

HIGHLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018





Winter 2018

Dear Highland Families and Friends,

You truly do it for Highland! Thanks to your support, life is full of endless opportunities for our students at Highland Community School.

This report highlights some of the possibilities you made happen during the 2017-18 school year, including:

- Strength in diversity and collective action for social justice;
- Student achievement demonstrated by our State of Wisconsin Department of Instruction Report Card where we *Exceeded Expectations* for the third year in a row;
- Parent involvement and leadership at all levels of the school;
- Recognition as leaders among the international Montessori community with an invitation to present at the Association Montessori Internationale General Meeting last April in Amsterdam.

Although this report focuses on accomplishments over the past year, we are thrilled to be in the midst of celebrating our 50th anniversary, building upon our bold past to light the way for a bright future. Your support, this past year and in years to come, is what makes these opportunities possible for our children.

We know that you believe in our vision, that we can change the world by nurturing children and their families to be informed, compassionate, life-long learners who are a force for change in education, the community, and society. Your involvement and commitment to support Highland in all of our various needs demonstrates this and helps foster a more peaceful and equitable community.

We are proud and honored you have chosen to work at this vision with us through all the years, transitions, growth, and change.

This past year we experienced some changes in our leadership. We appreciate the contributions by our past leaders and acknowledge the role each one played in growing our school, acquiring our building, expanding academic offerings, and ensuring Highland is on solid financial footing. We are confident our interim executive director, Tracy Williams, will take us through this next transition as we seek a permanent executive director and finalize our new strategic plan. Tracy has the administrative leadership experience, meaningful rapport with

2017-2018
PARENT BOARD
of DIRECTORS

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2017-2018
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Dr. Mark Joerres

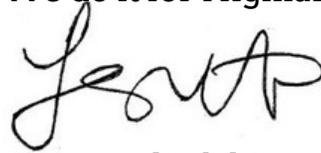
2018-2019
INTERIM EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR
Tracy Williams

many in our community, a deep understanding of our charter contract, and a 17-year commitment to our community mission. Tracy is also a parent and the first African American woman in this leadership role in all of Highland's history. We have so much to be proud of!

As a Board, our goal is to nurture the historically great aspects of Highland, while working with our parents, families, staff, leadership, and the greater community to find ways to improve our school. I hope you read the following report with pride because none of Highland's greatness is possible without you. Thank you for the investment you have made and for your trust.

We look forward to seeing you at the 50th Anniversary Celebration Weekend on May 31st - June 1st, 2019 to honor Highland's bold past and prepare for our bright future!

We do it for Highland!



Leana Nakielski
Board President 2018-19

MISSION --- AND VISION

AT HIGHLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL, we are a community of diverse families and educators working together to offer quality Montessori education in a nurturing environment that enriches, empowers, and inspires children to reach their potential and encourages parents to become responsible for and involved with their children's education.

We are changing the world by nurturing children and their families to be informed, compassionate, life-long learners who are a force for change in education, the community, and society.



Montessori Pedagogy

At Highland, our focus is on developing the whole child. Through the guidance of Dr. Montessori's pedagogy, each member of the Highland community has committed to help our students learn how to evaluate information while nurturing the students' compassion, curiosity, and sense of personal power. Our students are succeeding.

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

We are proud to report that in a district where nearly one-third of schools are failing to meet expectations, according to WI DPI's District Report Card, Highland is in the 15% that is exceeding expectations! Our Student Achievement score has increased for the third straight report card and we are showing impressive strides in closing the achievement gap between low-income students and their peers. This acknowledges the outstanding success of our Comprehensive Academic Teachers (CATs) and Special Education Team, the implementation of the Family Model, and our teachers responding to the students' individual needs.



"I chose Highland for my daughter because her god-sister attended Highland and I was watching her turn into a wonderful, well-rounded, smart young woman. I wanted my daughter to mature in the same way. I honestly didn't know much about Montessori, but I trusted my friend's recommendation. Once my daughter started I was convinced more than ever that the teachers were special, the environment was special and the passion for not only learning but growing was seen in all activities and interactions."

