

# LaGrange Highlands District 106

## Superintendent's Newsletter -- Dr. Patricia Viniard

*In the spirit of Thanksgiving: Thank you so much for the privilege of working with and on behalf of the incredible Highlands' school community. I do not take this wonderful opportunity for granted!*

*Wishing you and your family  
a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday!*



### Highlands' PARCC Data Show Growth in All Areas!

In the last superintendent's newsletter, district data for the MAP assessment, Local Writing assessment, and the 5Essentials Survey (taken by teachers, students in grades 6-8, and parents) were reported. At the time that newsletter was distributed, we had not yet received our PARCC data, so I wanted to share now. PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) is the state-required assessment that students in grades 3-8 take each spring in the areas of English Language Arts and Math.

**I am pleased to report the Highlands' 2017 results were excellent.** Among the highlights:

\* From 2016 to 2017, the district-wide percentage of Highlands' students who Met or Exceeded state standards on PARCC assessments increased over 4% to **71%**!

\* 71% of Highlands' Middle School students Met or Exceeded standards in 2017, a 2% increase from the previous year!

\* 72% of Highlands' Elementary School students Met or Exceeded standards, an 8% increase from 2016 and a 14% increase from 2015!

\* For surrounding and comparable suburban districts (a total of 13), only four districts, including Highlands, had over 70% of students who Met or Exceeded state standards!

\* Highlands saw a significant increase in the achievement of three demographic groups:

1. From 2016 to 2017, Low Income Students who Met or Exceeded state standards increased from 34% to 44%!

2. From 2016 to 2017, the students receiving English Language services who Met or Exceeded state standards increased from 20% to 32%!

3. From 2016 to 2017, Students with Disabilities who Met or Exceeded state standards increased from 21% to 32%!

\* Related to #3 above: At Highlands, over 84% of Students with Disabilities receive their instruction inside the general education classroom **at least 80% of the school day!** For our peer districts, that number is 60% and the state average is just 53%.

As we continue to collaborate on behalf of every child at Highlands, it is important we take a moment to pause, reflect, and congratulate the Highlands' community—students, staff, parents, and families—for the combined efforts that realized these exceptional results!

### November/December "Quick Takes"

**November 22, 23, and 24**

*Thanksgiving Holiday Break – Enjoy!*

**November 28 -- 7:00 p.m.**

*LTHS Future Freshman Night at LTHS South*

**November 29 -- 9:05 a.m.**

*Late Start Day for Students*

**December 7 -- 7:00 p.m.**

*MS Band and Orchestra Concert*

**December 12 -- 7:00 p.m.**

*Gr. 4-5 Band and Orchestra Concert*

**December 13 -- 9:05 a.m.**

*Late Start Day for Students*

**December 19 -- 7:00 p.m.**

*Board of Education Meeting*

**December 19 -- 7:00 p.m.**

*6<sup>th</sup> Grade Musical*

**December 22 to January 7**

*Winter Break – Enjoy!*

*"Excellence is not a destination.  
It is a continuous journey that never ends."  
Brian Tracy*



## QUEST FOOD SERVICE UPDATE

In the previous Superintendent's Newsletter, there was an article about the district's lunch program. In their first two years at Highlands, our lunch provider, Quest Food Service, did not experience sales as anticipated. As noted in the previous article, **if participation does not increase, it will not be in Quest's best interest to keep our district as a client.**

After analyzing the parent survey feedback you provided, Mr. Mike Duback, Director of Operations, worked with Quest to expand menu options and offer "a la carte" side items. As of the end of October, sales are up and Quest is trending at a break-even point. **We continue to encourage you to have your child try Quest lunches by ordering online:** Click on the "School Life" link on district website, then click on "Hot Lunch." Thank you for your support, and we will provide additional updates in future newsletters!



HAVE YOU CONNECTED WITH HIGHLANDS YET ON SOCIAL MEDIA? STAY IN BETTER TOUCH (REMINDERS, SHOUT OUTS, CELEBRATIONS, SPECIAL MOMENTS, AND MORE) BY CONNECTING WITH US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER!



## WINTER WEATHER – SCHOOL CANCELLATION OR DELAYED START OF SCHOOL DAY

As you know, inclement weather (e.g., snow, ice, frigid temperatures, or a combination of these) may lead to a decision to cancel school **or** delay the start of the school day. 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 feasible—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 is hoping for a mild winter!



### *Study Regarding Teens, Screen Time, and Depression*

Researchers found nearly half of teens who experienced 5+ hours of screen time daily, especially with phones and tablets, experienced prolonged periods of hopelessness/sadness or thoughts of suicide. That rate is nearly double that of teens who spent fewer than an hour in front a screen. The rate for girls was particularly alarming. A possible link: Girls spend more time on social media than boys. Significant screen time affects mood: When teens stare at screens more than 1-2 hours, the negative effects creep in. The study found **reduced depression and suicide** was linked to sports/exercise and talking to real people in real life (not screen, social media, or text communication)!

**What informational articles would YOU like to see in upcoming Superintendents' Newsletters?**  
**If there are topics and/or aspects of our district you would like to learn more about, please email me at [pviniard@district106.net](mailto:pviniard@district106.net)!**

*With Highlands' Pride,  
Dr. Patricia Viniard*