



The Highland HIGHLIGHT

ISSUE 1 ■ OCTOBER 2011

Published by Highland Local Schools to promote our students, staff and programs.

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MEET:
TOMMY TURK
Kindergarten, Hinckley Elementary

WE DID IT AGAIN!

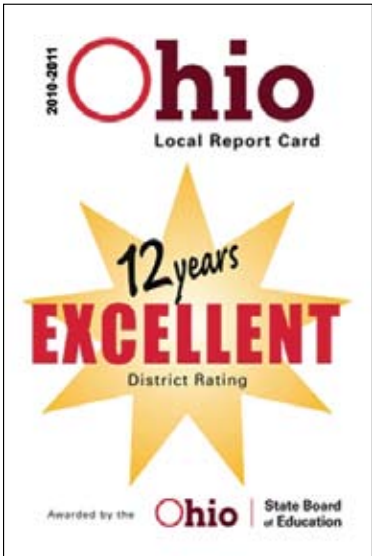
12 years and counting...

Highland Local School District has again been rated "Excellent" by the Ohio Department of Education for the 2010-11 school year. This marks the 12th consecutive year that Highland has earned an Excellent rating.

"This rating is reflective of our mission of providing the highest educational experiences for our students in a personal learning environment," stated Superintendent Catherine Aukerman. "The legacy of excellence continues at Highland. We have met 100 percent of our state indicators (26 out of 26), met Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) as a District for all of our subgroups,

and our Performance Index Score is higher than it has ever been at 105.4." Last year's score was 104.6. This score places Highland Schools among top-performing districts in the State. The Performance Index, which ranges from 0 to 120, is a weighted average that is determined by considering the level of achievement of every student on every State achievement test taken throughout the 2010-11 school year.

"We set the bar very high at Highland. We continue to improve our student performance each year, which demonstrates our ability to provide a superior level of learning for our students. I am confident that our students will continue to perform at even higher levels in the years to come," said Mrs. Aukerman.



2010-11 RESULTS

Performance Index
(120 possible)

HHS:	108.6
HMS:	104.4
Granger:	103.5
Hinckley:	102.7
Sharon:	106.6
District:	105.4

The District and each individual school received an overall rating of EXCELLENT by the State Department of Education. Each school also met all of the state indicators, as well as the Adequate Yearly Progress indicator.



WE ARE HIGHLAND! Pictured from left are Highland Middle School students Ryan Frederick, Katie Corvo, Marcie Zywicka, Kristinna Jerik, Audrey Anich and Hunter Levine.

MAKING HEADLINES...

FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS AT HHS



Highland Local School District and Highland High School welcome our two newest exchange students this year. Please extend a warm Highland welcome to **Michelle Neuber from Gotha, Germany, who is residing with Susan Schmidt;** and **Chen Cui from Shenzhen, China, who is residing with Christopher & Marcia Karwowski.**

SCHOOLS WIN GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS

Congratulations to Highland elementary students who participated in the Summer Reading Celebration program at the Highland Library. It was a record year for the program and for Highland Schools, which had 588 students involved. Granger, Hinckley and Sharon elementary schools each won a copy of the *Guinness Book of Records* for their school library for having 25% or more of their students register for the summer program. Granger and Sharon each had 42%, while Hinckley was very close behind with 41%. Way to read, kids!

MRS. NERLICH IS SWCD TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Kristine Nerlich, science teacher at Highland High School, who has been named the 2011 Medina County Soil and Water Conservation Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Nerlich's award stems from her interest and work in reviving the land lab, which is located on the north side of the current high school. She has inspired student involvement in the project, and the HHS Science Club is in full swing in beginning their work. In addition, two Eagle Scout projects are a part of the renovation project as well. Mrs. Nerlich will be honored by the Medina County SWCD at their annual dinner meeting on October 22.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dr. Norman Christopher, M.D. Mike Houska
Robert Kelly Dan Petek Diane Thomas