- Kelly Carter, Highland Parent

Montessori Pedagogy

More than an approach to education, the Montessori philosophy is an approach to life. It embraces the role of education in the development of peaceful communities and the attainment of individual expression within a democratic society. Highland students have the emotional intelligence and critical thinking skills needed to be global leaders.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

The Global Leadership Initiative is a continuum of developmentally appropriate projects that build upon one another. Starting in Children's House, 146 students learned the vocabulary of geography and how to peacefully calm themselves with breath and yoga during difficult situations. Our 3rd-graders researched and presented on a topic of social justice, including people like Vel Phillips and the Freedom Riders.

This year, was the 7th year our 6th-graders participated in the rigorous Montessori Model United Nations Conference in New York City. Once again, Highland is one of the few public Montessori schools present at MMUN. As delegates, our students learn about other countries, develop character and invaluable leadership skills while negotiating resolutions on important issues impacting the world.

Twenty-four 8th-graders broadened their horizons by participating in the capstone service-learning trip to Costa Rica. Students participated in a service project, visited a coffee farm, practiced their Spanish, and experienced the different biospheres. It is because of generous donors, these trips of a lifetime are available to all of our students, regardless of their financial situation.



Cultivating Youth Leadership



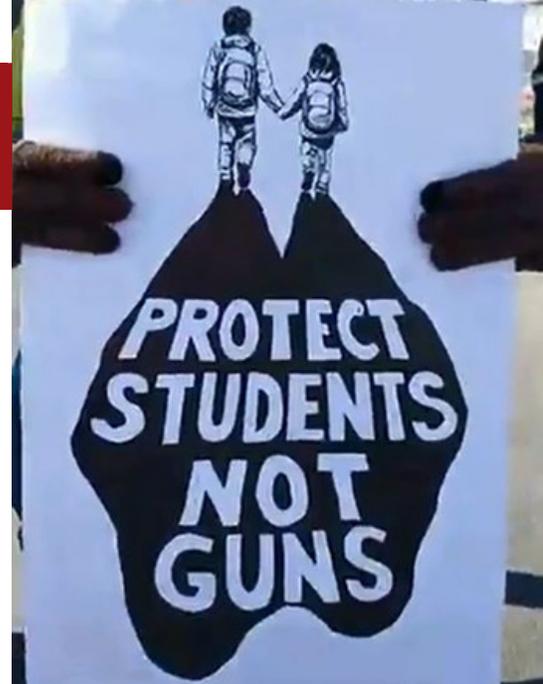
Community

Highland is a community school. Founded in 1968, during a historic time of unrest, while Milwaukeeans were marching for civil liberties, Highland was born out of a passion for education equality, social justice, caring for each other, and a yearning for family involvement. It is meaningful to us that we now educate children in the same building that was the site of protests in 1968, inspiring the creation of Highland so many years ago.

With the 50th Anniversary of the *Marches on Milwaukee*, there has been ample opportunity for our students to learn about Milwaukee's history and Highland's birth. Our community came together with Urban Underground to host a Greater Milwaukee Foundation *On the Table* conversation about how to improve our quality of life. We were a stop on the commemorative bus tour honoring the men and women who marched in 1968.

Our students participated in the National School Walkout to call for solutions to the gun violence plaguing the United States. Five of our students even joined *50 Miles More* movement and walked from Madison to Janesville.

The “all for one and one for all” atmosphere that started the school is still at the core of our learning environment today. As a school, we hope to create a space where everyone feels cared for and comfortable. Our students are engaged in the critical issues of our larger Milwaukee community.



Creating a Nurturing Place



Community

Community cannot only be found within the walls of Highland or in our great city; community is found in every nation all around our world. We were reminded of this when Highland was invited to present at the Association Montessori Internationale's Annual General Meeting this past spring. The theme of the meeting was "Community, Confidence, and Curiosity."

