

HIGHLANDER HILLTOP

EDITION 10/16

Message from the Principal

Good afternoon,

I wanted to take an opportunity this week to extend my gratitude to all of the students and their family members for their continued support of the teachers and staff here at Portland Middle School. We know that this has been a very challenging time for families, and we appreciate all of your patience and understanding as we ensure that we can prepare our building to most effectively and safely move forward with our next step of reopening on the 26th. I will be holding a principal roundtable this coming Wednesday, at 5:00 pm on Google meet. I will send out the link the day before, but if you know you would like to attend, please reply to this email to let me know, so that I can add you to the invitation list.

One thing I want to ensure this year is that our students get a true middle school experience. To that end, clubs have slowly been starting up (art club and broadcasting have already begun meeting), and more will be starting later this month. Please see the list below for more information about the clubs offered here at Portland Middle School.

Have a fantastic weekend,

Chuck Hershon

Sincerely,
Chuck Hershon

 [@ChuckHershon](https://twitter.com/ChuckHershon)



Next Week's Hybrid Schedule

Monday 10/19	Tuesday 10/20	Wednesday 10/21	Thursday 10/22	Friday 10/23
Blue at home	Blue at home	At Home Learning Day for All	Blue in school	Blue in school
Red in school	Red in school		Red at home	Red at home

Interested in joining a club?.....WATCH FOR THE UPCOMING START DATES OF MIDDLE SCHOOL CLUBS.....sewing club, GIVE, Student Council, Future Problem Solvers will be rolling out during the first week in November.



SAVE THE DATES:

- 10/20: Board of Ed Meeting
- 10/21: Parent-Principal Roundtable
- 10/26: Reopening Day for All
- 10/27 & 10/30: Picture Days, order forms will be sent home today and Monday, Oct. 19th.
- 10/28: 2 Hour Delay
- 11/3: No School, PD Day for Teachers
- 11/10: Board of Ed Meeting
- 11/11: No School, Veteran's Day
- 11/23 & 11/24: Parent Teacher Virtual Conferences
- 11/25 – 11/27: Thanksgiving Break





Middle School Yearbooks are available to purchase! The 7th Grade Computer Science classes are starting work soon on this year's Yearbook. 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/>

NURSE'S OFFICE: Dear Portland Parents,

As we move to full-time in-person learning, we are both happy to welcome more students and hopeful to maintain our open learning environment for as long as we possibly can. Returning to full-time school does NOT mean a return to school as usual. Our new normal means that ANY signs of illness in your child means they MUST stay home. We have strict guidelines per the State of Connecticut that we must follow and if your child presents with any of the following symptoms, they will be isolated and dismissed home immediately:

Temperature over 100

Shortness of breath

New or uncontrolled cough

Loss of taste or smell

Muscle/body aches and/or chills

Sore throat

Nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea, Headache, Fatigue

Congestion and/or runny nose

Close contact (within 6 ft for at least 15 mins) with someone diagnosed with COVID in the last 2 weeks

We are very aware that many of these symptoms are consistent with allergies, mild colds, etc, but unfortunately we are unable to diagnose these conditions here in school. We use our best judgement for children that we have come to know, but for the majority of cases, any child presenting with any of the above symptoms while in school will require either a doctor's note or a negative COVID test (or complete a 10 or 14 day isolation from school depending on symptoms) as well as be free of any symptoms for 24 hours in order to return.

Note that close contact with a positive COVID case requires a mandatory quarantine regardless of symptoms or COVID test results

Please make sure to check in with your child each morning regarding the symptoms listed above, and if in doubt, keep them home!

In the case that your child misses school for illness protocol reasons, please reach out to his/her teacher for guidance in setting up academic support during that time.

Also, please make sure all emergency contact phone numbers are current and that we can leave a message if needed. This includes setting up your voicemail and making sure the mailbox is not full. This is extremely important in case of emergency or needing to dismiss your child from school.

Thank you all so much for your cooperation and for trusting us with your children during these challenging times. We will get through this together! As always, please call the nursing office with any questions or concerns.

7TH GRADE NEWS In our science classes, seventh grade students continue to explore the components of scientific inquiry. A demonstration provided an opportunity for students to practice making detailed quantitative and qualitative observations. In addition, learning to compose testable and measurable scientific questions has led students to develop 3-part hypothesis statements which investigate possible answers for the questions. Through this process, students are beginning to recognize independent and dependent variables, and moving forward, students will also learn to identify controlled variables for an experiment.



NEWS FROM THE UNIFIED ARTS DEPT.

Attention all Art Enthusiasts!

Portland Middle School Art Club is beginning this week! The Art Club Survey has been emailed to all Portland Middle Schoolers and the responses are rolling in. Don't miss out! The official start was Thursday October 8 and will continue on many Thursdays throughout the school year. Art Club will begin virtually with hopes of some in-person attendance in the future. Questions? See or email Ms. Szerejko

Here is the survey in case anyone missed it:

ART CLUB SURVEY

Attention musicians! Middle School Jazz Band is coming back! Anyone interested in joining the group and playing jazz standards along with popular music like "Uptown Funk", "Havana", "Moves Like Jagger", and more should send an email to Ms. Ketterer at sketterer@portlandct.us. Middle school is the time to join as all band instruments, in addition to piano, guitar, bass guitar and drum set, are welcome. Email Ms. Ketterer to join in on the fun! Sewing Club coming soon! A survey will go out next week for all who are interested! We'll do a virtual meeting to start & then spend some time together after school. Email Mrs. Lutkus with any questions: klutkus@portlandct.us



8TH Grade NEWS:

Students in U.S. History are currently examining the building tension in the colonies and how that ultimately led to the independence movement and war. The focus of the class has been to analyze the cause and effect relationship between the actions of both Britain and its colonies.

On October 21st during our virtual learning day there will be an opportunity for students to join a virtual presentation for Vinal and VoAg. VoAg's presentation will be from 10:30-11:15 and Vinal will be from 1:15-2:20pm. Please make sure your son/daughter joins the informational presentation if they are planning on attending either of these schools for their high school career. Here are the meet links for each school:

VoAg: meet.google.com/zwu-zxps-vpa

Vinal: <https://meet.google.com/jvi-gkut-fmp>