CONTACT US

Administration Office 330-239-1901
3880 Ridge Road, Medina, Ohio 44256

100 HINCKLEY STUDENTS EARN FITNESS AWARDS

For the 2010-11 school year, Hinckley Elementary School had 98 of its 445 students earn fitness awards; 34 of those earned the Presidential Physical Fitness Award, while another 64 achieved National Fitness Award status. Students had to take part in a number of physical fitness tests measuring strength, endurance and flexibility in order to qualify for the awards. These tests include the shuttle run, pull-ups, flexed-arm hang, curl-ups, sit and reach and the mile run. Congratulations to the following Presidential Physical Fitness Award winners: **Kyrsten LeMassena, Juliana Hadchiti, Dario Prescenzi, Brock Bisler, Mike Mason, Sarah Cooper, Isabella Delfino, Emily Beehn, Sabrina Hartman, Lauren Cifranic, Lucas Mason, Jordan Domasky, Hailey Csizmadia, Emily Beal, Derek Morinello, Taylor Levine, Madeline Lutzko, Brianne Jenkins, Sam Zeleznik, Maria Vitko, Hunter Theus, Cassidy Angus, Quade Mainzer, Eli Fragnoli, Joseph Borsuk, Isabella Adams, Olivia Sauer, Alicia Porvasnik, Alexa Sposit, Alexandra Mazzaro, Cecilia Mainzer, Jackson Carriero, Frank Zmlen and Peyton Chapman.** Special recognition goes to **Frank Zmlen** who joins an elite group of 6th-year Presidential Fitness Award winners. Congratulations, Frank, on this outstanding accomplishment!

SCHOOLS WIN FOOD AWARDS

Each year, the Medina County Board of Health recognizes food service operations and retail food establishments within Medina County that demonstrate exemplary compliance with the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code. The awards are given in three categories: Excellence, Compliance and Honorable Mention. To receive an Excellence Award, food service operations and retail food establishments cannot have any violations during any inspection conducted by the Health Department during the previous licensing year. Operations having no "critical" violations during any unannounced inspections conducted by the Health Department during the previous licensing year are eligible for the Compliance Award. Lastly, to be eligible for the Honorable Mention Award, operations must have no critical violations during at least one inspection during the previous licensing period. Critical violations include, but are not limited to: food quality; food preparation and cooking/holding temperatures; employee practices and hygiene; and safe water supply.

EXCELLENCE AWARDS:

Highland High School; Sharon Elementary School

COMPLIANCE AWARDS:

Granger Elementary School; Highland Middle School

HONORABLE MENTION:

Hinckley Elementary

WELCOME NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Congratulations and welcome to the following staff members who are new to Highland Schools this year!

HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL

- Dana Addis, Principal
- Kevin Bowers, Intervention Specialist
- Marianna Hardy, English/Drama
- Darla Miller, Spanish
- Doug Lowe, Custodian
- Jean Meyer, Cook
- Molly Ryan, Psychologist

HIGHLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Hallie Myers, Intervention Specialist
- Linda Pavlick, Cook

GRANGER ELEMENTARY

- Jane Back, Reading Tutor

HINCKLEY ELEMENTARY

- Stephanie Rambert, IE Tutor
- Erica Loomis, Cook

SHARON ELEMENTARY

- Trevor Armstrong, Intervention Specialist

DISTRICT-WIDE

- Deb Yorko, Interim Director of Special Education
- Carrie Kalina, Speech Pathologist
- Deb Allen, Gifted Coordinator

Kindergarten students ready to learn, succeed

Starting school is such an exciting time, especially for kindergarten students. It can also be a bit intimidating, but at Highland Local Schools, we welcome them with open arms and make them feel right at home! Kindergarten orientation was held August 24-25 and Highland's three elementary schools welcomed nearly 185 students this year. Teachers prepared a multitude of activities to help them get acquainted with the school building, teachers and staff. Students had a great time and showed that they are willing and eager to grow and learn!



Above, Lisa Skinner helps new Sharon kindergarten student Heidi Zarkovacki, while (at left), Marcy Hughes offers a hand to Jet Weakland, also a new Sharon student.

Mattress sale fundraiser Oct. 8-9

The Highland Speech and Debate Team will hold a Mattress Sale Fundraiser from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, October 8 and Sunday, October 9 in the Highland High School Gymnasium. Mattresses will be available at 40% to 60% off of retail prices. All sizes and name brands will be available with factory warranties. Pillowtop, orthopedic and memory foam. Setup and delivery is available. Cash, checks and credit cards will be accepted. Proceeds from the sale to benefit the Highland Speech and Debate Team.

