

Highland Free School's 2024-2025 Parent & Student Handbook

The educational philosophy at Highland is based upon the fact that children are naturally inquisitive and excited by learning. ***Our goal is to keep that inquisitiveness alive.*** Highland Free School wants to create an environment that stimulates students to explore, create and learn at their own pace. To enable children to individually explore the potential of a situation or learning experience, children will be given the chance to develop independence, self-confidence and self-discipline by making choices and taking responsibility for those choices.



School Resources
Padlet



Google Calendar



When we first opened our doors, we were embarking on an educational experiment to provide a unique learning environment for parents and students looking for an alternative to traditional public schools.

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We emphasize the development of self-discipline and self-control, rather than external control. Discipline is based on the theory of logical and natural consequences, developed by Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs.

Our school maintains an average 12 to 1 student- teacher ratio. This low ratio allows us to individualize academic instruction for each child.

Our curriculum is aligned with the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards and includes individualized, skill-based tasks and assignments for the introduction and practice of basic skills. However, our emphasis is on integrated, thematic units that use hands-on, innovative activities and projects designed to give students practice applying those basic skills.

Student achievement is measured using a variety of assessment tools, including teacher observation, quizzes, AASA, AzSci, and STAR assessment. Teachers compose narrative progress reports charting each child's accomplishments and skill levels three times a year. Although teachers are in contact with parents on a daily basis, conferences are scheduled at least twice a year to discuss student progress. We believe that a child's education is a partnership between families and school. Lessons learned at school should be supported and reviewed at home through homework and family discussions and activities.

Highland Free School by no means has all the answers for educating children. The one answer we do have is that we change and grow and are always looking for new ways to generate enthusiastic participation and learning. The basic keys to our success are low student/teacher ratios, parent involvement that creates a sense of community, and a 21st century learning environment (which includes individualized, hands-on, STEM instruction).

Curriculum

Highland Free School follows the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards. For more information or to get a copy of your child's specific grade level standards you can download them from the Arizona Department of Education's website.



Every two weeks the classrooms also cover in-depth units of study. This year's topics are listed below.

2024-25 Units of Study

August 12- 16: Geography

August 19-30: Ancient China

September 2-13: Cold Ecosystems

September 16-27: Nutrition/Healthy Living

September 30- October 9: Money/Economics

October 14-25: Aztec, Inca, and Maya

October 28- November 1: Arizona State Government and Symbols

November 4-8: Civics/US Government

November 12-15: Engineering

November 18-22: Celebrations [Older: Western Religions]

December 2-19: Theater

January 8-10: Olympics

January 13 -31: Biography

February 3-19: Scientific Method & Forces and Motion/Simple Machines

February 24-March 7: A Century of Change (Social and Technology)

March 17-21 Desert

March 24-28: Arizona History: Explorers to Present

March 31-April 17: Media and Technology

April 21-25: Ecology

April 28 - May 9: Weather

May 12-23: Ancient Greece & Rome

Additional Curriculum Information for the Year

Geography: This year we will be covering United States geography.

Art & Music

- Lessons on regional art and music are taught during world geography.
- Art and music are integrated into the units of study when possible (e.g. *the units on Ancient China, the Aztec, Inca & Maya civilizations, and Ancient Greece and Rome will include lessons on music and art from different cultures and time periods*).
- Additional music and art lessons occur weekly.

Science

This school year's science units include nutrition, cold ecosystems, the desert ecosystem, scientific method, forces and Motion (including simple machines), engineering, technology, and weather. In addition to those units of study, science is also integrated whenever possible into the other units of study (e.g. *the unit on the Ancient Chine civilization will include advancements in science during that time-period*).

Health and Physical Education.

- Our Olympic unit focuses on health and physical education.
- Small and gross motor activities are an integral part of the curriculum of the younger class.
- Students have 3 recess periods during the day. Highland has a wonderful playground that enables students to exercise while they are having fun.
- Our music and health curriculum also incorporates movement.
- To help exercise their bodies, students will also be taking occasional walking trips.

Character Education Program: Highland tries to provide a rounded education for its students. Part of this curriculum includes a character education component that focuses on traits such as truthfulness, responsibility, compassion, diligence, sincerity, trustworthiness, respect, attentiveness, and forgiveness.

School Day

School Schedule:

7:30-8:10: Before School Extended Day (for a fee)

8:10-8:30: Student Drop Off

2:45-3:00: Student Pick-Up

3:00-4:30: After School Extended Day (for a fee)

Class Schedules

(Please note that times may vary depending on the classroom activities of each day.)

	Younger Class
8:30-9:40	English Language Arts
9:45-10:05	Snack Break & Recess
10:05-10:40	English Language Arts
10:40-10:45	Break
10:45-11:30	Math
11:30-12:30	Lunch and Recess
12:30-1:05	English Language Arts
1:10-1:15	Break
1:15-1:45	Specials
1:50-2:45	Unit Topic and Closing

	Older Class
8:30-9:45	English Language Arts
9:50-10:05	Snack Break & Recess
10:05-11:00	English Language Arts
11:00-11:10	Recess
11:10-12:00	Math
12:00-12:45	Lunch and Recess
12:45-1:00	Independent Reading
1:00-2:00	Specials and Break
2:00-2:45	Unit Topic

Specials: Art, Music, Spanish, Health, and Geography

Tutoring

Title I: Title I is a federally funded program designed to provide supplemental support to students who need extra help in becoming successful learners and to stimulate needed changes in teaching and learning systems. A school receives Title I services if more than 40 percent of its student population qualifies for the federal Free and Reduced Meals Program. If our school qualifies, your child may be eligible for Title I tutoring (which generally occurs before and after school, during breaks, as well as during class time).

Assessment and Progress

Testing: Highland administers the following standardized assessments to gauge student progress and help inform instruction. [Note: Retention is possible if students don't make adequate yearly academic gains.]

- The state of Arizona requires that we administer the AzSci Science test to 5th graders as well as the AASA to 3rd-6th graders. These assessments are scheduled for the first two weeks of April. Please make sure that your child is present during testing days. We understand that some families are frustrated with high stakes testing and even consider 'opting out', however we strongly encourage families against that option as it will have a seriously negative impact on our school. With such a small school, any student not taking the assessment can **significantly** affect our funding and school rating.
- The school will administer the standards-based STAR assessment suite to all students to assess growth and achievement 4 times a year.

Third Grade Retention: Arizona Revised Statute §15-701 states that if a student scores below the cut score on the reading portion of the 3rd grade AASA exam, he/she will not be promoted to the 4th grade until sufficient progress is made to demonstrate that the student is reading proficiently. There are four exemptions to retention in ARS §15-701. In accordance with the law, a school district governing board or the governing body of a charter school is permitted to promote a student who fails to meet the cut score on the reading portion of the 3rd grade AASA exam for any of the four following reasons:

- (i) A third grade student is an English Language Learner or is Limited English Proficient and has received fewer than two years of English instruction; or
- (ii) A third grade student with disabilities has an individualized education plan (IEP), and the IEP team, which includes the student's parent/guardian, agrees that promotion is appropriate; or
- (iii) A third grade student is in the process of a special education referral or evaluation for placement in special education and/or students that have been diagnosed as having a significant reading impairment, including dyslexia; or
- (iv) A third grade student has demonstrated or subsequently demonstrates sufficient reading skills or adequate progress towards sufficient reading skills of the 3rd grade reading standards as evidenced through a collection of reading assessments approved by the State Board.

Additional information about Arizona's Move on When Reading legislation can be obtained at www.azed.gov/mowr.

Progress Reports and Conferences

Progress Reports: Highland is a non-grading school. Skill-based, narrative progress reports will be distributed three times a year. These reports usually will be followed-up with an individual Parent/Teacher Conference to discuss the child's progress.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: We try to keep in contact with parents on a daily basis and provide in-depth conferences following the distribution of progress reports. If you would like to set up an additional meeting with the staff, please see your child's teacher to schedule an appointment.

