

HIGHLANDER HILLTOP

Message from the Principal

Dear Portland Middle School Families,
Happy Friday. Today, September 11th, is always a very emotional day for me. I grew up in Long Island, about 20 miles from where the World Trade Center once stood. I can still remember each moment of that day vividly. One of the clearest memories was going to my third period class, and finding it without my Marketing teacher Mr. Vine. He had left the school to join his fellow volunteer first responders to drive into the city to help the brave men and women who quickly and selflessly answered the call of duty that day. It parallels quite seamlessly with what we are experiencing today, where our first responders are once again stepping up to the call of duty in the fight against COVID-19. If you have the opportunity, take a moment today to thank those individuals for the sacrifices that they make, each and every day.

Sincerely,
Chuck Hershon

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



Hybrid Schedule Cheat Sheet

Thank you to parents for joining us at the Principal Roundtable on Wednesday. Per your requests, we have put together a cheat sheet to help navigate the new schedule for the MS while we are in the Hybrid.

Hybrid Schedule Cheat Sheets: [7th Grade](#); [8th Grade](#)

<https://www.portlandctschoools.org/middle-school>

Tips to being a Portland Problem Solver

One of the biggest challenges to the hybrid model has been ensuring that students at home are able to log in and attend Google Meets, especially with so many using the platform. Here are some tips for what to do, when you are struggling to sign in.

1. **Close all of your other tabs:** Each tab takes up its own bit of bandwidth.
2. **Restart your chromebook:** If you don't shut down your chromebook regularly, you may find that you have many updates waiting to be installed, which are slowing your browser.
3. **Turn off your camera:** While we normally want students to have their cameras on, turning off your camera can help with the processing speed of Google Meet.
4. **Try logging on with your phone:** The age and speed of the processing of your phone may be more powerful than that of the chromebook.
5. **Contact a classmate:** Ask them to let your teacher about your technical issues.
6. **Email your advisor and your teacher:** Maintaining communication is important.
7. **Look at Google Classroom to see what assignment is posted for the day:** You can reach out to your teacher or a classmate to get clarification on the assignment.
8. **Try again for your next class:** Don't be discouraged by the Meet not working for one class. Often times the technical issue is fixed after a few minutes.

Next Week's Hybrid Schedule

Monday 9/14	Tuesday 9/15	Wednesday 9/16	Thursday 9/17	Friday 9/18
Blue at home	Blue at home	<i>At Home Learning Day for All</i>	Blue in school	Blue in school
Red in school	Red in school		Red at home	Red at home



**SAVE THE DATES:
Important Dates in
September**
 9/15: BOE Meeting
 9/23: Two Hour Delay -
 PD for Teachers
 10/6: Virtual Open
 House



A note from the Portland Secondary Schools Music Booster President

Welcome back everyone. We are excited to begin a new school year supporting the Portland Middle School Music Program. The PSS Music Boosters is a joint middle-high school booster organization that supports our music teachers, music programs and all things music at the Portland Middle and High Schools. While we might look a little different this year in that at least in the short term, we won't be actively fundraising in our normal way and there likely won't be field trips, we are still here to support the music program. Please check out the attached for more information. We will be having our first Zoom meeting of the school year sometime in October so please watch for the specific date as well as the meeting link coming later in the month and plan to join us. ALL parents of PMS/PHS music students are PSS Music Boosters and we look forward to seeing some new faces in October!

Here's what the UNIFIED ARTS Department is talking about:

We are off to a great start and students are getting comfortable navigating google classrooms, virtual meets and their hybrid schedules. Students have begun to explore several topics such as kitchen safety, how businesses are created, job applications, computer coding and 3D design, stretching and lifelong wellness, rhythmic literacy and the creative process. Students are reminded that work that is assigned at home is due at the end of their scheduled period, and to wear sneakers on their PE days if possible. Band students should be bringing in their signed handbooks and funds for instrument "masks". Ms. Ketterer cannot wait to start playing together as soon as materials have arrived!

7th GRADE NEWS: Wow, what an amazing start to the school year we just had on the 7th grade team! We're so excited to have met your children in person and online, and we're so impressed with the manner in which all students acquitted themselves in both environments.

We're very excited to get back to work next week as our focus turns to simplifying schedules and building technological literacy. In social studies classes, students are going through training on Google products. Google literacy and organization is required to be successful across all classes in our hybrid and distance models.