Sharlen Moore, longtime Highland Board Member and parent, and Veronica Mancheno, Highland's Educational Leader, traveled to Amsterdam to share how Highland has been building an active, peaceful community in Milwaukee through investing in each other.

Highland became the living, breathing example of all the research that was presented at the conference. Research on: parent involvement, ways to more accurately measure learning environments, all the tangible and intangible ways a Montessori education supports children from lower socio-economic urban areas, and the need for more social-emotional support.

In addition to reinforcing that Highland is providing the support our students and families need to succeed, there was the chance to show gratitude for many of the people who committed their lives to make Highland what it is today. Honors were presented to Carol Hicks, Joen Bettmann, and Allyn Travis, some of Highland's earliest educators and advocates. The group also acknowledged Tim Duax's and Kathy Hubing's dedication to Highland as educators, parents, and trusted advisors. There was not a dry eye in the audience. At that moment, we remembered what Dr. Montessori wrote, "We shall walk together on this path of life, for all things are part of the universe and are connected to form one whole unity."

Highland Community School is not only a special place in Milwaukee. The work performed at Highland inspires people from Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Poland, Thailand, Nigeria and many more to continue to work toward making Montessori education a reality for every child regardless of income. YOU INSPIRE us all to continue to work for this. Thank you.



Arts

Art education is essential for healthy child development. The process of creation nurtures children's inventiveness, self-expression, and decision-making skills. Highland students have the freedom to explore their creative side and express their feelings through writing, performance, music, and visual arts without being judged.

Guided by the students' curiosity and interests, Highland's Artist-in-Residence and Performing Arts Director weave art, music, and performance into the overall classwork for depth and dimension to the children's studies.

VISUAL ARTS PROGRAM

In addition to in-school art instruction, in 2017-18, our students participated in a number of exhibitions. The first was the continuation of a community-based video project called *(Re)Housing the American Dream* where our students produced video work that was exhibited at Haggerty Museum of Art at Marquette University. Last October, our students exhibited innovations in childhood education alongside Highland parent, Michael Westcott at the Mobile Design Box, in an exhibition called *Little Details*.

PERFORMING ARTS

The 2017-18 season of the Highland Community Players was as dynamic as ever. The 1st-3rd graders presented a high-energy circus performance of talents and oddities. The 7th and 8th graders treated audiences to a comedy of doomsday scenarios in *Ways the World Will End, But Not You*. Several of these students performed in the very first Circus, so many years ago! The show that took the cake, or the slime, rather, was the very ambitious *Winnerz Take All*. Highland's 10th annual Upper Elementary interactive production was a nod to the '90's-era Nickelodeon game shows with the central theme of winning and the lengths at which people will go to ensure they are winners. It was a loud, wild, and exciting time.

A WINTER CELEBRATION

At the 2018 Winter Celebration, our community came together to celebrate the beauty of many cultures and the modern-day heroes who face new challenges every day. It reminded us all that in order to move forward, we must find unity together.



Honoring the
Creative Spirit

"The development of language is part of the development of the personality, for words are the natural means of expressing thoughts and establishing understanding between people."

- Dr. Maria Montessori

LOUDER THAN A BOMB

On March 16th, a group of adolescent students ventured to Chicago to attend Louder Than A Bomb's 2018 Individual Finals. This slam poetry competition featured the top 12 scoring individual poets in a competitive poetry slam. As part of the Adolescent Program occupation, the students were assigned to write an "ode" poem to something special they noticed while on the trip.

On the midnight ride back to Milwaukee, the students had the train car all to themselves. They were excited and inspired by the performances they had just seen and used part of the train car to stage their own open mic session. The adjacent poem was written about that night.

After this experience, our students took to organizing after school open mics in the Community Cafe.

Imagine what Dr. Montessori would have thought had she been on the that train ride. We think she would have been delighted.