Enrollment Paperwork

New students must provide proper documentation when enrolling

- **Application Form**
- **Proof of Residency:** Arizona Residency Documentation Form or a Shared Residence Form

Birth Certificate: Parents must provide proof of identity and age for their child which may consist of a birth certificate or other “reliable proof” of the student's identity and age.

Home Language Survey Form: As required by the state, enrolling families must fill out a home language survey form.

Withdrawal Form: (if applicable) Please present withdrawal form from most recently enrolled school.

Additional Legal Guardianship or Custody Papers [If needed]

Emergency Information: It is VITAL that you provide us with up-to-date emergency information. If you move, change jobs or change other important contact information you must let us know as soon as possible.

Immunization Records: Proof of immunizations or signed waiver is required to attend school and must include the name of the person, the birth date, the type of vaccine administered, and the month, day and year of each immunization.

Student Records: Highland Free School is required by law to retain the following records permanently: immunization, student identification number, academic records and transcript of final grades, summary of attendance records and standardized test scores.

Non Discrimination Policy: Highland does not limit admissions based on ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, income level, disabling condition, proficiency in the English language or athletic ability (including students of any race, ethnicity, color, or national or ethnic origin) to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available to students of the school; and does not discriminate on the basis of race in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs.

School Rules and Procedures

Note: The Highland Free School community (including students, staff, families, and school board) is mandated to follow all local, state, and federal education laws and regulations (which are applicable even if they are not mentioned in this handbook).

Discipline Philosophy

Highland Free School's discipline is based on logical and natural consequences. Letting children experience the natural or logical consequences of their actions is one way to teach responsibility. Reading material on logical and natural consequences is available at the school if you are interested in learning more about this philosophy.

Basic Safety and Learning Rules:

1. **No weapons are permitted** [including toys with weapons, clothing depicting weapons or violence, or even using pretend weaponry during play].
2. **Drugs and other illegal items and behaviors are prohibited.** Federal, State and Local laws apply to Highland staff, families, and students. If illegal items are brought to school or illegal actions are done on the Highland campus, the consequences may include loss of privileges, suspension, expulsion and even possible criminal charges.
3. **No hurtful hands or hurtful words are allowed.** Problem solving must be done with words only. Intimidation and the force of one's will are not acceptable. Harassment and bullying will not be tolerated (this includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, family status, race, color, national origin, religion, and disability). This policy extends to the entire Highland community (including staff, students, families, and other visitors). Overly rough play is also not acceptable. Any wanton or deliberate destruction of property is the financial responsibility of the students and parents.
4. **Interference with another's learning is not acceptable.** Everyone must be respectful of one another and value their right to learn.

Outside of School Harassment, Violence, or Cyberbullying: As noted above, any form of bullying or harassment at Highland Free School is prohibited- this is *regardless of when or where the harassment or violence occurs*. Any act of violence or harassment of Highland Free School community members (including students, staff, board members, and family of community members)

by a fellow community member is strictly prohibited. This may be grounds for loss of technology privileges, suspension, dismissal, and even possible criminal charges.

Discipline Options: Depending upon the nature of the violation, student discipline may be progressive. Highland will consider all other relevant factors in determining an appropriate consequence. The following penalties may be imposed either alone or in combination.

- Verbal warning • Written notification to parents • Separation from other students • Suspension of privileges • Restitution • Exclusion from a particular class, activity, or event • Community service • Suspension • Expulsion

[Depending on the severity of the violation, Highland may default to TUSD discipline guidelines for disciplinary actions.]

Restitution: When personal or school property has been damaged, stolen, lost, or destroyed, the student may be held responsible for replacing or paying the cost of the item. Restitution may be required in addition to other behavioral consequences.

Long Term Suspensions: For suspensions longer than 10 days, notice must be sent no later than three school days following the imposition of a short-term suspension pending long-term suspension. The formal Long-Term Suspension Hearing shall be held within ten school days of the date the short-term suspension became effective. The hearing will be closed to the public (except for the student, his/her representatives, and the School's Hearing Committee and representatives) and will follow due process guidelines. Decisions made regarding suspension length will be implemented. Students and parents have the right to appeal the decision.

Long Term Suspension Appeals: Students may appeal their disciplinary hearing decisions regarding long term suspensions (for longer than 10 days) to Highland Free School's Governing Board. The basis for the appeal shall be specified in a written notice of appeal (addressed to Highland Free School Governing Board) within 5 days of suspension or expulsion event. The hearing will be closed to the general public and will follow due process guidelines.

Parental Notification: In accordance with A.R.S. § 15-186.01, if the School determines a student has been harassed, threatened, or intimidated on School grounds or in a manner that substantially disrupts the School's learning environment, the School's Leadership Team or their designee, will notify the parent or guardian of that affected student. Threatening or intimidating behavior and harassment have the meanings set forth in A.R.S. § 15-186.01.

Reporting Suspected Criminal Conduct: In order to comply with A.R.S. § 15-153, the School's Leadership Team or a designee, will report to local law enforcement any suspected crime against a person or property that (i) is a Serious Offense or involves a Deadly Weapon or Dangerous Instrument or Serious Physical Injury; or (ii) any conduct that poses a threat of death or Serious Physical Injury to a School employee, student, or other person on the School's property (collectively, "Suspected Criminal Conduct"). All capitalized terms in this paragraph have the meaning set forth in Arizona law.

Expulsions: After completion of a formal long-term suspension hearing which results in a decision to suspend, the Director may submit a recommendation for expulsion to the school governing board. Expulsion Hearing information will be mailed to the guardian within 5 days of the initial suspension

hearing. The Highland Free School Governing Board will schedule the expulsion hearing so that it may be resolved during the long-term suspension, but not earlier than five (5) working days from the date that the written notice of the hearing is sent to the student and parent. The hearing will be closed to the general public and will follow due process guidelines. *Disciplinary issues involving firearms, other weapons, serious verbal threats of violence, violent behavior towards students, staff or property, and inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature are among possible cause for dismissal. (see Arizona Revised Statutes § 15-841(H) § 15-841(G))*

During hearing and appeals the student is entitled to:

1. *The right to representation by the parent or legal counsel.*
2. *The right of the parent to be present at all proceedings involving their child*
3. *The right of the student, parent, or representative to reasonable access to non-privileged evidence and the student's records at least two days prior to the hearing. (This right may be exercised at any reasonable time during regular school hours after first making arrangements with the principal or designee)*
4. *The right to be free from any requirements to present evidence against himself or herself*
5. *The right to present favorable evidence and witnesses*
6. *The right to question adverse evidence and witnesses presented at the proceeding*
7. *The right to have the testimony presented preserved at the student's own expense*
8. *The right to have an interpreter present, if one is necessary*

See IDEA for additional guidance on Special Education procedural safeguards.

K-4 Application for Readmission: Following a long-term suspension or expulsion, a parent may apply for student readmission after a student has served at least five school days of the long term suspension or twenty school days after effective the date of an expulsion.

The school administration reserves the right to interpret how it will deal with any of the many situations that may come up in the learning environment of Highland Free School. Discipline measures are chosen on a case-by-case basis, as appropriate to the situation.

The discipline, decisions shall not be based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry or any other unlawful reason.

Attendance Policy:

- **Excessive Tardies and Absences:** Excessive tardies and absences have a detrimental effect on your child's ability to develop academically, and it also interferes with the teacher's ability to teach the class as a whole. The state of Arizona requires that all students attend school 90 percent of the school year. A student that is absent more than 18 days per year is considered to have "excessive absences," whether the absence is excused or unexcused. If your child is absent or tardy a significant number of days, he/she might not be able to make enough academic progress to be promoted to the next grade level.
- **Tardy/Early Departures**
 - Students must attend over 25% of the day to get ½ day credit. Students must attend at least 75% of the school day to be considered in full attendance for the day.

