

Highland Community School

A photograph of the exterior of Highland Community School. The building is a multi-story structure with a mix of brick and light-colored stone or concrete panels. A prominent feature is a large, modern glass entrance area with a dark green awning. The glass is decorated with colorful, vertical panels in shades of green, yellow, and blue. To the right of the entrance, there is a sign that reads "HIGHLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL". The sky is clear and blue, and there are some trees and bushes in the foreground.

Annual Meeting 2025



Agenda

- Welcome and Board Introductions (Amy)
- Annual Highlights (Tracy)
- Academics (Jean)
- Family Engagement (Elizabeth)
- Board Strategic Plan Update (Amy & Ali)
- Financial Update (Brenda)
- Development (Annie)
- Closing & Thank You (Mikaya)

Board Introductions

Annual Meeting 2025



Highland Community School Board Members

Officers

Brian Litzsey - President

Amy Nelson Christensen - Vice
President

Brenda Simonis* - Treasurer

Patrick Bader* - Secretary

Board Members

Ali Kopyt*

derria byrd*

Kantara Souffrant

Kia Green

Mikaya Clark
(President-elect)

Latisha Franklin

*committee chairs

Newly Elected Board Members

Elected to serve a 3-year term beginning July 2025

CONGRATULATIONS



Benjamin Correia-Harker



Lakita Wells



Suavé Kyles



Board Farewells

Amy & Brian

The image shows the exterior of a modern school building. The main structure is a two-story building with a light-colored brick facade. A prominent feature is a large, multi-story glass facade on the left side, which is framed by green and yellow vertical panels. A dark green awning extends over the entrance area. To the right, there is a curved section of the building with a brick facade. The sky is blue with some clouds. The text "Annual Highlights" is overlaid in a large, bold, red font at the top left. The text "Annual Meeting 2025" is overlaid in a large, bold, red font at the bottom right. The name "HIGHLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL" is visible on the brick wall near the entrance.

Annual Highlights

HIGHLAND
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

Annual Meeting 2025

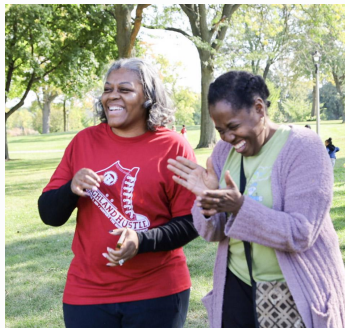
In the classroom



Community



The Highland Hustle

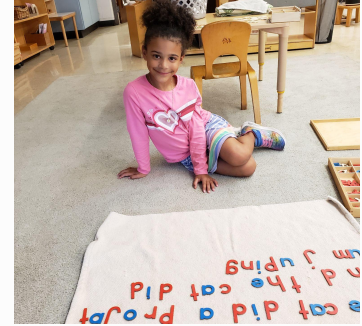




Toddlers



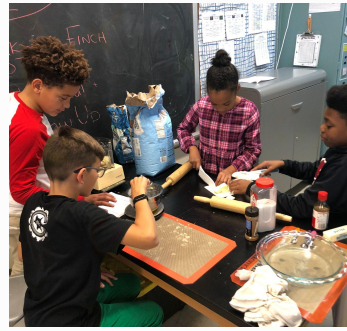
Children's House



Lower Elementary



Upper Elementary



STONBROADWAY



AP





Academic Update

2025



Academic Goals



Achieve an increased percentage of pupils in Charter School scoring proficient or advanced on the Forward Exam in English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science that is the same as, or higher than, the percentage of pupils scoring proficient or advanced in corresponding grades in all MPS schools.

