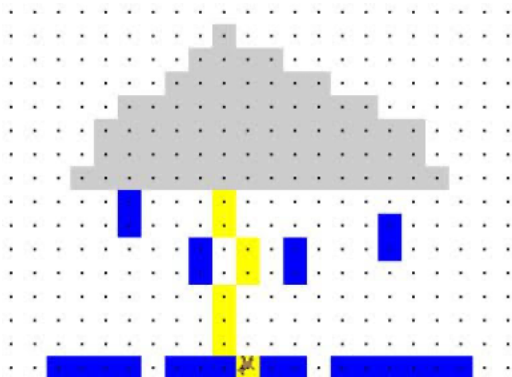
Although changing is not required this year, all students should try to remember to wear sneakers on PE days.



CODING EXPERTS

This week we had three 7th grade students achieve something no other Portland Middle School student ever has... complete every unit within our Computer Science coding software. Chase VanDeventer, Theresa Hunter, and Nathan Quesnel each met this unprecedented mark! Below are some images of their final projects, where utilizing their coding skills they had to create a graphic or animation.

Theresa's smiley face graphic came in at over 85 lines of code. Chase's smiley face and border graphic came in at over 115 lines of code. And Nate's storm cloud animation came in at over 385 lines of code! They had to utilize complex coding practices like functions, loops, variables, and control to accomplish this. What an achievement for these students!



DON'T MISS OUT!!!

Middle School Yearbooks are available to purchase! The Deadline to order is February 26th and the price is \$20 and can be ordered online now! Follow the website below:

<https://www.jostens.com/apps/store/customer/1037183/Portland-Middle-School/>