- If you are picking up your child early or dropping off late, you must sign your child in/out (the form is located on the table near the front gate).
- **Absence Notification:** Parents should notify the school if their child is going to be absent via the Remind app (preferred) or by calling. If parents or guardians do not contact the school for absences or significant late arrivals, in accordance with A.R.S. § 15-807, Highland will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or guardian of a student who is absent from school without an excuse.
- **Automatic 10 Day Withdrawal:** Students absent for ten (10) consecutive school days, except for excused absences identified herein, or has a prolonged illness, shall be withdrawn from the school, pursuant to A.R.S. §15-901 (A)(2).

Illness and Contagious Diseases: The Department of Health Services requires that students not attend school if they are in an infectious stage of a disease. Daily health-screening of your child for symptoms prior to the child arriving at school will help prevent spread of diseases. Symptoms of contagious illness include fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, vomiting, diarrhea, and unexplained skin rash. If your child is sick, he/she must be fever, diarrhea, and vomit free without medication for 24 hours before he/she can return to school. For unexplained rashes, please consult pediatrician to see if they are safe to return to school. If he/she becomes ill at school, please pick up your child promptly after you have been notified. Until they are picked up by an authorized person, they will be asked to wear a face mask and/or self-distance. If there is an emergency that requires immediate medical attention, we will call 911 and take the student to a hospital emergency room if necessary; however, such emergencies seldom occur. The Department of Health Service requires that in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease for which you cannot provide proof of immunity of your child, your child will not be allowed to attend school until the risk period ends. You must inform the school if your child is exposed to or has contracted Covid 19 or other infectious/communicable disease. Highland will be following CDC guidance for isolation and mask wearing.

When in public spaces, one is at risk of being exposed to contagious illness. Everyone in the Highland community plays crucial roles in keeping the school safe and reducing the risk of exposure and illness.

Additional Covid 19 Information: *If Pima County is at high risk based on current Covid-19 community levels, we will be following masking recommendations and requiring mask wearing inside. During times when we are not at high risk, mask wearing will be optional unless there is a Covid exposure (in which case mask wearing and quarantines will be determined by CDC guidelines).*

See Highland's Mitigation Plan and refer to the Arizona Department of Health Services, CDC, and Pima County Health Departments for more guidance for illnesses including Covid-19.

Lice: Anyone can get lice regardless of income, age, and sex. Highland may conduct periodic lice checks on the students. If a child has been found to have lice or nits (eggs of lice), we will notify the family and the student may not return to school until his/her hair has been treated. Even with treatment, it might take a while to completely get rid of lice. Make sure you do follow-up treatments as indicated by your treatment plan and take all precautionary steps to delouse your house.

Medications: *Medication cannot be in the student's possession. ANY medication brought to school*

must be labeled with the student's first and last name and given to a staff member for safe storage in our lock box. This includes, but is not limited to, cough syrup, pain medication, cough drops, vitamins or any other over the counter medicine. In order for teachers to be legally allowed to administer medicine to your child, a *Medication Consent* form must be completely filled out by the parent. Medications must be in their original containers. Over the counter medications must be labeled as safe for children. Teachers will only dispense medicine at or below the dosage level that is indicated on the over-the-counter medication package as is appropriate for your child's age and weight. Teachers are also required to follow dosages as indicated on prescription medicines. Prescription medicines must have your child's name on the pharmacy label. Any expired medicines will be appropriately discarded. Highland reserves the right to refuse to administer medication that has not been prescribed by a licensed physician. ***Students with inhalers and epi-pens can carry these medications with them (however, parents still need to fill out a consent form).***

Poison Control: With the exception of medicine, which must be locked up, anything that could be poisonous and/or is labeled ***Keep out of reach of children*** should not be brought to school.

Sunblock Policy: In order to reduce future skin cancer risk, Highland strongly recommends that students wear hats and sunglasses while outside. Before school and/or before playing outside, we also recommend that students apply sunblock that they have brought from home.

- ❑ All sunblock products must be marked as child safe.
- ❑ Sunblock must be labeled with your child's first and last name.
- ❑ The sunblock will be kept in a tub, which will be stored out of the reach of children. If your child would like to use it, he/she must ask a teacher for his/her bottle and then return it to the teacher after use.
- ❑ It is your child's responsibility to apply the sunblock him/herself. The teachers will not apply sunblock on any student.
- ❑ Any expired sunblock will not be used; it will be discarded.
- ❑ In order to prevent unintended allergic reactions, sunblock must not be shared with other students.
- ❑ *Some sunblocks contain heavy scents which can be a problem for those with allergies and asthma. If possible, please try to bring in unscented sunblock.*

Toys and other Items from Home: ***Students are not able to bring toys or personal items to school besides books and the essentials (e.g. lunch, water, and medicine).***

Backpacks: Backpacks are not allowed at school unless for medical reasons or for transferring items between households.

Cell Phones: Students are not allowed to use cell phones at school. Cell phones brought to school must be turned off and stored in the student's cubby or with the teacher. If there is an emergency and you need to contact your child, call the school's main line at (520) 623-0104 or contact us via Remind.

Audio/Visual Recording Devices: Students are not allowed to bring audio or visual recording devices to school without permission from staff. If the staff has allowed students to bring cameras to school on a particular day, students may not use them during class time, and they must get permission from anyone they intend to take pictures. All pictures and videos taken at Highland Free School are for private use only. ***Pictures of students, staff and the campus cannot be published or transmitted for***

public viewing without permission from the school and all of the people included in the picture or video. Public viewing includes posting on blogs, posting on media sharing sites such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and any other transmission of media on the internet. This also includes uploading media on the internet or sending pictures via cell phones. Students are also prohibited from taking pictures with cell phones without permission from staff.

Students Must Remain on Campus: Students must remain on school property within the school gates during school hours unless accompanied by a guardian or teacher (with parental permission).

Pamphlets: Students have the right to distribute non-school endorsed materials and pamphlets when outside the school building while class is not in session (during public school hours).

Authorized Pick-Up: Persons authorized to pick up students from school must be listed on the child's emergency card. If you are planning to have someone who is not on the emergency card pick up your child, you must give verbal or written permission before it happens.

Daily Sign-In: The Department of Health Services requires that parents of extended day and summer program students sign their child(ren) in and out each day.

Food: Children should eat before school to provide them with energy to start the day. Highland does not provide lunches, so children must bring their own lunches in bags or boxes. Make sure that your child comes to school with a quality, balanced lunch each day. Please limit sweets and junk food (e.g. candy, soda, chips). No microwave is available for student use. In order to avoid confusion, don't forget to label your child's lunch bag and beverage container. To ensure the safety of the students, lunches cannot include knives or glass containers. Due to safety issues and other problems associated with it, lunches will not be shared. No gum is allowed.

Birthdays: Please speak with your child's teacher if you are interested in bringing treats or non-food items to help celebrate your child's birthday. Please note that food items must be in individualized, commercially pre-packed units. Due to scheduled classroom activities, classrooms may not be able to celebrate on actual day of the birthday. Please speak with your child's teacher if you are interested in bringing something in.

Clothing: An active child needs to wear comfortable, practical clothing. Your child should dress appropriately for the weather and for school activities (for example flip-flops are not considered safe to wear when climbing). On cold days, children might not be allowed to play outside without appropriate dress. Students cannot wear strapless shirts to school. Please label your child's sweaters, jackets and hats. Make sure you monitor the content printed of your child's clothing and lunchboxes. Pictures of weapons and other hurtful content are not permitted.