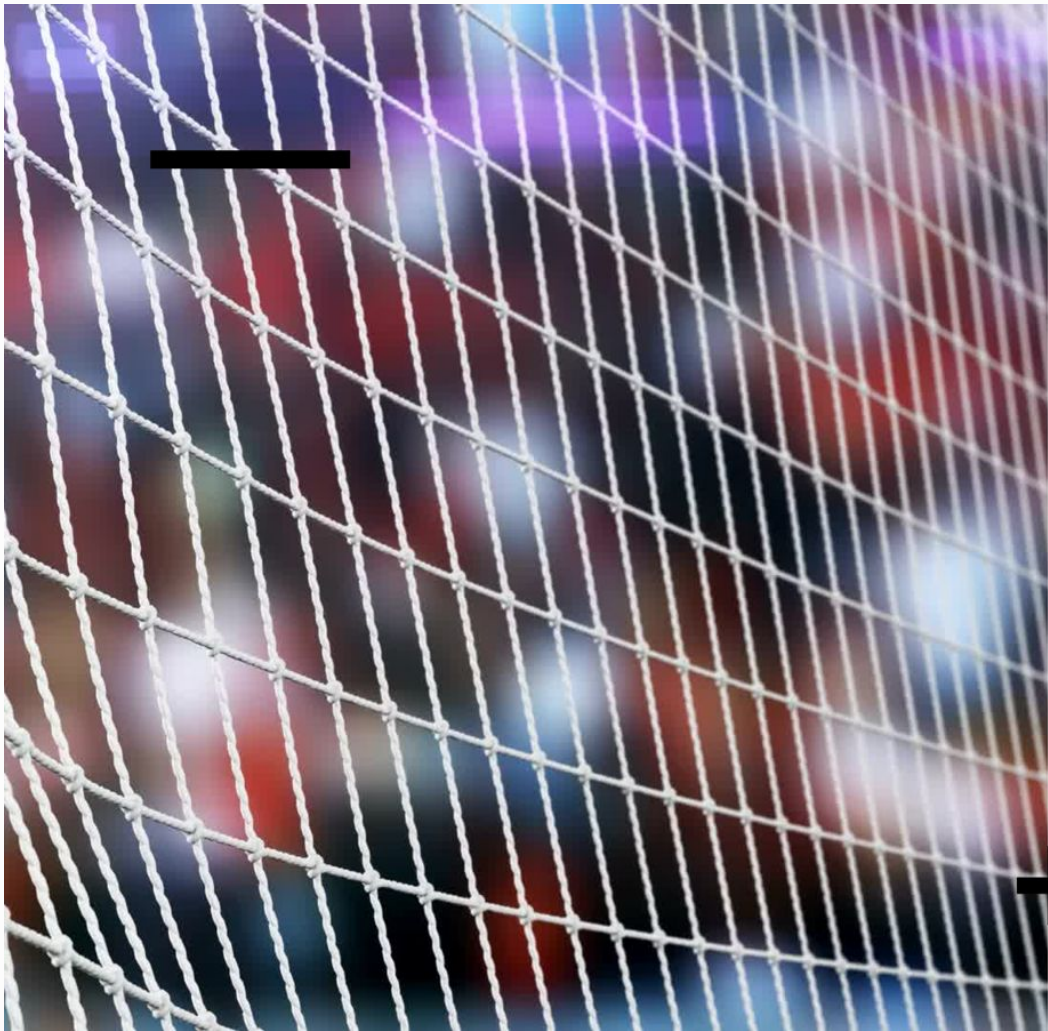
Achieve a percentage of pupils promoted from grades 4 and 8 that is the same as, or higher than, the percentage of pupils being promoted from the corresponding grades in MPS schools.

Attendance Goals

Achieve an average daily attendance rate of pupils that is the same as, or higher than, the average daily attendance rate of pupils in corresponding grades in all MPS schools.

Achieve a stability rate of pupils that is the same as, or higher than, the stability rate of pupils in corresponding grades in all MPS schools. In this Contract, "stability rate" shall refer to the percentage of students (excluding the top grade) enrolled on the May count date of the first year that are still enrolled on the following year's September count date.

Achieve a mobility rate of pupils (registered as of the September Third Friday Count) that is the same as, or lower than, the mobility rate of pupils in corresponding grades in all MPS schools. In this Contract, "mobility rate" shall refer to the percentage of students that enroll after the Third Friday in September (or, intake rate).



Behavior Goal

Highland's suspension rate will be equal to or less than the district's average for equivalent grade bands.