Cook-off is all about the chili

The Highland High School Art Club will host its annual Chili Cook-Off at 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 27 at the high school to raise money for the Art Scholarship Fund. Enter your favorite chili dish and you may be crowned Chili Cook-Off Champion! Anyone may enter and all are welcome to attend. Tickets are \$5 per person and includes all you can eat chili, plus cornbread and desserts (donated by students). Handmade ceramic bowls will be on sale for \$10, that price includes the meal. Student artwork will be on display and some items will be for sale. Tickets can be purchased at the door or from any Art Club member. For more information, please contact Bonnie Kubilus at 330-239-1901, ext. 5251 or at bkubilus@highlandschools.org.

Career fair is Oct. 12

Attention all Highland High School students: You and your parents are invited to attend the 2011 Medina County College/Trade/Tech and Career Fair from 6:30-8 p.m. on Wednesday, October 12 at the Medina County Community Center, located at 735 Lafayette Road, Medina (on the Medina County Fairgrounds). The fair attracts more than 100 colleges and career-enhancing organizations from Ohio and nearby states.



Hinckley students Isaiah Prediy, Debaj Khaleq and Robel Lemma are all smiles as they tour their new school building.

Gridiron opens season with victory!

3RD ANNUAL PIG ROAST

The Highland Hornets offered no mercy to Holy Name during the season home opener on August 26. The Hornets won 49-14. It was a great night for a game...and the 3rd Annual Pig Roast, hosted by the Athletic Boosters. As in past years, thousands turned out to enjoy food and football! Congratulations to Coach Tom Lombardo, his coaching staff and the Hornets on a strong season start. And also to the Highland Marching Band and Alumni Band for an impressive night of music.



GO HORNETS!





WHO'S GOT SPIRIT?

Hinckley students do!

It was another successful school start at Hinckley Elementary! The school held its annual Spirit Day Assembly on August 26 and welcomed back students in a "cheerful" fashion! Students and staff dressed in Highland spirit wear and had the chance to run through the Hornet Tunnel.

HAPPENINGS



BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

Granger, Hinckley and Sharon Elementary school students took part in the annual School Bus Safety Program in late August and early September. Highland Schools bus drivers spoke with students about bus safety, as well as important rules and procedures to help keep all riders safe. Students learn the correct way to cross in front of the bus when at their designated bus stop, how to enter and exit the bus and the proper behavior when riding the bus.

Above left: Highland bus driver Dave Chatham explains to Granger Elementary 2nd graders how to safely board the bus.

Above right: Highland bus driver Laura Vallen and Granger Elementary teacher Barb Knerem give a helping hand to 2nd grader Isaac Radigan as he learns how to exit the bus during an emergency exercise.

OCTOBER 2011

- **OCTOBER 11:** High School Choir Concert at 7 p.m., HHS Auditorium.
- **OCTOBER 12:** High School Conferences from 4-7:30 p.m.
- **OCTOBER 13:** Inspector Iwannano Assembly at 9 a.m., Hinckley.
- **OCTOBER 14:** NEOEA Day / No School; Red Cross Bloodmobile from 1-7:30 p.m., Highland Middle (West Gym).
- **OCTOBER 17:** Board of Education Meeting at 7 p.m., Hinckley.
- **OCTOBER 18:** Combination Choir & Orchestra Concert from 6:30-8:30 p.m., HHS Auditorium.
- **OCTOBER 21:** End of 1st Grading Period.
- **OCTOBER 26:** All Strings Concert (includes HMS & HHS) at 7 p.m., HHS Auditorium.
- **OCTOBER 27:** High School Art Club Chili Cook-Off, 6 p.m., HHS.
- **OCTOBER 28:** Hinckley PTO Harvest Creature Contest.

NOVEMBER 2011

- **NOVEMBER 1:** Elementary School Conferences, 4-7:30 p.m.
- **NOVEMBER 2:** High School Conferences, 4-7:30 p.m.
- **NOVEMBER 3:** Elementary School Conferences, 4-7:30 p.m.
- **NOVEMBER 4:** Professional Development Day / No School
- **NOVEMBER 5:** Sharon PTO Fall Festival, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **NOVEMBER 8:** Meet the Coaches Night, 7 p.m., HHS.
- **NOVEMBER 9:** National Honor Society Induction at 7 p.m., HHS.
- **NOVEMBER 10:** Elementary School Conferences, 4-7:30 p.m.; Fall Sports Awards Assembly at 6:30 p.m., HHS.
- **NOVEMBER 11:** Veteran's Day observed; HMS Activity Night, 7-9 p.m.
- **NOVEMBER 17:** Hinckley 3rd & 4th Grade Concert at 7 p.m.; Middle School Conferences, 4-7:30 p.m.; HHS Fall Musical Production, 7 p.m.
- **NOVEMBER 18:** Granger 1st Grade Thanksgiving Program at 1:30 p.m.; HHS Fall Musical Production, 7 p.m.
- **NOVEMBER 19:** Highland Foundation Annual Dinner and Auction at 6 p.m., Weymouth Country Club; HHS Fall Musical Production, 7 p.m.
- **NOVEMBER 21:** Board of Education meeting at 7 p.m., HHS.
- **NOVEMBER 23-28:** Thanksgiving Break / No School.