Ode to the train ride back to Milwaukee

In the aftermath of an amazing and inspiring event
Everyone is tired and hyped up
People are saying things that they normally would never release
 into the world
In the aftermath of an amazing and inspiring event
People change
They are filled with inspiration and creation
This was not a normal train ride
If you were on the outside looking in
All you would see is a bunch of kids yelling and running around
But let me remind you
This was not a normal train ride
On the inside of that train car
Was something special
Something I had never experienced before
Something I will probably never experience again
On the inside of that train car
Was a bunch of kids filled with desire
The desire to create
To create something important
To create something that was going to change them
And maybe change someone else
The desire to create an outlet for emotion
On the inside of that train car
That seemingly normal train car
That train car that rocked back and forth like it was trying to lull
 you to sleep
Was something special
It was filled with inspiration and creation
And a feeling of change
A feeling that was trying to change us
A feeling that is still trying to change us
A feeling that will forever change us
A feeling of the unknown
A feeling of mystery

-Kailyn Pickett, HCS '18

Care of the Environment

Children learn to love and respect the earth by getting their hands dirty. However, many children do not have the opportunity to connect with natural spaces on a regular basis. Through Highland's Natural Grounds, and embedding environmental education into the Montessori curriculum, our students connect with nature each day.

The next wave of naturalization was implemented on our schoolyards in the Natural Grounds project. Thanks to the generosity of Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewer District and the Fund for Lake Michigan we planted discovery yards and rain gardens throughout the grounds. The natural landscape not only diverts rainwater from running directly off the pavement into the sewers, but provides a space for our students to learn about green infrastructure, water conservation, and natural habitats.

The addition of the Discovery Yards and rain gardens were not the only new additions to our outdoor classroom. Thanks to an investment from the SweetWater Foundation, we are in the midst of creating an outdoor structure that will demonstrate how water flows through the Milwaukee watershed while providing outdoor classroom space in the winter months. Thanks to Nature Works Everywhere, we added an orchard and edible garden on the corner of 18th Street.

We were awarded the "Occupant Engagement" award at the ReEnergize Milwaukee 2017 Awards & Celebration, co-hosted by the US Green Building Council Wisconsin and City of Milwaukee Environmental Collaboration Office. This prestigious award is part of the Better Buildings Challenge, a national initiative to make buildings 20% more energy efficient within ten years.

Finally, our very own "Eco Mike" Steiner was awarded the "2018 Energy Educator of the Year" by the Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program in partnership with the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education and We Energies.



Growing an Environmental Ethic

Highland Graduates

Class of 2018 Graduates

30 students graduated in 2018 and will attend **10** different high schools:

- Golda Meir
- MacDowell Montessori School
- Milwaukee High School of the Arts
- Pathways High School
- Pius XI Catholic High School
- Riverside High School
- Regan IB High School
- Rufus King International High School
- St. Joan Antida High School
- Wauwatosa East High School

We are proud of you!



Alumni Give Back

Many of our alumni have shared the sentiment that Highland is a school that feels like home. So when we put a call out to our alumni who are still in high school, to volunteer at Highland events, they happily signed up. Thank you to all the alumni who came to serve food at the Annual Holiday Art Bazaar and those who talked their friends into helping with the 6th Annual Bike Walk Eat! Both events were better with you here. Like the Highland song says, "*Highland, Highland, I'll be seeing you again.*" **You are welcome anytime!**

Are you a Highland alumnum who is doing something great? Or a proud parent who wants to share with our community all the wonderful things your child is doing? We'd love to hear from you! Please contact Michaela Humpal, Director of Community Resources at (414) 342-1412 or by email: mhumpal@hcsmkc.org

Highland by the Numbers

We are a community of diverse families.