Bicycles, Skateboards, Scooters, & Roller Skates: Highland has a bike rack for those students who bike to school. However, Highland is not responsible for monitoring the safety of personal items. For safety reasons, the riding of bikes, skateboards, scooters and roller skates is not allowed inside the school gates.

Field Trips: We will go on various field trips throughout the year. In order for your child to go on each field trip, we require that a legal guardian sign a permission slip. Non-legal guardians are not

allowed to sign the permission slip. By signing the permission slip, legal guardians are agreeing to allow their child to attend the field trip and are acknowledging and agreeing to the fact that their child may be transported by available transportation means (including being transported in a chartered bus when available). Parents are invited to help chaperone the students (space permitted). The extended day and summer programs do not take any field trips (besides walking trips in the neighborhood). Let us know your ideas for unique field trips or special happenings.

Neighborhood Walking Trips: As a part of our school curriculum, Highland students will be taking occasional walking trips around the neighborhood (in the area contained by the following streets: Broadway, Kino, Euclid and Aviation Parkway), to Safeway (on Broadway and Campbell) and to a local park called San Antonio Park-Parque de la Gente for play and picnicking. The park is located on the southwest corner of Santa Rita Avenue and East 14th street (two blocks from Highland). Please sign the permission slip at the beginning of the year to allow your child to join in on these walks.

Lending Library and Family Game Cabinet: The books in the student library are available for checkout. We also have a family game cabinet with games, puzzles and activity items available for home use. Fun family together time is beneficial to children, so we strongly encourage parents to visit the game cabinet and have fun playing with your kid! You are also welcome to donate your old games! There are also books available for loan at Highland about education and childrearing. Speak with a staff member if you are interested in borrowing one. Families are financially responsible for any books that are damaged or not returned.

Classroom Visitors: It is the policy of the Governing Board to encourage parents and other interested citizens to visit classrooms as long as such visits do not disrupt school operations or interfere with the educational process. Parents shall have reasonable access to observe/visit classes, go on a tour, or join activities and functions at the school upon advance notice to, and authorization by, Highland staff. In order to ensure that no unauthorized persons enter buildings and that the educational process or other school operations are not disrupted, all visitors to the school shall report to the older classroom when entering, and must receive authorization before visiting other parts of the building. For the student safety, if visitors do not have an IVP fingerprint card, they must be chaperoned while on campus.

Helping Out / Parental Participation: We appreciate your willingness to devote your time and talents to our students. To comply with state mandates and insurance requirements, we have an application for all volunteers. If you are interested in helping, please pick up an application. Please note that current state law requires constant monitoring and supervision of any visitors/volunteers who do not have an IVP fingerprinting card.

Functions: There are several functions that happen at school during the year, including our Halloween Carnival, plays, talent shows, etc. The entire school community and friends are invited to attend these events.

Released Time For Religious Instruction: The School shall excuse students for religious purposes, including participation in religious exercises or religious instruction. A guardian of the student must give their written consent to the absence and any religious instruction or exercise must take place at a suitable place away from School property.

Smoking: Highland is a smoke-free facility. There is no smoking or vaping allowed on the premises.

Pesticides: Pesticides will not be applied during normal facility hours of operation. Pesticides are applied as necessary to prevent the immediate harm that may be caused by fire ants or other infestations of stinging/harmful insects. If pesticides will be applied, a notice will be posted 48 hours in advance.

Mandated Reporters: All employees at Highland are by law mandatory reporters concerning suspected child abuse and neglect. Any person who reasonably believes that a minor is or has been the victim of physical injury, abuse, child abuse, a reportable offense or neglect that appears to have been inflicted on the minor by other than accidental means or that is not explained by the available medical history as being accidental in nature, or who reasonably believes that there has been a denial or deprivation of necessary medical treatment or surgical care or nourishment with the intent to cause or allow the death of an infant who is protected under A.R.S. § 36-2281, shall immediately report or cause reports to be made of this information to a peace officer or to Child Protective Services in the Department of Economic Security, except if the report concerns a person who does not have care, custody or control of the minor, the report shall be made to a peace officer only. For more information about our Sexual Abuse and Prevention Policy, please speak request a copy of the policy. To report any concerns, speak with the director or assistant director.

School Community Meetings: Highland Free School holds community meetings that provide an opportunity to discuss important school issues. These are open to all and are strongly encouraged.

Staff Fingerprinting Requirement: Staff employed by Highland Free School are required to obtain a valid IVP Fingerprint Clearance Card. A contractor, subcontractor or vendor, or any employee of a contractor, subcontractor or vendor, who is contracted to provide services on a regular basis at an individual school shall obtain a valid fingerprint clearance card pursuant to [A.R.S. §41-1758 et seq.](#) The Superintendent or designee may exempt from the requirement to obtain a fingerprint clearance card a contractor, subcontractor, or vendor whom the Superintendent or designee has determined is not likely to have independent access or unsupervised contact with students as part of their normal job duties while performing services to the school or to the school district.

Non-Profit Status & Governing Board Members: Highland Free School is a non-profit organization (501(c)(3)). Following is a list of the board members of Highland Free School: Teresa Rodriguez, Kelly Murphy, Lisa Sherman, and Christine Donovan.

No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the school, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

The Arizona Department of Health Services regulates Highland Free School. Highland carries a blanket liability insurance, as required by D.H.S.

Parents' "Right to Know" Notices

Title I schools shall notify parents that they may request information on the professional qualifications of the student's teacher and paraprofessionals and be notified if their student is being taught by a teacher that does not meet the state certification or licensure at the grade level and subject they are teaching. This information must be provided to parents in a uniform format., "To the extent practicable," provide in a language that parents can understand, and in a timely manner.

The information provided should include: whether the teacher has met state requirements and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects taught; whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency certificate; whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher; information on the teacher's degree major and any other certification or degree held by the teacher and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; whether the child receives services from paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications. Title I schools are required to provide parent notification when a teacher does not meet the requirements of a highly qualified professional by the State of Arizona. Notification must occur if students have been assigned, or have been taught by—for four or more consecutive weeks—a teacher who is not highly qualified.

At Highland, a teacher and paraprofessional background/qualification binder is available in the main building. Speak with a staff member if you would like to see the binder.

Supplement vs. Supplant: Monies received from the federal government for Title I must not be used to substitute for funds or services that would otherwise be provided by the school. We use federal funds received under Title I only to supplement our services and do not use these federal funds to supplant funds that would, in the absence of Title I funds, have been spent on Title I students.

Student Achievement: Parents have the right to know in a timely manner their child's level of achievement based on required state assessments. Parents may request, and the local educational agency will provide the parents on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding any State or local educational agency policy regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by section 1111(b)(2) and by the State or local educational agency, which shall include a policy, procedure, or parental right to opt the child out of such assessment, where applicable

Parent's Right to Know notices are included in the Student Handbook, Title I Handbook, and posted online. The handbooks are distributed to all families upon enrollment each year. The online notice is always posted and is updated as needed.

Child Find Policy

Highland Free School will ensure that all children with disabilities within the boundaries of the public agency, including children with disabilities who are homeless or wards of the State, and children with disabilities attending private schools or home schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated.

PROCEDURES

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '04) 34 CFR §300.111 Child Find

1) **Highland** will identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities within their population served who are in need of special education and related services.

This must include:

- a) Children who are homeless;
- b) Children who are highly mobile, including migrant children;
- c) Children who are wards of the state; and,
- d) Children who are attending private schools or home schools.

Note: As a charter school, Highland will identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities within our population served who are in need of special education and related services.