We can't wait to see the products they produce using these tools, and we know that the training will be valuable for their success in this new, semi-virtual space!

We will also be working with Mrs. DeRose, our fabulous school counselor to get students into their ASPEN accounts. Understanding how to check their grades and attendance is one of the most important steps for students as they grow into independent learners.

The first week has been exciting, but we're just getting started.

As always, the team encourages you to reach out to us with any questions, suggestions or concerns!

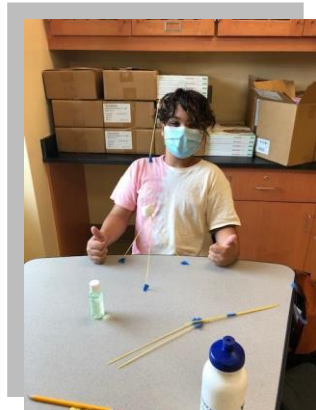
NEWS FROM THE 8TH GRADE TEAM: It has been a great start for the 8th grade this year! Students have been adjusting very well to our new learning environment. During the start of the year, all students have reviewed classroom procedures and protocols.

During this past week, **Language Arts** students started a Personal Poetry Project; crafted poems; and presentations that represent who they are. Students are currently working on close reading and annotation skills. In the near future, students will be moving into a writing assignment where they write a short literary analysis piece.

Within the Science classroom, students have contributed through Google Classroom as to what was a struggle during our remote learning in the spring. Each student has received a copy of the course outline for science in a shared Google Doc or in person. Students will continue to review the course and class expectations in the next in-person class meetings.

In Math Class, students are beginning to receive their books and materials; logging in and bookmarking resources and math websites that will be crucial this year; getting to know you activities; discussing how the google classroom is set up; and demos activity to see how we can collaborate even when we are all virtual (Wednesday)

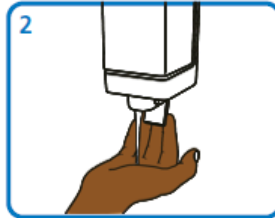
In U.S. History, students have been engaged in lessons that help recall past information and introduce the idea of making connections across varying time periods. We have had spirited discussions and are currently working on an assignment that has asked the students to interview a total of three people from different generations to gain perspective on the changing history.



Hand-washing technique with soap and water



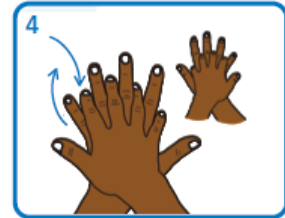
1 I've paid my dues



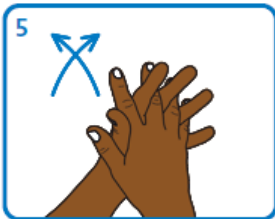
2 Time after time



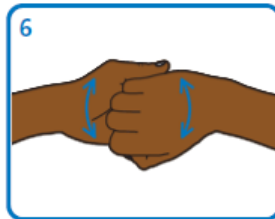
3 I've done my sentence



4 But committed no crime



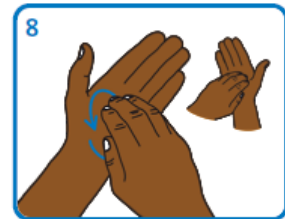
5 And bad mistakes



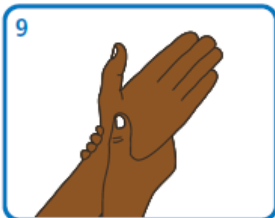
6 I've made a few



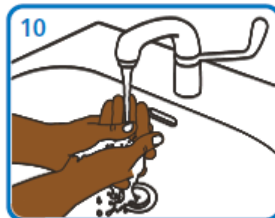
7 I've had my share of sand kicked in my face



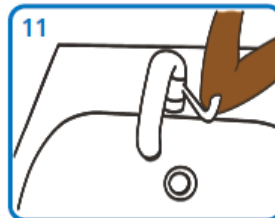
8 But I've come through



9 (And I need to go on and on, and on, and on)



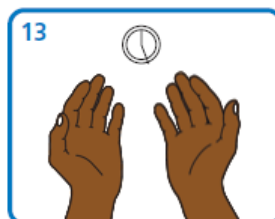
10 We are the champions, my friends



11 And we'll keep on fighting till the end



12 We are the champions



13 We are the champions

Create your own
<https://washyourlyrics.com>

We Are the Champions
Queen

Adapted from National Health Service, who adapted from the World Health Organization **Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care**.

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