Race/Ethnicity Overview

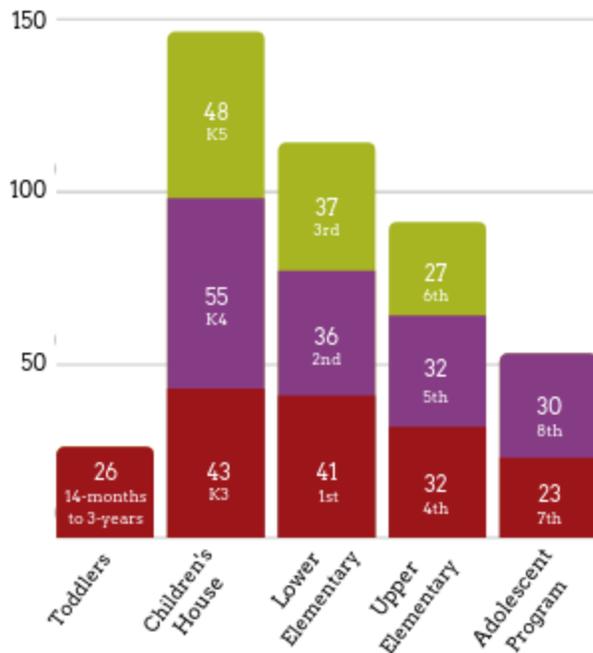


American Indian (1%) and Asian (1%)

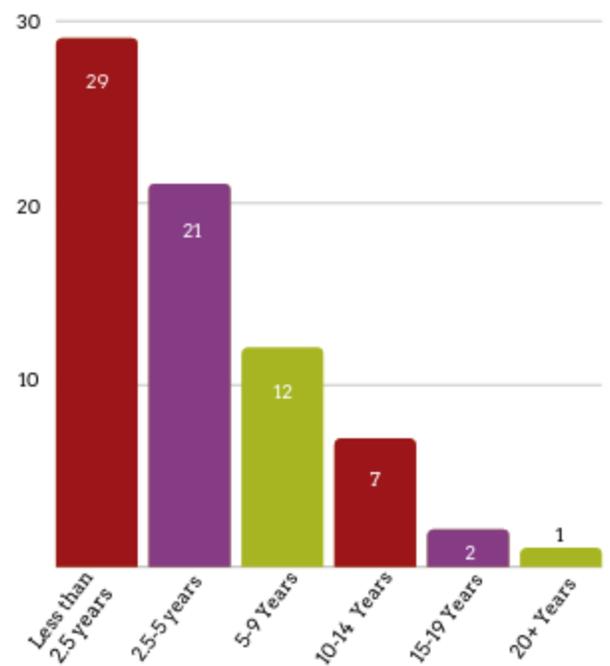
Economic Status



Student Ages/Levels



Faculty and Staff Commitment



Parents are involved and responsible for their children's education.

- **90%** of parents volunteered in the classrooms, helped with field trips, brought food, organized fundraisers, beautified our school, and much more!
- **58%** of our faculty and staff have children or grandchildren who attend Highland

THANK YOU

Thank you to the parents, grandparents, and friends of Highland Community School, who generously donate to our school. Your investments, sweat equity, time, in-kind donations, guidance, love, and support make Highland the wonderful place that it is.

Thank you for being a part of the Highland community!

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Arts@Large
Beer Capital Distributing, LLC
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Black Husky Brewing
Camino
Carrot Bomb Catering
City of Milwaukee
Company Brewing
Daniel M. Soref Charitable Trust
Divine Savior Holy Angels High School
Edge Grain, LLC
Enlightened Brewery Company, LLC
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Fun Beer Tours
Fund for Lake Michigan
Glacier Canyon Lodge
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
 A.J. Roberts and J.R. Robertson Fund for World Peace
Green Schools Consortium of Milwaukee
Greener Roofs & Gardens LLC
Gypsy Taco
Haggerty Museum of Art
HARK Design Collaborative, LLC
Evan and Marion Helfaer Foundation
Herbert H. Kohl Philanthropies
Indulgence Chocolatiers
Jimmy John's
Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful, Inc.
Kohl's Cares LLC
Kohl's Department Stores, Inc.
Lakefront Brewery, Inc.
Life Storage
Little Giant Photography
Marquette University
Marquette University High School
Meemic Foundation
Metro Market
Microsoft
Milwaukee Art Museum
Milwaukee Bucks
Milwaukee Food & City Tours
Milwaukee High School of the Arts
Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District
Moxie
Natural Solution, LLC
Nature Conservancy
Near West Side Partners
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee
Northwestern Mutual Foundation
Partners Advancing Values in Education
Pete's Fruit Market
Point Beer
Quality Tank Solutions
Reflo
Riverwest Filling Station
Roundy's Supermarkets, Inc.
Southeastern Wisconsin Watershed Trust, Inc.
Steny's Tavern & Grill
Sweet Mullet Brewing
Tess
The Bartolotta Restaurants
The Irish Pub
The Local
The Newport
The Tin Window
The Vanguard
Thinking Tree Massage
Third Space Brewing
To Solution Inc.
U.S. Bank Foundation
United Nations Association of Greater Milwaukee
Urban Underground
UW-Extension
UWM
Victory Brewing Company
We Energies Foundation
Wisconsin Arts Board
Wisconsin Coastal Management Program
Wisconsin Energies Foundation