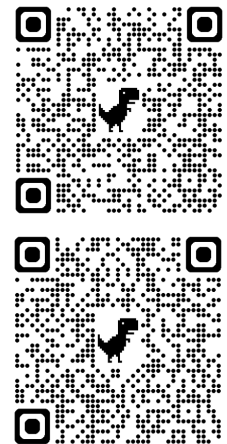
2) Child find must also include children who are suspected of being children with a disability and are in need of special education, even though:

- a) They are advancing from grade to grade or
- b) They are highly mobile children, including those who are migrant children.

3) Each public agency will maintain a record of children who are receiving special education and related services.

Arizona Administrative Code (AAC) R7-2-401.C Public Awareness

Highland Free School, on an annual basis, creates public awareness of special education opportunities and advises parents of the rights of children with disabilities. Through Child Find, HFS shall inform the general public and all parents within the public education agency's boundaries of responsibility of the availability of special education services for students aged 3 through 21 years and how to access those services. This includes information regarding early intervention services for children aged birth through 2 years [including confidentiality protections, the availability of special education services, student rights to a free appropriate public education and the special education referral process].



AAC R7-2-401.D Child Identification and Referral

Highland Free School shall establish, implement, and make available (either in writing or electronically) to its school-based personnel and all parents within Highland Free Schools boundaries of responsibility, written procedures for the identification and referral of all children with disabilities aged 3 through 21, including children with disabilities attending private schools and home schools, regardless of the severity of their disability. Highland Free

School shall require appropriate school- based personnel to review the written procedures related to child identification and referral on an annual basis. The public education agency shall maintain documentation of school-based personnel review.

- Procedures for child identification and referral shall meet the requirements of the IDEA and its regulations, A.R.S. Title 15, Chapter 7, and the State Board of Education rules R7-2-401.
- The public education agency responsible for child identification activities is the school district in which the parents reside unless: a) The student is enrolled in a charter school or public education agency that is not a school district. In that event, the charter school or public education agency is responsible for child identification activities; b) The student is enrolled in a nonprofit private school. In that event, the school district within whose boundaries the private school is located is responsible for child identification activities.
- Identification (screening for possible disabilities) shall be completed within 45 calendar days after: a) Entry of each kindergarten student and any student enrolling without appropriate records of screening, evaluation, and progress in school; or b) Notification to Highland Free School by parents of concerns regarding developmental or educational progress by their child (aged 3 years through 21 years).
- Screening procedures shall include vision and hearing status and consideration of the following areas: cognitive or academic; communication; motor; social or behavioral; and adaptive development. Screening does not include detailed individualized comprehensive evaluation procedures.
- For a student transferring in to Highland Free School. Highland Free School shall review enrollment data and educational performance in the prior school. If there is a history of special education for a student not currently eligible for special education, or of poor progress, the name of the student shall be submitted to the Director/Special Education Director for consideration of the need for a referral for a full and individual evaluation or other services.
- If a concern about a student is identified through screening procedures or through a review of records, Highland Free School shall notify the parents of the student of the concern within 10 school days and inform them of Highland Free School's procedures to follow up on the student's needs. • Highland Free School shall maintain documentation of the identification procedures used, the dates of entry into school or the notification by parents made pursuant to subsection (D)(5), and the dates of screening. The results shall be maintained in the student's permanent records in a location designated by the administrator. In the case of a student not enrolled, the results shall be maintained in a location designated by the administrator.
- If the identification process indicates a possible disability, and the student is enrolled in Highland Free School, the name of the student shall be submitted to the administrator for consideration of the need for a referral for a full and individual evaluation or other services. (A parent or a student who has reached the age of majority may request an evaluation of the student. For parentally placed private school students, the school district within whose boundaries the nonprofit private school is located is responsible for such evaluation.)
- If, after consultation with the parent, the responsible public education agency determines that a full and individual evaluation is not warranted, Highland Free School shall provide prior written notice and procedural safeguards notice to the parent in a timely manner.

English Language Learner Policy

Students whose home or primary language is not English, will be administered an assessment to see if they qualify for extra support. If your child qualifies for additional English Language support, Highland will use the Two-Hour SEI (Structured English Emersion) model.

This model includes:

- 120 minutes a day (or 600 minutes a week) of English language instruction provided by a teacher with an SEI endorsement within the student's home classroom.
- Access and opportunity every-day to grade-level content alongside native English-speaking peers.
- Access to and use of Lexia's Core 5 program for school and home use to provide additional targeted English-language instruction.

Parents may choose to opt-out of the program, however, students will continue to take AZELLA assessments yearly to mark their progress until they have achieved proficiency according to the assessment data. Students who have scored proficient on the AZELLA are then monitored for two years to help ensure success after their move into a mainstream classroom

English Learners who are not progressing toward achieving proficiency of the Arizona Academic Standards, as evidenced by the failure to improve scores on the Arizona Achievement test, shall be provided compensatory instruction, to assist them in achieving those Arizona Academic Standards. Compensatory Instruction may include individual instruction/tutoring, small group instruction, enrolling in Title I tutoring, summer school, and online instruction available for use at home. A WICP describing the compensatory instruction provided shall be kept in the student's academic file.

IDEA

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that protects the rights of students with disabilities. In addition to standard school records, education records for children with disabilities could include evaluation and testing materials, medical and health information, Individualized Education Programs and related notices and consents, progress reports, materials related to disciplinary actions, and mediation agreements. Such information is gathered from a number of sources, including the student's parents and staff of the school of attendance. Also, with parental permission, information may be gathered from additional pertinent sources, such as doctors and other health care providers. This information is collected to assure the child is identified, evaluated, and provided a Free Appropriate Public Education in accordance with state and federal special education laws.

Each agency participating under Part B of IDEA must assure that at all stages of gathering, sorting, retaining and disclosing education records to third parties that it complies with the federal confidentiality laws. In addition, the destruction of any education records of a child with a disability must be in accordance with IDEA regulatory requirements.

For additional information or to file a complaint, you may call the federal government at (202) 260-3887 (voice) or 1-800-877-8339 (TDD) OR the Arizona Department of Education (ADE/ESS) at (602) 542-4013. Or you may contact:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

or

Arizona Department of Education
Exceptional Student Services
1535 West Jefferson, BIN 24
Phoenix, AZ 85007

IDEA- General FAPE Procedures

A free appropriate public education (FAPE) will be available to all children within the boundaries of responsibility of the public agency, including children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school as provided for in §300.530(d) of the IDEA regulations.

Determination of Eligibility: All Public Agencies will make the determination that a child is eligible for special education and related services on an individual basis by a properly constituted team.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, Highland Free School will ensure that: a) A group of qualified professionals and the parent of the child determine: If the child is a child with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Arizona State Statutes; and If so, the educational needs of the child. b) The parents are provided, at no cost, a copy of the evaluation report an eligibility determination.

A child will not be determined to be a child with a disability if the primary factor for the determination is: a) Lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction (as defined in section 1208(3) of the ESEA as such section was in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Every Student Succeeds Act (December 9, 2015)); b) Lack of appropriate instruction in math; or c) Limited English proficiency.

The eligibility determination, including education needs, will be based on all of the information sources used in the evaluation process, and if the child is deemed eligible and in need of special education and related services, an IEP will be developed in accordance with §§300.320 through 300.324.

Free Appropriate Public Education Highland Free School will make the following services available to all children with disabilities within the population of Highland Free School, including children with disabilities



who have been suspended or expelled from school as provided for in §300.530(d) of the IDEA regulations. • A free, appropriate public education. • A fair, accurate, and unbiased evaluation to assist in deciding Exceptional Education and related services. • An individualized educational program (IEP) based upon each student's individual capabilities and needs. • An education in the most typical setting in which each student can make educational progress. • A range of placement options from the least restrictive to the most restrictive. • The same array of academic, nonacademic, physical education, and extracurricular activity services that is available to students without disabilities.