Priority Area: Students Committee: Academic and SEL			
3-year Board Goals	Strategies of the Board	Intended Success	Metrics
Monitor the school's progress towards meeting the goals in the School Improvement Plan	- Create academic committee to review academic achievement & opportunity	Students will experience more equitable curriculum and instruction regardless of racial demographic	Forward (grade level) STAR (growth) three times a year The performance gap between Black students and their white peers will be reduced by 3% SIP
Reduce disparities in student experience	- Ensure resources are dedicated to ensure an equitable student experience for students of color as well as LGBTQ+ students	Students will experience more equitable curriculum and instruction regardless of LGBTQ+ demographic	Student survey Classroom observations Student focus group (student council)
Reduce disparities in student achievement	- Ensure resources are dedicated to reduce disparities in student achievement based on race and special education status	Students will experience for equitable academic achievement across racial demographics	Transparent classroom data

Strategic Plan



School Improvement Plan

Begins with a Root Cause Analysis

Developed with feedback from staff, family and student surveys in mind

School Improvement Plan is drafted each summer

Reviewed monthly by our Data Team and a member of our Contracted Schools team at MPS

Academic Focus



Provide individual and group coaching for both Lead and Assistant Guides



Use analysis of observations, classroom assessments and STAR to drive instruction



Further develop and implement Montessori Curriculum Maps to ensure alignment with standards and identify gaps to be further developed



Provide additional professional development on Neurodivergency, Equity and the Science of Reading





Highland Community School

School Details

Grades : K3-8

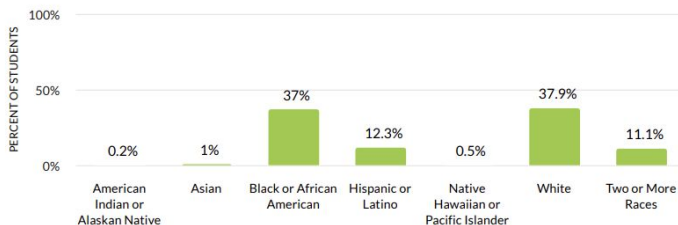
Enrollment : 414

Percent open enrollment : 4.3%

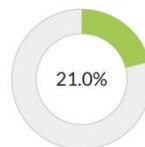
Highland is a school with diverse families and educators working together to offer quality Montessori education in a nurturing environment that enriches, empowers, and inspires children to reach their potential and encourages parents to become responsible for and involved with the education of their children.

The statement above is provided by the school. It is not an evaluation by the Wisconsin DPI.

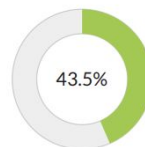
Student Groups



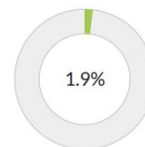
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED



ENGLISH LEARNERS



Score Summary



Please use caution when interpreting scores and ratings. Multiple years of data are used throughout the report card, including updated 2023-24 assessments. For more information, see <https://dpi.wi.gov/accountability/resources>.

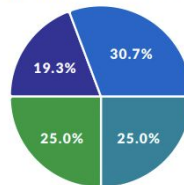
Overall Score

75.0

Exceeds Expectations



PRIORITY AREA WEIGHTS



ACHIEVEMENT

GROWTH

TARGET GROUP OUTCOMES

ON-TRACK TO GRADUATION

HOW DOES THIS
COMPARE TO
LAST YEAR?

When compared to all schools in
MPS:

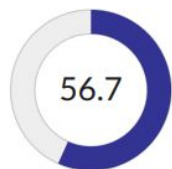
- 14th highest score in the district
- up from #22 last year

When compared to other k-8
schools:

- 9th highest score in the district
- Up from #14 last year

Priority Area Scores

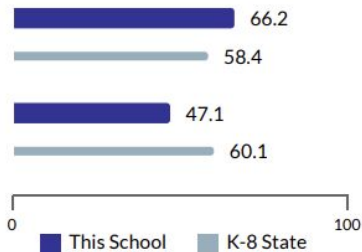
ACHIEVEMENT



English Language Arts

Mathematics

Subject Area Scores



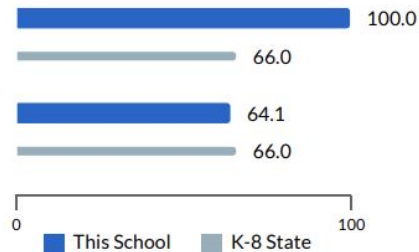
GROWTH



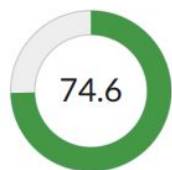
English Language Arts

Mathematics

Subject Area Scores



TARGET GROUP OUTCOMES



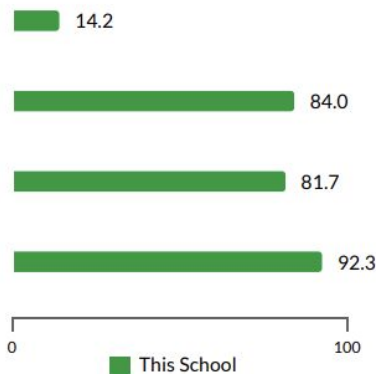
Achievement

Growth

Chronic Absenteeism

Attendance

Group Scores



ON-TRACK TO GRADUATION



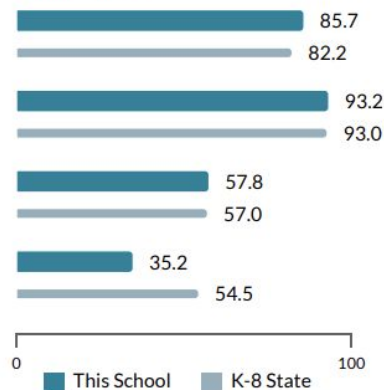
Chronic Absenteeism

School-wide Attendance

3rd Grade English Language Arts

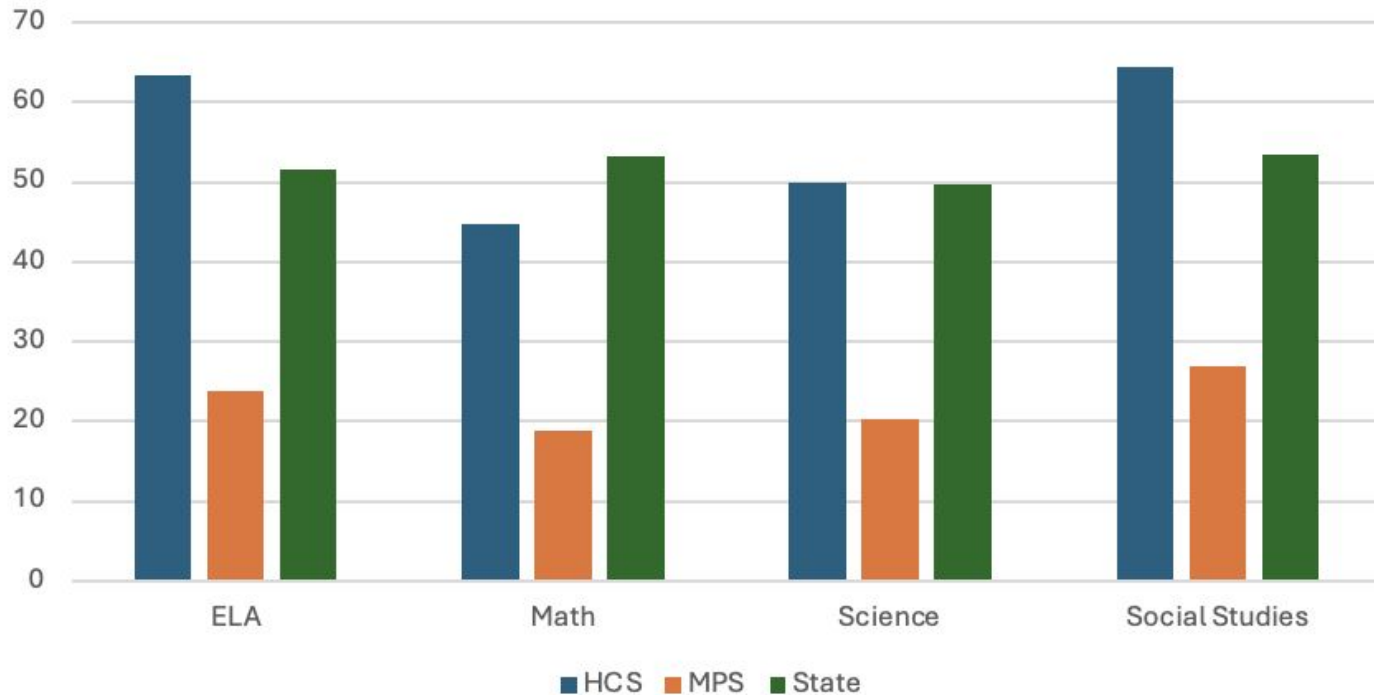
8th Grade Mathematics

Area Scores





2023-24 Forward Proficiency Percentiles



English Language Arts

	2023-24				
	Total # Tested	Advanced	Meeting	Approaching	Developing
All Students: K-8 State	353,590	11.5%	40.0%	30.2%	18.2%
All Students	200	15.0%	48.5%	23.0%	13.5%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	<20	*	*	*	*
Asian	<20	*	*	*	*
Black or African American	72	2.8%	36.1%	34.7%	26.4%
Hispanic or Latino	20	0.0%	65.0%	20.0%	15.0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	<20	*	*	*	*
White	86	31.4%	53.5%	12.8%	2.3%
Two or More Races	20	5.0%	55.0%	25.0%	15.0%
Economically Disadvantaged	90	5.6%	46.7%	25.6%	22.2%
English Learners	<20	*	*	*	*
Students with Disabilities	58	5.2%	44.8%	20.7%	29.3%

How does it affect Highland?

All Children's House, Lower Elementary, CATs, and Spec Ed teachers will take part in the LETRs training provided by MPS over the next 2.5 years.

All schools are required to provide early literacy instruction that meets the definition of science-based early literacy instruction as defined in Act 20.

Act 20 allows a Montessori program to provide early literacy instruction that includes all 9 components of science-based early literacy instruction.

Screeners will be administered beginning in K4.

Children who score in the lowest 25% will have a reading plan developed that includes interventions and regular progress monitoring that is shared with their family.



Math

	2023-24				
	Total # Tested	Advanced	Meeting	Approaching	Developing
All Students: K-8 State	353,324	19.6%	33.7%	26.3%	20.3%
All Students	201	13.4%	31.3%	33.3%	21.9%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	<20	*	*	*	*
Asian	<20	*	*	*	*
Black or African American	72	1.4%	12.5%	45.8%	40.3%
Hispanic or Latino	21	0.0%	42.9%	38.1%	19.0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	<20	*	*	*	*
White	86	26.7%	44.2%	24.4%	4.7%
Two or More Races	20	15.0%	35.0%	20.0%	30.0%
Economically Disadvantaged	90	3.3%	28.9%	37.8%	30.0%
English Learners	<20	*	*	*	*
