

LaGrange Highlands District 106

Superintendent's Newsletter -- Dr. Patricia Viniard

Information Regarding School Cancellations

As you know, inclement weather (e.g., snow, ice, frigid temperatures, or a combination of these) may lead to a decision to cancel school. The superintendents from the six feeder elementary districts and LTHS work together with the goal of making a unified decision that is in the best interest of students, families, and staff members. The decision will be made as early as possible—the evening before, if possible, or early in the morning—and you will be notified via the district's Emergency Notification System. In addition, we provide the cancellation information to the area's Emergency Closing Center website.

Here's hoping for a mild winter!



Highlands' Parents Encouraged to Take "5Essentials Survey"!

DID YOU KNOW...

- Illinois school districts are required to administer a climate survey—the *5Essentials Survey*—at least every two years. School districts, however, have the option of giving the survey every year, and this is what we have done at Highlands. We value and use the information to celebrate successes and identify areas for possible improvement and growth!
- Teachers and students in grades 6+ are required to take the survey. Although the parent portion of the survey is optional for districts, at Highlands we highly value parent input. Therefore, this year we again invite and encourage all parents to participate in the survey!
- This year's survey window, set by the Illinois State Board of Education, is earlier than it was in previous years. The window is open now and will close on January 16.
- **IMPORTANT:** *5Essentials* is a school survey, not a district survey. Therefore, if you have a child(ren) in both the Elementary and Middle School, it is important you take the survey twice. (Please!!!)
- All responses are anonymous, and we receive the overall compiled results.
- To take the survey:
 - Log on at: <https://survey.5-essentials.org/Illinois/survey/parent/login/>
 - There is a box in which to enter the County. Type in Cook.
 - There is a box in which to enter the School. Type in Highlands Elementary or Highlands Middle School.
 - You can then click the "Log In" button and begin the survey.
 - Please take the survey twice if you have a child(ren) in both schools.
- **Thank you** for taking the survey(s) and for your support of Highlands!

December/January "Quick Takes"

December 8

Gr. 6-8 Band & Orchestra Concert (7:00 PM)

December 13

Gr. 4-5 Band & Orchestra Concert (7:00 PM)

December 14

Late Start for Students

December 20

School Board Meeting (7:00 PM)

December 21

Gr. 6 Musical (7:00 PM)

December 23 – January 8

Winter Break; No School

January 9

Students Return to School

January 14

Variety Show

January 16

NO SCHOOL – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day & the "5Essentials Survey" window closes

January 17

School Board Meeting (7:00 PM)

Saturday, January 21 (3-5:00 PM)

Foundation's Family Fun at Highlands with "Chili Cook Off & Bingo." For info and tickets: <http://district106-educationalfoundation.com>

January 26

Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences

January 27

NO SCHOOL—Teacher Institute Day



NEW "TEACHING AND LEARNING" PAGE ADDED TO DISTRICT WEBSITE!

From Mrs. Ali Beiermeister (Director of Teaching and Learning)

The district website has been updated so there is now a Teaching & Learning page! The Teaching & Learning page can be found under the website's "Our Schools" tab. On this new page you will find a State Report Card for the district, as well as one for each school. These Report Cards include a great deal of data—including our PARCC data along with results from the *5Essentials Survey*. We have also posted information about district assessments and resources on sexual abuse and suicide prevention. Throughout this year, we will be adding resources to allow you to better understand assessment results, as well as obtain information about the student opportunities available through the West Suburban Consortium of Academic Excellence. We hope you find the Teaching & Learning page informative and useful!



JOIN "AMAZON SMILE" TO SUPPORT HIGHLANDS!



Highlands is extremely fortunate to have two amazing and dedicated parent volunteer groups—the PTC and the Educational Foundation—working on behalf of our students and staff. Every penny they raise goes right back into our schools through equipment, technology, books, and wonderful opportunities for Highlands' students. **If you've been looking for an easy, Win-Win way in which to support the PTC, look no further:**

When you shop on Amazon, start at **Amazon Smiles**. When you use **Amazon Smiles**, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping—with the added satisfaction of knowing that 0.5% of the purchase price is donated back to the PTC to benefit the Highlands' schools! The link is: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-4163721>

Thank you for supporting the PTC so they can support the Highlands!

Please Support the Highlands PTC!

<http://xbox.district06.net/html/modules.php?name=PTC>

Please Support the Highlands Educational Foundation!

<http://district06-educationalfoundation.com>

As 2016 winds down and we prepare for a new year, it is a good time to reflect on what we are thankful for and take pride in. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to work and serve on behalf of the Highlands' community—our students, staff, and parents are the most engaged and caring you will find **anywhere**. The 3 ½ years since I joined the Highlands' community have passed quickly, and they have been very busy and highly productive. I have been privileged to be part of several projects and initiatives which have increased opportunities for Highlands' students. **A few noteworthy examples include:** We have implemented full-day kindergarten... Worked through an area academic consortium to expand enrichment opportunities, such as a Science Fair at Brookfield Zoo and an Art Fair at Cheney Mansion... Created a School-Community Garden... Partnered with Illinois Math and Science Academy to bring "Fusion," a STEM enrichment program, to students... Brought two LADSE (LaGrange Area Department of Special Education) classes to Highlands... Started a "Project Lead the Way" (science, technology, engineering, and math) program in Middle School... Implemented a Co-Teaching model to better support the needs of students with IEPs... Increased students' access to technology at the elementary level... Expanded the Early Childhood Program and made it a blended program... Added specialized support for students who are English Language Learners... Analyzed and greatly enhanced our safety and security practices and procedures... And more!

Thank you for supporting your child(ren) **AND** the Highlands' school community—HERE'S TO A SUCCESSFUL AND PRODUCTIVE NEW YEAR!

Wishing you a joyful and healthy holiday season, Dr. Patricia Viniard