BIKE WALK EAT SPONSORS

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Mechanical, Inc.
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Milwaukee Art Museum
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Quorum Architects, Inc.
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RoadID
Stein's Garden & Home
Story Hill Renovations LLC
Third Coast Family Dental
ToSolutions
Urban Ecology Center
van Iersel Family
Velobahn Coffee and Cycle
Vulture Space
Wisconsin Bike Federation

FAMILY & FRIENDS

Anonymous (6)
Darlene Arnold
Kim and Brian Berner
Joen Bettmann
Eva Bonde
Erin and Ray Borgwordt
Jacqueline Boynton and
Peter McAvoy
Mike Brady
Bernadette Burke
Mary and Joseph Burke
Jerry Burns and Liz Weiss
Mary and George Carian
Alexis and Antoine Carter
Kelly Carter
James Cope
Joseph J. Cottrell, Jr.
Anne DeLeo and Patrick Curley

Jean Dellemann-Engelbrecht
Francis and Jacqueline Dettloff
Brian and Brittany DeWindt
Judy and Jim Dollhausen
Diane and Tom Doyle
Ariel Droese
Tim Duax and Kathy Hubing
Jon Duris and Amy Elliott
Russell and Virginia Duris
Alison Efford and Brandon Walton
Nick and Beth Elder
Karyn Elliott
James and Barbara Engelbrecht
Jason and Lindsay Evans
Margaret and Richard Falsetti
Hilary Fox
Barbara Fredricks
Zac Galan-Skinner
Berford and Rosland Gammon
John Gardner
Julie Gardner
Patricia Garrigan and
Alanson Sturgis
Cecilia Gencuski
Frank X. Gess and Rita Tassin
Melissa Gibson and
Ross Freshwater
Justina Gomez
Dinah Goris
Monique and Perry Green
Sherita and Quemont Greer
Amy and Tom Gutowski
Brooke and Mike Haley
W.P. and Marijane Halquist
Kevin and Camille Hammond
Angela Harris
Ebony Harris
Kevin and Amanda Henderson
Jeremy and Crystal Hoffmann
Jessica Hoffmann
Aaronanda and Jeffery Holloway
Erika A. Holtz
Michaela and Nathan Humpal
Kevin Idzi
Gretchen Irvine
Dan Jablonic
Joan and Jon Jacobs
Mark and Juliann Joerres
Alix and Jesse Kamberelis
Deirdre Keenan
Mary N. Kelsey
Phyllis and Johnny Kimble
Wishkub Kinepoway