Students with Disabilities	59	5.1%	23.7%	23.7%	47.5%

What have we already done?

- Aligned our curriculum to state standards to make academic expectations clear
- Implemented Classroom Placement and Classroom Change Approaches centered on equitable learning communities
- Committed to hiring a diverse staff whose backgrounds reflect the racial and cultural diversity of our students, so all children feel seen, supported, and represented at school
- Engaged in professional development opportunities focused on creating inclusive learning environments
- Organized a Student Council to amplify student voice
- Surveyed our families, staff and students twice a year to gather feedback on what is working and what needs work



What are we working on?

- Adjusting progress reports to be more family friendly
- Continuing our alignment of Montessori and state standards
- Providing additional professional development opportunities to support our diverse community



Climate and Culture Focus

01

Monitor absences
and tardies weekly

02

Increase
communication with
families around the
importance of being
at school on time
each day

03

Work with families to
identify barriers to
timely arrival and
attendance

04

Support families to
reduce obstacles that
interfere with timely
arrival and school
attendance



Behavior Focus

Monitor Nautilus Tracker and follow through with Child Study Process for all students with more than 3 incidents

Increase time CATs and Special Education providers are in classrooms to better support skill transfer, SEL skills, and work habits

Strengthen systems for recess time to bring continuity to behavior expectations and offer supports to those who need them



Highland Community School

Family Engagement

A breakdown of your 8,000+
hours of community
commitment

8,000+

Coaches, Club Leaders, Library Assistants, Chaperones, Board Members, Classroom Readers, Special Guests, Turbo Team, Events Set-up, Events Clean-up, Committee members, Event attendees, Family-Teacher Conferences, Family Meetings, Coffee Hours, Children's House Meet-ups, Room Parents, Survey Respondents, Snack Providers (for clubs, sports, classroom events, testing days), Fundraising Supporters (Highland Hustle, bake sales, direct donations, matching gifts), Lost & Found Organizers, Swap Helpers, Communications Amplifiers (sharing posts, forwarding newsletters, spreading the word), Interpreters / Translators, Workshop Presenters / Panelists, Supply Donors (classroom materials, wish lists, costumes, etc.), Media Volunteers (event photos, picture day helpers, yearbook, etc.), **All-Around Cheerleaders & Encouragers** (supporting their kids and our school in ways big and small every day!)