Powers of the School District Governing Board or County School Superintendent

The governing board of Highland Free School shall establish policy with regard to allowable pupil- teacher ratios and pupil-staff ratios within the school district or county for provision of special education services.

Assistive Technology

Highland Free School will ensure that assistive technology devices or services or both will be available to a child with a disability, if required, as a part of: a) Special education, b) Related services, and c) Supplementary aids and services.

On a case-by-case basis, Highland Free School will ensure the use of school purchased assistive technology devices in a child's home or other setting if the child's IEP team determines that the child needs access to those devices in order to receive FAPE.

Extended School Year Services (ESY)

Highland Free School will make extended school year services available as necessary to provide FAPE to children with disabilities. a) ESY services will be provided only if a child's IEP team determines, in accordance with §§300.320–300.324, that the services are necessary for the provision of FAPE. b) Services will not be: i) Limited to a particular category of disability; or ii) Unilaterally limited to the type, amount, or duration of services.

The ESY services that are provided to a child with a disability will: a) Be provided beyond the normal school year of the agency; b) Be provided in accordance with the child's IEP; c) Be provided at no cost to the parents of the child; and d) Meet the standards of the State.

Nonacademic Services

- 1) Highland Free School will afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities including, as determined appropriate and necessary by the child's IEP team, the provision of supplementary aids and services. 2)
- 2) Nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities may include counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by Highland Free School.

Physical Education

• Highland Free School will make regular physical education services available to children with disabilities to the same extent that Highland Free School provides those services to children without disabilities, unless: a) The child is enrolled full time in a separate facility; or b) The child needs specially designed physical education as prescribed in the child's IEP.

• If a child is enrolled in a separate facility, Highland Free School will ensure that the child receives appropriate physical education services. Highland Free School will provide the parent /guardian with information to assist them in obtaining services from their public school of residency.

• If special physical education is prescribed in a child's IEP, Highland Free School will provide for those services, either directly or through other public or private programs.

Program Options Highland Free School will ensure that children with disabilities have available to them the variety of educational programs and services that are available to nondisabled children, including art, music, industrial arts, consumer and homemaking education, and vocational education.

Routine Checking of Hearing Aids and External Components of Surgically Implanted Medical Devices

• Highland Free School will ensure that the hearing aids worn in school by children with hearing impairments are functioning properly; and

- The external components of surgically implanted medical devices (e.g., cochlear implants) are functioning properly, except that Highland Free School will not be responsible for any post-surgical maintenance, programming, or replacement of any component, external or internal, of the medical device.

Methods of Ensuring Services

- Highland Free School may use the Medicaid or other public benefits or insurance programs in which a child participates to provide or pay for services required under IDEA, as permitted under the public benefits or insurance program, except that Highland Free School; 1. a) May not require parents to sign up for or enroll in public benefits or insurance programs to receive FAPE; 2. b) May not require parents to incur out-of-pocket expenses such as payment of a deductible or co-pay for services required by IDEA, but may pay the cost that parents otherwise would be required to pay; 3. c) May not use a child's public benefit if that use would: i) Decrease lifetime benefits; ii) Result in the family paying for non-school services that would otherwise be paid for by public benefits; iii) Increase premiums or lead to discontinuation of benefits; or iv) Risk loss of eligibility.
- Highland Free School must notify parents that their refusal to allow access to their public benefits does not relieve the agency of its responsibility to provide all required IDEA services.
- Highland Free School must obtain a one-time written consent from the parent, after providing written notification and before accessing the child's or the parent's public benefits for the first time. The consent must specify: a) The personally identifiable information that may be disclosed; b) The purpose of the disclosure; and c) The agency to which the disclosure may be made.
- Highland Free School must provide a written notification to the child's parents before accessing the child's or parent's public benefits or insurance for the first time and prior to obtaining the one- time parental consent and annually thereafter.

Procedures and Safeguards:



Policies and Procedures



Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Highland Free School receives a request for access.
Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
Parents or eligible students who wish to ask Highland to amend their child's or their education record

should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the [School] to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))

- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

FERPA Notice for Directory Information

NOTE: Highland respects your privacy and tries its best to never publish or give out any personal information without written consent.

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Highland with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Highland may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised Highland to the contrary in accordance with Highland's procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Highland to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the

following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent. **[Note: These laws are Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).]**

If you do not want Highland to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify Highland in writing. Highland has designated the following information as directory information:

- **Student's name**
- **Address**
- **Telephone listing**
- **Electronic mail address**
- **Photograph**
- **Date and place of birth**
- **Dates of attendance**
- **Grade level**
- **The most recent educational agency or institution attended**
- **Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user’s identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user**

FOOTNOTES: 1. These laws are: Section 9528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).

Homeless Student Policy

Children who are determined homeless are provided with certain rights in schools that ensure an equal opportunity for education. The term “homeless children and youth” means individuals who lack a fixed regular and adequate nighttime residence (A); and (B) includes— (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement; (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and (iv) migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii). The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitle B—Education for Homeless Children and Youth), reauthorized in 2015, ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness.

McKinney-Vento Regulations All students are required to fill out a McKinney-Vento form upon enrollment (**Federal and State Required Info** form). If your living arrangement is both temporary and the result of economic hardship, you may qualify for services under the McKinney-Vento Act. The purpose of this law is to provide academic stability for students of families in transition. You may want to talk with our Homeless Education Liaison if your family’s temporary living arrangement is one of the following:

- You are living with friends or relatives, or moving from place to place because you cannot currently afford your own housing.
- You are living in a shelter or a motel.
- You are living in housing without water or electricity.
- You are living in a place not considered traditional housing, such as a car or a campground.

A student may also qualify as an “unaccompanied youth” if he or she is living with someone who is not a parent or guardian, or if he or she is moving from place to place without parent or guardian. Children who qualify under McKinney-Vento have the right to

- Attend the school they were attending when their family was forced to move to a temporary address because of economic hardship, even if that school is in another school district. The choice must be a reasonable one that is in the best interest of the children involved.
- Contact the Homeless Education Liaison if you are not sure.
- Stay in this school for the duration of the school year if their families are forced to move to another temporary address because of economic hardship.
- Receive assistance with transportation to attend school while they are in temporary housing
- Start school immediately while people at the school help families obtain school and immunization records or other documents necessary for enrollment.
- Enroll in school without having a permanent address.
- Participate in the same programs and services that other students participate in.
- Receive any applicable Title I service

To remove educational barriers for children and youths experiencing homelessness, Highland Free School will provide a bus pass to students in need of transportation assistance. If transportation is needed, please speak with the director or make a written request. Highland will purchase a bus pass within 5 school days of request.

See the Title I handbook for policies and procedures.



School Prayer Policy (as mandated by the Federal Government)

Prayer During Non-Instructional Time: Students may pray when not engaged in school activities or instruction, subject to the same rules designed to prevent material disruption of the educational program that are applied to other privately initiated expressive activities. Students also may read from religious materials; say a prayer or blessing before meals; and engage in worship or study religious materials with fellow students during non-instructional time (such as recess or the lunch hour) to the same extent that they may engage in nonreligious activities. Although school authorities may impose rules of order and pedagogical restrictions on student activities, they may not discriminate against student prayer or religious perspectives in applying such rules and restrictions.

Organized Prayer Groups and Activities: Students may organize prayer groups and religious clubs to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other noncurricular student activity groups. Such groups must be given the same access to school facilities for assembling as is given to other noncurricular groups, without discrimination because of

the groups' religious character or perspective. School officials should neither encourage nor discourage participation in student-run activities based upon the activities' religious character or perspective. Schools may take reasonable steps to ensure that students are not pressured to participate (or not to participate) in such religious activities. School authorities possess substantial discretion concerning whether to permit the use of school media for student advertising or announcements regarding noncurricular activities. However, where student groups that meet for nonreligious activities are permitted to advertise or announce their meetings—for example, by advertising in a student newspaper, making announcements on a student activities bulletin board or public address system, or handing out leaflets—school authorities may not discriminate against groups that meet to engage in religious expression such as prayer. School authorities may choose to issue appropriate, neutral disclaimers of the school's sponsorship or approval of noncurricular groups and events.