Brandice Kirchner and
Jordan Burich
Chris and Amy Kjaer
Timothy Kjaer
Alison Kopyt
Andrea and Nelson Kopyt
David and Carol Krey
Joel and Mary Kriofske
Tad and Alie Kriofske Mainella
Keisha Krumm
Jacqueline Lalley and
Michael Groen
Fran Leap
Jim LeCapitaine
Katherine LeCloux
Ronald and Anne Leggio
Bridget and Ray Lewellyn
Tim and Erica Linn
Jill and Chris Maertz
Mary Mainella
Veronica Mancheno
Ellen and Gordy Manian
Richard and Catherine Marx
Kate Mau
Katherine McChrystal and
Jake Manian
Michael McChrystal
John McDonald
Will McGraw
Jennifer and Patrick McKean
Sarah McLaughlin
Sonya Medina and Melvin Parr
Donna Miller
Elizabeth Miller
Sharlen and Reggie Moore
Shelli Mueller
Robin Muller
Melissa and Trent Muller
Lucia and Jack Murtaugh
Leana Nakielski
Michael Natalizio
Rachel Neal
Erin and Don Nelson
Anne and Al Nephew
Barbara and Byron Nichols
Jenny and Jeremy Nichols
Wendy Foster Norman
Eileen O'Connor
Miriam Ofori
George and Erica Olenici
Amy O'Neill
Maribeth Overstreet
Julie Pahnke

Nicholas and Erika Petty
 Jermaine Posey
 Majorie and Marcus Powell
 Jasmin Quezada
 Tomoko Quinn
 Janette Randall
 Mike and Lorraine Randall
 Jennifer and Edwin Raymond
 Peggy and Edwin Raymond
 Corbett and Natalie Reinbold
 Hamilton O. Reinbold
 Gina Renteria Shirah
 Cindy Richardson
 Poe Ru and Moo Paw
 Michael Salinas
 MaryEllin and Raymond Santiago
 James and Nancy Schleicher
 Lauren Schlenker and
 Daniel Johnson
 Terry and Susan Schlenker
 Carol Schneider
 Emily and Scott Schoenfelder

Tom Schwalbach
 Jessica Schwan
 Jason and Johanna Smith
 Robert Smith
 Michael Soens
 Gina and Christian Staples
 Alicia and Mike Steiner
 Ivorena Taylor
 Debra Timm
 Jessie Tobin and Tim Vargo
 Stephanie and Martin Van Iersel
 Rachel VanderWegen
 Jean Tipan Verella and
 Sameena Mulla
 Melanie Vianes
 William and Patricia Voeltner
 Ellen Wagner and
 Michael McCarthy
 Margaret Ward
 Michael and Susan Ward
 Angela Warren and
 James Sokolowski

Barry Weber
 Ed Wegner
 Stevie WeishanKristi and
 Michael Westcott
 Jeff and Linda White
 Sterling White
 Michael and Mary Alice Williams
 Tracy Williams
 Justin Williamsen
 Sarah Williamson and
 Adam LaLuzerne
 Raven Wilson
 Meagan Winn and Jay Pucek
 Marilyn and Alan Wiseman
 Andrew Yeager and
 Susanna Leggio
 Corey Zetts and Benji Timm
 Jessica and Jonathan Ziegler
 Tricia Zippel

Every effort was made to ensure this list is accurate. If your name is not listed, or is listed incorrectly, please contact Michaela LewellynHumpal, Director of Community Resources at (414) 342-1412.

Financial Statement

The Highland Community School Board of Directors and school administration report all of our financial requirements have been met and policies and procedures are in place, including an annual independent financial audit, to ensure the highest standards of financial oversight. A copy of our audited financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2018, is available upon request.

Income

Childcare Revenue	\$856,707
Educational Revenue	\$3,639,229
Other Income (includes fundraising)	\$187,560
Total Income	\$4,683,496

Expenses

Educational & Programs	\$4,074,639
General & Administrative	\$379,060
Fundraising	\$95,140
Total Expenses	\$4,548,839

Excess of Income over Expenses \$134,657

Statement of Financial Position

Total Assets	\$3,516,633
Total Liabilities	\$1,640,553

Net Assets

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$1,509,231
Board Restricted Net Assets	\$228,496
Temporarily Restricted Assets	\$138,353
Total Net Assets	\$1,876,080

Bold Past, Bright Future



Celebrating 50 Years of Building a
Peaceful Montessori Community

May 31 & June 1, 2019

Join us in celebration:

Tours of the old buildings
50th Anniversary Gala
Bike Walk Eat



Highland Community School

1706 W. Highland Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53233 ● www.hcsmke.org ● (414)342-1412