Community Hours

Classroom/ School Service

Chaperoning: 500
Reading to Children: 680
Other Classroom Help: 369
Special guest &
presentations: 250
Library: 704
Lost & Found: 42
Room Parents: 980
Board of Directors: 1056
Committee Service: 230
Events Planning: 180
Laundry: 75
Materials: 30
Total Hours: 3,574

Enrichment Service

Sports: 752
Girls on the Run: 144
Girl Scouts: 1380
4H (4Ever, Gardening, Chess,
Robotics, Cloverbuds): 631
Other Clubs (Coding, GSA,
Pearls): 220
Total Hours: 3,127

Events

Top 10 attended events:

1. Community Feast, 688
2. Winter Celebration, 560
3. Follow the Child, 325
4. *A Very Special Visit*, 300
5. Highland Hustle, 275
6. Ice Cream Social, 250
7. Very Important Persons Day, 217
8. Highland Community Circus, 215
9. Black Heritage Celebration, 175
10. Math in Action Night, 120

Community Events

28+ Events

3,435
Attendees
and Guests



9
teams



21
Coaches



95%

Of families participated in ***at least one*** Family-Teacher Conference this year. 80% of families participated in both sets of conferences.



Highland Community School

Spring Survey Results

Highland Community School



174

Responses

HIGHLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL...

Spring 2025

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
allows input and welcomes parents' contributions	64%	31%	4%	0%	0%
Is a Safe Place for My Child	66%	31%	3%	0%	0%
Supports me in my child's learning	64%	34%	3%	0%	0%
keeps me well-informed about my child's progress in school	58%	35%	5%	2%	0%
encourages me to be an active partner with the school in educating my child	67%	28%	4%	1%	0%

You'd like to see...

Things parents want the school to improve, increase, change or add.

Consider parent work schedules more

More notice for activities/ club sign-ups

More varied communications

More social opportunities for parents

Math and literacy resources for at-home that don't involve screens

More ways to volunteer outside regular school hours

More availability for afterschool and before school

Reduced teacher-student ratios

You'd like to see...

Things parents want the school to improve, increase, change or add.

A school nurse

More foreign language instruction (younger)

More info for parents about Montessori

More Clubs & Sports for Lower EI

More diverse teachers

Changes to paid programs registration

Optional Homework Ideas

Keep pushing students academically

Better Sign-up for Fun Days

You'd like to see...

Things parents want the school to improve, increase, change or add.

Keep up the social and emotional learning

Consistency among teacher style

Help parents on how to communicate to teachers about concerns.

Continue to listen and let children express themselves.

Maintain a safe and healthy indoor school environment.

Focused emphasis on academics

Kudos to the school for...

This is a list of things parents think the school is doing well this year.

“Making sure everyone feels important”

“Expanded clubs and sports has been excellent; it’s giving more students a chance to get involved and feel connected.”

- **Evening Family Activities**
- Library Resources
- Supporting youth emotionally
- **Extra-curriculars**
- **Effective Communication**
- Formalizing Processes
- Being Welcoming
- Great Staff
- Inclusive Practices
- **Academics**
- Nurturing Children
- Keeping families informed
- Teacher consistency

Kudos to the school for...

This is a list of things parents think the school is doing well this year.

“I love Notes Home!!!! It is so easy to stay in the know about what’s happening.”

“I appreciate the interventions based on data.”

“Communication and transparency.”

“Highland does a great job making each child feel loved, safe and supported.”

“I am grateful the school has a social worker and counseling resources.”

“Amazing Enrichment (Circus, Black Heritage, True Skool).”

“All the activities and parent engagement!”

Board Strategic Plan Update

Annual Meeting 2025



Highland Community School Board Strategic Plan 2023-2027

Students

- ❖ Monitor the school's progress towards meeting the goals in the School Improvement Plan
 - Create academic committee to review academic achievement & opportunity
- ❖ Reduce disparities in student achievement
 - Ensure resources are dedicated to reduce disparities in student achievement based on race and special education status
- ❖ Reduce disparities in student experience
 - Ensure resources are dedicated to ensure an equitable student experience for students of color as well as LGBTQ+ students