Teachers, Administrators, and other School Employees: When acting in their official capacities as representatives of the state, teachers, school administrators, and other school employees are prohibited by the Establishment Clause from encouraging or discouraging prayer, and from actively participating in such activity with students. Teachers may, however, take part in religious activities where the overall context makes clear that they are not participating in their official capacities. Before school or during breaks, for instance, teachers may meet with other teachers for prayer or religious study to the same extent that they may engage in other conversation or nonreligious activities. School employees may also engage in private religious expression or brief personal religious observance during such times, subject to the same neutral rules the school applies to other private conduct by its employees. Employees engaging in such expression or observance may not, however, compel, coerce, persuade, or encourage students to join in the employee's prayer or other religious activity, and a school may take reasonable measures to ensure that students are not pressured or encouraged to join in the private prayer of their teachers or coaches. School employees may participate in their personal capacities in privately sponsored baccalaureate ceremonies or similar events.

Moments of Silence: If a school has a "moment of silence" or other quiet periods during the school day, students are free to pray silently, or not to pray, during these periods of time. Teachers and other school employees may not require or encourage students to pray, or discourage them from praying, during such time periods.

Accommodation of Prayer During Instructional Time: Students may engage in prayer or religious expression during instructional time to the same degree they may engage in nonreligious private expression during such time. Students may, for example, bow their heads and pray to themselves before taking a test. It has long been established that schools have the discretion to dismiss students to off-premises religious instruction, provided that schools do not encourage or discourage participation in such instruction or penalize students for attending or not attending. Similarly, schools may excuse students from class to remove a significant burden on their religious exercise, where doing so would not impose material burdens on other students. For example, it would be lawful for schools to excuse Muslim students briefly from class to enable them to fulfill their religious obligations to pray during Ramadan. Where school officials have a practice of excusing students from class on the basis of parents' requests for accommodation of nonreligious needs, religiously motivated requests for excusal may not be accorded less favorable treatment. In addition, in some circumstances, based on federal or state constitutional law or pursuant to state statutes, schools may be required to make accommodations that relieve substantial burdens on students' religious exercise. Schools officials are therefore encouraged to consult with their attorneys regarding such obligations.

Religious Expression and Prayer in Class Assignments: Students may express their beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of their submissions. Such home and classroom work should be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the school. Thus, if a teacher's assignment involves writing a poem, the work of a student who submits a poem in the form of a prayer (for example, a psalm) should be judged on the basis of academic standards (such as literary quality) and neither penalized nor rewarded on account of its religious content.

Student Assemblies and Extracurricular Events: Student speakers at school assemblies and noncurricular activities such as sporting events may not be selected on a basis that either favors or disfavors religious perspectives. Where a student speaker is selected on the basis of genuinely content-neutral, evenhanded criteria, and the school does not determine or have control over the content of the student's speech, the expression is not reasonably attributed to the

school and therefore may not be restricted because of its religious content (or content opposing religion) and may include prayer. In these circumstances, school officials may choose to make appropriate, neutral disclaimers to clarify that such speech (whether religious or nonreligious) is the speaker's and not the school's speech. By contrast, where school officials determine or have control over the content of what is expressed, such speech is attributable to the school and may not include prayer or content promoting (or opposing) religion.

Prayer at Graduation & Baccalaureate Ceremonies: Highland does not have Graduation or Baccalaureate ceremonies.

Transportation Plan to Ensure School Stability for Students in Foster Care

Duration of Transportation

If transportation to school of origin is required in order to maintain school stability for students in foster care, [Highland Free School], in collaboration with the local child welfare agency (CWA), will ensure that said transportation will be provided for the duration of the child(ren)'s time in foster care.

How Transportation Will Be Provided, Arranged, and Funded

1. Interim transportation should be addressed to ensure no delays for the student in foster care while transportation is being worked out between the parties. Describe how this LEA will promptly provide, arrange, and fund interim transportation for children in foster care as they collaborate with the CWA to institute a child's long term transportation plan (*be sure to include the duration of transportation, method of transportation, etc*): [If it is determined by the CWA and Highland that it is in the student's best interest to remain at the school of origin, within 5 days of the determination, Highland will, in collaboration with the CWA, determine the most cost effective method of transportation which may include reimbursement for mileage for foster parent(s), relative, or other adult or will provide the youth or caretaker with bus passes or other public transportation vouchers as long as the placement is in the best interest of the child or until the end of the school year.]
2. Describe how this LEA will examine existing transportation options available for students in foster care (*i.e. transportation covered by other LEA programs, state contracts, etc.*): [Since Highland is a small school and does not have existing transportation options, we will investigate options available to fit the needs of the individual student in their situation (including city bus, state contracts, family reimbursements, etc.)]
3. Describe how this LEA will ensure that children in foster care will promptly receive transportation to their school of origin in a cost effective manner & in accordance with section 475(4)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 675 (4)(A)) (*be sure to include no or low cost options to pursue, which occurrences this LEA will agree to pay for the cost of transportation, which occurrences this LEA will pursue reimbursement from the local CWA for the cost of transportation, which occurrences this LEA will seek a cost sharing agreement with the local CWA for the cost of transportation, methods of transportation to be used and when such methods would be used, procedures to ensure student safety, etc.*): [Transportation will be provided]

Extended Day & Summer Program

Description of Services/Activities: During the hours of operation, teachers will care for and monitor elementary school-aged students (aged 5-12). Activities will include tutoring, homework help, arts and crafts, the use of computers and other technology, using the playground, playing board games, etc.

School Info: Highland Free School • 510 South Highland Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85719 • (520) 623-0104

Director: Teresa Rodriguez (Assistant Director: Kelly Murphy)

Parent Responsibilities and Access: Parents have access to facility premises where the parent's enrolled child is receiving child care services. Parents are responsible for signing their child(ren) in and out each day. Only people listed on the emergency forms will be allowed to pick up children. If you would like someone other than the people listed to pick up your child, you must make arrangements with the school prior to the pick-up.

Enrollment and Disenrollment: In order to enroll in the extended day or summer programs, parents must

*fill out an enrollment sheet

*fill out a blue emergency card

*provide proof of up-to-date immunization records

*provide a valid copy of a birth certificate or passport

A verbal or written request is required in order to dis-enroll your child from the program(s).

Discipline Guidelines and Methods: Highland Free School uses the logical and natural consequences philosophy when disciplining students. The program is outlined in the S.T.E.P. Program (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting). As a result of disciplinary concerns, Highland reserves the right to dis-enroll a child at any time.

Transportation Procedures: Students in the extended day and summer programs do not take field trips requiring transportation. The school does not provide any transportation. We may take occasional walking trips in the neighborhood. A permission slip must be signed by a legal guardian prior to the trip.

Refund Policy: Overpayments will be applied to the next month's tuition. Any refunds will be negotiated with the director.

Pesticides: Pesticides will not be applied during normal facility hours of operation. Pesticides are applied as necessary to prevent the immediate harm that may be caused by fire ants or other infestations of stinging/harmful insects. If pesticides will be applied, a notice will be posted 48 hours in advance.

Medication Administration Procedures: No medication can be administered by Highland's Staff without a medical consent form signed by the student's legal guardian.

Inspection Reports: Reports from the following departments are available for review in the director's office: Arizona Department of Health Services, Tucson City Fire Department and Arizona State Fire Marshal.