1st Annual Highland Walk-A-Thon

Purpose: To raise \$1,000 to buy toys for children at Akron Children's Hospital

Date: Sunday, October 23, 2011

Time: 1-4 p.m.

Place: Hinckley Reservation

Contact: Kayla Sussner, 330-239-1901
Missy Lyle, 330-239-1901



SB 210 Requires Changes in Food, Beverage Offerings

Ohio Senate Bill 210, known as the Healthy Choices for Healthy Children Act, became law June 18, 2010. The law contains provisions to combat childhood obesity in the next several years by increasing students' physical activity and ensuring access to healthy meals and beverages at school.

Beginning July 1, 2011, the act restricts the sale of certain foods and beverages to students in school districts, community (charter) schools, STEM schools and chartered non-public schools. These restrictions must be observed during the regular school day, as well as during periods before or after the school day in which students are participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities, academic or enrichment programs or latchkey programs.

The restrictions apply only to "a la carte" items, which are individually priced food and beverage items available for sale to students through a school breakfast or lunch program or vending machines located on school property. They do not affect foods and beverages sold in connection with a school-sponsored fundraiser or other event held outside of the regular school day or in conjunction with an interscholastic athletic event. However, any and all fundraisers held throughout the District during school hours must comply with the nutrient requirements.

According to Evelyn Makarek, Highland Food Service Supervisor, the changes are based on calories, total fat, saturated fat, trans fat protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals. For the first year, 20% of snacks need to be within the highest rated category of the nutrients; the second year, 40% have to be in the highest rated category of nutrients. This will enable a gradual change of adjustment for the students.

ALL GRADE LEVELS: We have increased the amount of fresh vegetables and fruits on the daily menu and a la carte selections. Additionally, we will be featuring a breakfast yogurt and oatmeal bar at the high school, along with our bagel bar currently offered on Wednesday. Consequently, with the fresh vegetables, fruits and healthy snack items our food cost has increased by 22-30% per week.

ELEMENTARY: We are now selling snacks that are lower in fat and calories, such as reduced-fat Doritos, Baked Cheetos, Baked Lays and pretzels, as opposed to high-fat, regular Doritos. High-fat cookies (Oreos) have been replaced with graham cracker cookies and other low-fat bakery items. Ice cream has been drastically reduced to a very limited selection based on the nutrient analysis.

MIDDLE SCHOOL: We are now selling smaller size beverages as opposed to the larger 20 ounce bottles. We are no longer offering candy in the vending machine during the school day, but instead selling a larger variety of low-fat snack and cookie items, including reduced-fat Doritos.

HIGH SCHOOL: We are now selling a larger variety of beverages with less than 66 calories per 8 ounce serving and a larger variety of diet, non-carbonated beverages and flavored waters.

If you would like more information or have questions related to the new requirements, please contact Mrs. Makarek at 330-239-1901, ext. 5512.



YOUR MONEY MATTER\$

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE FINANCIAL ADVISORY PANEL

Members of the Financial Advisory Panel:

Granger Township

- Bob Businger
- Richard Pace

Hinckley Township

- Diane Dermody
- Rob Smykal

Montville Township

- Christopher Schaefer

Sharon Township

- Dan Fousek
- Paul Kelly

Administration

- Catherine Aukerman
Superintendent
- Neil Barnes
Treasurer

Online

Each issue of "Your Money Matter\$" is posted on our District web site at highlandschools.org, click on the "Administration" link then click on the "Treasurer" tab.

Feedback

If you have comments to share, questions about Highland's finances or inquiries about District operations, please contact Dawn Marzano, Director of Communications, via email at marzano@highlandschools.org, or 330-239-1901, ext. 1261. You can also contact any Financial Advisory Panel member. We will try to address all questions in the next edition.

DISTRICT HARD HIT BY STATE CUTS

Passage of the \$4,634,300 Emergency Levy by the Highland Community in May will infuse much needed additional operating resources into the Highland Local School District beginning in January 2012. This new levy will provide some financial stability in the near term and ensure that the District can continue to provide its current level of excellent service to students.

Unfortunately, the excitement of this levy passage was somewhat stifled by the realities of the State of Ohio budget passed by the 129th General Assembly through House Bill (HB) 153 as signed into law by Governor Kasich on June 30th. The current State budget spans the two-year period ending June 30, 2013. The recently enacted budget negatively impacts Highland Local Schools in the following areas:

Tangible Personal Property (TPP) Tax Loss Reimbursements – These payments are made to school districts to help offset tax losses incurred as a result of business friendly tax law changes in previous years. During Fiscal Year 2011, Highland Local Schools received \$1,225,547 in TPP tax loss reimbursements from the State. Under previous law, a gradual phase out of these payments was scheduled to begin in Fiscal Year 2014. HB 153 accelerates the phase out of these payments to school districts. Under the new biennial budget the District will receive reduced payments of \$767,011 in Fiscal Year 2012 and \$304,151 in Fiscal Year 2013.

Electric Deregulation Property Tax Replacement – Similar to TPP tax loss reimbursements, these payments are made to school districts to help offset tax losses incurred as a result of regulatory and tax law changes related to utilities in previous years. During Fiscal Year 2011, Highland Local Schools received \$159,232 in electric deregulation property tax loss replacement payments. Under HB 153, Highland Local Schools will receive no further payments through this State funding source.

State Fiscal Stabilization Funds – The previous State budget was balanced through the use of one-time Federal stimulus dollars. These funds are referred to as State Fiscal Stabilization Funds. The funds helped minimize State funding losses to school districts to 1% in Fiscal Year 2010 and 2% in Fiscal Year 2011. During Fiscal Year 2011, Highland Local Schools received \$343,873 through this funding source. The current State budget does not provide for the replacement of these funds.

As a result of the current State budget, Highland will lose \$961,641 in State funding in Fiscal Year 2012 and \$1,424,501 in Fiscal Year 2013 (compared to Fiscal Year 2011 State funding levels). Significant reductions in State funding shift the responsibility of funding schools more and more to the local taxpayer. Moving forward, a balanced approach will be required in which additional revenues are periodically secured by the District, cost containment measures continue, and responsible budget reductions are proactively sought.

The Highland Local School District continues to be a good steward of your tax dollars. In April 2011, the District reached a two-year agreement with the Highland Education Association through which employee health care contributions were tripled effective July 2011 and will be increased by an additional 5% effective July 2012. Highland administrators and other staff agreed to the same health care contribution changes. These increased contributions will save the Highland Local School District well in excess of \$2,000,000 over the current five year forecast period. Additionally, the District has been a perennial recipient of the Auditor of State's "Making Your Tax Dollars Count" Award, an honor bestowed upon fewer than 5% of all Ohio political subdivisions.

HIGHLAND HAS THE BUYING POWER OF 23 STATES!

Did you know that Highland's membership in the Ohio Schools Council entitles our District to purchase from a national group purchasing association of 23 states? The District is able to access supplies and materials at a fraction of retail pricing through this national consortium. This is just another example of how our District actively seeks to reduce operating costs for taxpayers.

7th Annual Benefit
Dinner-Auction

Great Gifts

Saturday, November 19, 2011

Weymouth Country Club

3946 Weymouth Road, Medina

Doors open at 6 p.m.

Seating is limited. Adults only please. Cost is \$85 per person.

Early registration \$75 if received by October 21.

**Dinner & Cocktails ❖ Entertainment
Live & Silent Auction**

*RSVP by November 1 to Lori Miller at 1444 Snowberry Lane,
Medina, 44256; via e-mail at lmiller@hmmhousing.org or phone
at 330-618-9332. Contact Carrie Milkovich at 330-388-7949 with
questions or for sponsorship information.*

**THE
HIGHLAND FOUNDATION**

www.highlandfoundation.org

*Auctioneer services provided by Brooks Ames.
Proceeds benefit The Foundation. Tax-deductible \$30 per ticket.*