Staff

- ❖ Enhance benefits and opportunities for staff
 - Meet as committee of staff and families to brainstorm ways to relieve teachers of extra burdens
 - Look for grants or other funds to support staffing
- ❖ Support staff in their ability to serve students with an equity lens
 - Dedicate resources to staff professional development in equity with an emphasis on LGBTQIA rights and intersectionality (how various identities inform each other and structural oppression)

Board / School Community

- ❖ Refine transparency
 - Restructure board-school committees for alignment with strategic goals and increasing non-board involvement based on relevant best practices
 - Work with coach to refine board practices around open meetings, decision-making and voting, sharing of documents, and transparency
 - Identify HCS non-board committees for board member service
 - Develop system for matching Board skills and interests to committee structure
 - Map board members to committees
 - Revise board operational systems/documents: board calendar, new board member recruitment, board development, (new) member orientation
 - Board members attend all family engagement events
- ❖ Create long range facility improvement plan
 - Increase facilities committee meeting frequency
 - Create a scope and budget, including seeking quotes and establishing a timeline
 - Begin to find grants, potential funds to support this work
 - Participate in fund development to support this work

Mission

We are a community of diverse families and educators working together to offer quality Montessori education in a nurturing environment that enriches, empowers, and inspire the whole child to reach their potential. We encourage and support parents to be responsible for, and involved with, their children's education

Vision

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.

Values

Montessori Pedagogy
Community Connection
Social Justice Practices
Parent-Centered
Environment
Arts



Highland Community School

Changing the world by nurturing children and their families



Restructure of committees to ensure support of the Board strategic plan, remove duplication from administrative supports (fund development), and ensure accountability for Board goals:

1. Executive Committee
2. Finance Committee
3. Governance Committee
4. *Academics and Social Emotional Learning*
5. *Facilities (previously ad hoc)*

THE ROAD TO **AIR CONDITIONING**

Summer 2025: Road to AC Phase 1*

§ Replacement of building windows - Estimated \$230,000

§ Toddler & CHECK AC units - Estimated \$81,000

Future Phases:

§ 2026: Roof replacement (& possible Fire Panel replacement)

§ 2027: Boiler replacement & upgraded building controls system

§ 2028: Fan room & classroom improvements

§ 2029: Add cooling

*Already factored into summer programming



The image shows the exterior of a modern school building. The main structure is made of light-colored brick with a large section of windows featuring colorful, geometric panels in shades of green, yellow, and blue. A dark green awning covers the entrance area. To the right, there is a curved section of the building. The sky is clear and blue. The text "Financial Update" is overlaid in large, bold, red letters at the top left.

Financial Update

HIGHLAND
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

Annual Meeting 2025



REVENUE OVERVIEW

- Total projected revenue = \$6.9 Million
- MPS Revenue \$5.3M based on enrollment of 431 full-time equivalents (FTEs) which totals 76% of total revenue.
- Fundraising Revenue \$160K includes:
 - Highland Hustle funds raised
 - Grant income
 - School & Costa Rica fundraising
- Special Ed is budgeted at 28% reimbursement (consistent with historical), however no longer includes contracted special ed. staff (.5 FTE – impact of ~\$14K).
- Parent fees include camping, clubs/sports, & capstone trips. MMUN cost increases to \$900/student as costs rise. Larger number of Costa Rica travelers next year.

<u>Revenue</u>	<u>FY26 Budget</u>	<u>FY25 Budget</u>
MPS Charter Contract	\$ 5,297,909	\$ 5,110,096
Contributed Support	\$ 160,000	\$ 195,000
Special Ed, Title I & CSF	\$ 393,825	\$ 379,453
Program & Parent Fees	\$ 1,108,884	\$ 1,085,791
Other Funding	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ 6,960,618	\$ 6,770,340

EXPENSE OVERVIEW

- Increase of \$190K over current year
- Average expense increase of 2.7%

	<u>FY26 Budget</u>	<u>FY25 Budget</u>
Personnel	\$ 5,266,785	\$ 5,121,145
Education	\$ 669,863	\$ 654,147
Operations	\$ 303,570	\$ 296,610
Occupancy	\$ 720,400	\$ 698,438
	<u>\$ 6,960,618</u>	<u>\$ 6,770,340</u>

“Why can’t we just _____?”

93% of the budget is used for costs related to standard operations, facilities, & staffing for current positions.

7% of the budget covers classroom budgets, educational opportunities & trips, PD, & discretionary programs.

Changes to programs/expenses often come with a trade off.