Emergency Procedures: The school has first aid kits available to staff. There will be at least one staff member with current first aid and infant/child CPR certification. If a medical emergency occurs, staff will call 911 and then contact the parents. Additional emergency information is posted near the emergency exits. The facility will maintain a log of accident, injury, emergency, illness, infestation and absence.

Absent Day Policy: *Highland does not charge for day when child is not in attendance.*

Schedule, Charges and Fees for the 2024-2025 School Year:

Extended Day Schedule of Hours: morning: 7:30am-8:10am afternoon: 3:00pm-4:30pm

Refer to the current school calendar for school closure dates.

Charges and Fees: Daily extended-day: \$10 • Half Day (kinder): \$25

The Arizona Department of Health Services regulates Highland Free School. Highland carries a blanket liability insurance, as required by D.H.S. Insurance and inspection reports are on site and available upon request.

*Arizona Department of Health Services Contact Information: 400 West Congress, Suite 100 Tucson, Arizona 85701
General and Public Information: (520) 628-6540; Fax: (602) 628-6537*

Extended Day Empower Standards

Highland Free School's Extended Day Program is an Arizona Department of Health Services Empower Program facility. In general, Empower facilities follow 10 basic healthy living standards.

Standard 1: *Provide at least 60 minutes of daily physical activity and do not allow more than 60 minutes of sedentary activity at a time, or more than three hours of screen time per week.*

We at Highland are committed to our children's health. We encourage all children to participate in a variety of physical activity opportunities that are appropriate for their age, that are fun, and that offer variety. If children are inactive for long periods of time they can be at risk for problems associated with being overweight. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will follow the guidelines below:

- Staff will include up to 30 minutes of free-play and or teacher-led activity per day in curriculum for physical activity.
- Staff will encourage moderate and vigorous levels of physical activity.
- Screen time will be limited to three hours or fewer per week
- Sedentary time will be limited to fewer than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping. Information on screen time (in English and Spanish) will be made available to families at least once per year.

Information on screen time (in English and Spanish) will be made available to families at least once per year.

Standard 2: *Practice "sun safety."*

Highland is committed to our children's health and protecting children from the sun's rays during outdoor activities. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

- Staff will follow the age-specific recommendations, as described in Table 1 under the Sun Safety Standard, when planning outdoor activities.
- Staff is encouraged to protect the children's skin (and their own) by:
 - Using sunscreen, lip balm, hats, sunglasses, light clothing and shade.
 - Limiting exposure during peak UV times, from 10 am to 4 pm.
 - Regularly checking the UV Index to monitor the intensity of the sun's rays and plan for outdoor activities accordingly.

Information on sun safety (in English and Spanish) will be available to families at least once per year.

Standard 3: *Provide a breastfeeding-friendly environment.*

We at Highland are committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers and will respect a mother's decision to continue to breastfeed her child. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere that encourages mothers to initiate and continue to breastfeed, even after returning to school or work.
- Provide a designated place for mothers to breastfeed their child on site.
- Provide a refrigerator for storage of expressed breast milk.

Information on breastfeeding (in English and Spanish) will be available to families at least once per year

Standard 4: *Determine whether the site is eligible for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and participate if eligible.*

We at Highland are committed to the health of all of our children. CACFP supports child care facilities by making child care more affordable for many low-income families while promoting good eating habits. Eligibility for CACFP is determined by federal standards based on family income within established geographic boundaries. Our facility will check and document eligibility for CACFP. At this time, Highland does not participate in the CACFP. If you would like additional information regarding eligible family enrollment, please contact CACFP at 1-800-352-4558.

Standard 5: *Limit serving fruit juice to no more than two times per week.*

Highland is committed to supporting your child in establishing lifelong healthy eating and drinking habits. Too much juice may be linked to weight problems and is associated with tooth decay and decreased appetite for other nutritious foods. Too much juice may also take the place of more nutritious beverages such as fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk or water. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

- Limit 100% fruit juice with no added sugar to no more than two times per week for all children one year and older.

- Only 4-6 ounces shall be served at one time. Fruit juice shall only be served with meals and snacks and not continuously throughout the day.
 - Water shall be used as the first choice for thirst and will be offered throughout the day.
- Information on fruit juice (in English and Spanish) will be made available to families at least once per year.

Standard 6: *Serve meals family-style and do not use food as a reward.*

Highland is committed to supporting your child in establishing lifelong habits of healthy eating patterns. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

- Serve meals family-style whenever possible to support children in learning to serve themselves and develop healthy relationships with food.
- Our role as caregivers is to provide nourishing food. The child's role is to decide whether and how much to eat. We will never force a child to eat.
- Model behaviors for healthy eating and positive body image in the presence of children by having staff members recognize the important role adults play as role models for children as they learn to live healthy lives.

Healthy eating handouts (in English and Spanish) will be made available for the families at least once per year.

Standard 7: *Provide monthly oral healthcare education or implement a toothbrushing program.*

Highland is committed to protecting the health and safety of our students and staff in regards to tooth decay, which is an infectious disease and a serious problem among young children in Arizona. Our facility recognizes that we play an important role in preventing tooth decay and in educating children, their families and staff on tooth decay prevention. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will:

- Provide oral health education once a month.
- Guide our staff members on steps they can take to prevent tooth decay according to the age appropriate guidelines in the Empower Guidebook.

Information on tooth decay prevention (in English and Spanish) will be made available to families at least once per year.

Standard 8: *Ensure that staff members receive three hours of training annually on Empower topics.*

Highland is committed to furthering staff knowledge on the Empower Program and Empower topic areas including: physical activity, nutrition, oral health and tobacco. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will make sure that our staff receives or attends three hours of training annually on age-appropriate topics pertaining to physical activity, nutrition, oral health and tobacco education. All training shall be documented and records will be readily available.

Standard 9: *Tobacco and Nicotine Free*

Highland is committed to supporting the efforts of the Arizona Smokers' Helpline (ASHLine) to help staff and parents quit tobacco. In keeping with this philosophy and to protect the health of our children, their families and our staff, our facility will promote the ASHLine information on the dangers of second and third-hand smoke by placing them in a visible spot at least once per year so parents and staff can see them. We will also refer parents, when possible, to ASHLine. Highland is committed to providing a smoke-free environment for children and staff due to acknowledged hazards from exposure to second-hand smoke. In keeping with this philosophy, our facility will notify all employees, families and visitors of the smoke-free policy. Appropriate signage will be posted.

Standard 10: *Social-Emotional Development*

Highland is committed to providing an environment that supports the social and emotional development of children, families, and staff. Staff are trained yearly on social emotional topics. Staff are encouraged to build meaningful relationships with children, families, and co-workers. There is regular communication between staff and families. Our physical environment is designed around children's interests and abilities. Our daily schedule balances individual, small group and large group experiences. Transitions and wait times are minimized. Families are provided with information to better understand social emotional development concepts.



Highland Free School's 2024-2025 School Calendar

August 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

October 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

November 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

January 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

March 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

April 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

	Half Day
	School Closed/ Holidays
	School Closed- Teacher Planning

Calendar Template by calendarlabs.com

August 8 & 9 First days of School (Half Days)
 September 2..... Labor Day (School Closed)
 October 9..... Half Day
 October 10-11..... School Closed- Fall Break
 November 11..... Veterans Day (School Closed)
 November 15 Half Day for Parent/Teacher Conferences
 November 20 - 22.... Thanksgiving Break (School Closed)
 Dec. 20 - Jan. 5..... Winter Recess (School Closed)
 January 20..... Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (School Closed)
 February 20 & 21..... Rodeo Vacation (School Closed)
 February 28..... Half Day for Parent/Teacher Conferences
 March 10-14..... School Closed- Spring Break
 March 31-April 11... State Testing [tentative]
 April 18..... School Closed
 May 2 Half Day (Teacher in-service)
 May 23..... Half Day- Last Day of School for Students