

HIGHLANDER HILLTOP 5/14

Dear Highlander Families,

Happy Friday. This week are students completed their ELA Smarter Balanced Assessments, and did an absolutely fabulous job. They took their time to work diligently, and I know that the results will show what great strides they have made this year, despite all of the barriers they have had to contend with. On Monday, we will begin our Math assessments. Remind your children to get a good night sleep on Sunday, and to eat and good breakfast that morning.

Today we had our rising 7th graders come into the building to get an orientation from our student council, and go on tours of the building. While we begin planning for next year, I want to pause to make sure you are aware of all of the wonderful events that will be happening over the last month of school remaining. Please see the list below, and feel free to reach out with any questions.

-Chuck



Upcoming Events:

- May 28th – Field Day
- June 3rd – Junior Achievement Day for 8th graders
- June 8th – 8th grade Awards
- June 10th – 6:30-8:00 PM high school Spring Sports Awards
- June 11th – 3:00-4:00 PM – 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony
4:00-6:00 PM- Step up Celebration
- June 15th – Yearbook Signing and fun Ice Cream Truck

Portland Middle School has been awarded a Silver level of Program of Excellence from Jostens Yearbook! "The National Yearbook Program of Excellence is awarded to yearbook programs based on the extraordinary efforts that go into creating a yearbook and making it accessible to every student. With over 15,000 yearbook schools working with Jostens, your school is truly exceptional to have achieved this recognition. Watch for a message of congratulations to the Program of Excellence achievers on Jostens yearbook social channels* on Friday, May 14, 2021. The achievers list will also be posted to [Jostens.com](https://www.jostens.com)."

FROM THE NURSES OFFICE:



There is a GI bug affecting a few students & staff, please be aware. Handwashing with soap and water is preferred to hand gel for preventing this type of illness.

Scoliosis screening for 8th grade boys, (only if not already completed by a healthcare provider on a recent physical exam) will be performed likely the first week of June. More information will be sent home as it gets closer. Please email me at RHylland@portlandct.us if you wish to decline scoliosis screening for your 8th grade boy.

Middle school students are permitted to carry & self-apply their sunscreen for field day on Friday 5/28 with parental permission, see attached permission slip.

Grade 7 News:

The 7th grade ELA students enjoyed a much-needed respite from masks after SBAC today and headed outside into the sunshine to get some fresh air in the great outdoors. As part of our study of Endangered Species, students worked outside with partners to compare and contrast Expository and Argumentative essays on the plight of Elephants.



Mrs. DeRose visited the 7th grade classes this week to discuss the schedule for next year. Students received course selection sheets. Please have them returned to the main office by Monday, 5/17.

Grade 8 News:



Sensory Fidget Tools: Do you like to doddle, or click the top of your pen while listening to speakers? These are some ways people use sensory input to help with focus or anxiety. Some students in 8th grade have been trying out different types of Sensory/Fidget tools in order to help them with any feelings of anxiety as well as helping to focus during instruction. Right now the bubble poppers are a popular tool along with infinity cubes. There are various benefits of sensory toys and tools which focus on promoting touch, increasing concentration, reducing anxiety, developing fine motor skills and encouraging language skills. If you would like more information please feel free to contact me and I would be happy to discuss further.

Katherine Hunter: khunter@portlandct.us 8th grade Special Education Teacher



Music Department News:

The 7-12 Music Department is working together to put together a special combined band and chorus performance as we bring this school year to a close. We are looking forward to sharing the final product with the community!

Today was Sports and Sunglass Day! Here is Mr. Toussaint's class showing their school spirit!



Volunteer Hours Available at the Portland Library This Summer!

The library has made the decision to welcome Summer Reading Volunteers again this year after a hiatus last year. This position counts as community service for school or religious organizations so it's a great opportunity for those who need hours. Volunteers should be entering grades 7-up and will need to attend an online training session and adhere to COVID-19 safety requirements, including wearing a mask and social distancing. Hours are flexible and there is no minimum requirement. Please see Mrs. Jenn Renk at the library for more information.