Budget Breakdown

Fixed costs

Staff wages & benefits	5,398,185	
MPS Fees	103,983	
Bad debt allowance	5,000	
Operations	257,891	
Building expenses	665,400	
Restricted dollars	17,325	<i>library</i>
	6,447,784	93%

Controllable expenses

Controlled staff expenses	49,600	
Educational expenses	362,555	
Operations expenses	45,679	
Occupancy & Building reserve	55,000	
	512,834	7%
	6,960,618	



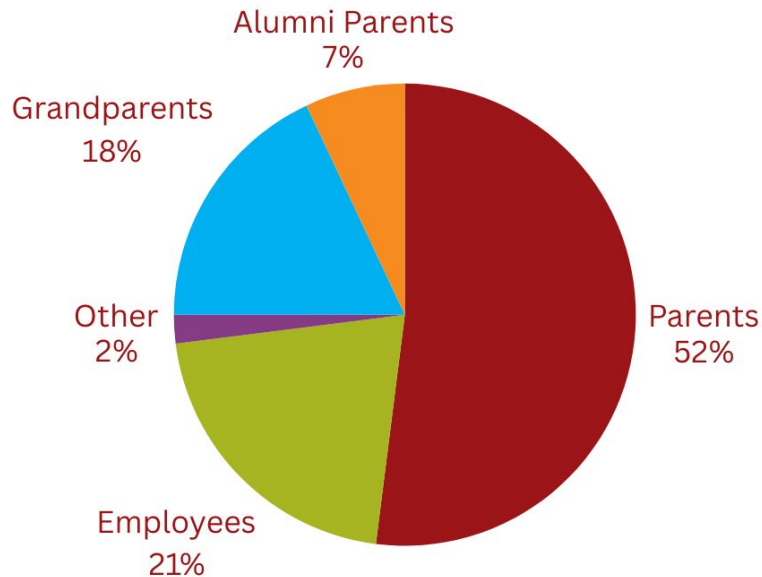
2024-2025 DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

FUNDRAISING GOAL

\$130,000

PROGRESS TO DATE

\$151,951





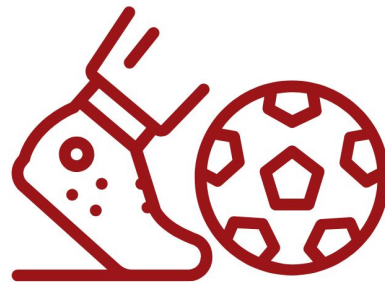
2024-2025 ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT



**JANUARY 2025
ALUMNI PANEL
COMMUNITY MEAL**

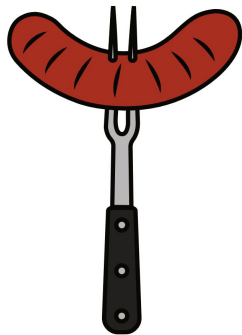


**SPRING 2025
ALUMNI AND ALUMNI
PARENT SURVEY**



**ALUMNI VS. STAFF
KICKBALL GAME
MONDAY, JUNE 9TH, 5:15PM**

DIG IN FOR HIGHLAND



SAZ'S ON STATE
THURSDAY, MAY 15
11:00 AM - 8:30 PM



**BACK THE PACK +
SUPPORT HIGHLAND**

PACKERS FAMILY NIGHT
AUGUST 2025
MORE DETAILS TO COME



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4TH
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
WASHINGTON PARK

Questions?

The image shows the exterior of Highland Community School, a modern building with a mix of brick and light-colored panels. A large, bold, red text overlay reading "Questions?" is centered across the upper half of the image. The building features a prominent entrance with a dark green overhang and large glass windows with colorful vertical accents in green and yellow. To the right, a brick section of the building has the school's name, "HIGHLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL", mounted on the wall. The sky is clear and blue, and some landscaping is visible in the foreground.

HIGHLAND
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

The image shows the exterior of Highland Community School, a multi-story building with a mix of brick and light-colored siding. A prominent feature is a large glass entrance area with colorful vertical panels in green, yellow, and blue. To the right, a curved section of the building has a sign that reads "HIGHLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL". The text "Thank You!" is overlaid in a large, bold, red font across the center of the image. The sky is clear and blue, and there are some trees and landscaping in the foreground.

Thank You!

HIGHLAND
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL