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**2015-2016 ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

# HIGHLANDER CHARTER SCHOOL

## WARREN CAMPUS DIRECTORY

### ADMINISTRATION

Rose Mary Grant – Head of School  
Jessica Blanco-Busam – Assistant Head of School  
John Wolf – Middle School Director

### STAFF

Trevor Borges – Coordinator of Technology  
Jeanne D’Agostino – Development Director  
Molly Tracy – ELO Coordinator/Afterschool Director  
Francis Gutierrez – Administrative Assistant  
Helena Johns – Discipline Specialist  
Justine Kinoian – Social Worker  
Dehlia McCarthy – School Psychologist  
Jeffrey Melo – Director of Athletics  
Sonia Nunez – Office Assistant  
Myron Reese – Building Manager  
Leticia Rivera – Spanish Instructor  
Ada Rojas – Administrative/Admissions Manager  
Lisa Schwartz – School Nurse Teacher  
Simona Simpson – Director of Multiple Pathways  
Mark Sperduti – Bus Driver

### FACULTY

Jeremy Bovay – High School Science Teacher  
Oneika Castro – Middle School English/Social Studies Teacher  
Eliza Desrosiers – Math Teacher  
Michael Dodge – Art Teacher  
Angela Goulart – Middle School Science Teacher  
Patty Houlik – Middle School Math Teacher  
Soljane Martinez – High School Social Studies Teacher  
Nathaniel McMullen – High School English Teacher  
Jeffrey Melo – Physical Education Teacher  
Peter Siner – Middle School Social Studies Teacher  
Wendy VanGyzen – Special Education Resource Teacher  
Michaela Wnuk – High School Math Teacher  
John Wolf – English & Science MS/HS Teacher  
Deborah Zolkos – Special Education Resource Teacher

## SCHOOL HISTORY & PHILOSOPHY

The Highlander Charter School opened in the fall of 2000 as a K-5 school serving 78 students. At that time, Highlander addressed several of the issues state officials identified by providing a small, diverse learning community utilizing some of the best practices available in education to all Rhode Island families. The Highlander student population is drawn largely from the greater Providence area; 75% of our students come from the city of Providence while the remaining 25% come from the surrounding towns and cities. We are now in our 15<sup>th</sup> year of operation and have grown to 474 students, Pre-K - 11.

We are named after the Highlander Folk School, founded in 1932, located just outside of Knoxville, Tennessee. Their history demonstrates that social concerns are best addressed when solutions come from the people who are experiencing the problem. They have a rich history of training labor and civil rights organizers, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks and others in an experiential-based, hands-on model.

We remain as committed today, as we were when we opened our doors in 2000, to the values of the Highlander Folk School. We actively teach social justice in developmentally appropriate ways to all of our students, addressing the issues of inequity prevalent in the world today. We encourage students to explore their interests and passions through a rich curriculum and empower our students and families to work together to solve problems in our own community by using the world as our classroom.

In the summer of 2003, Highlander renovated its first campus at 45 Greeley Street in the Wanskuck neighborhood of Providence. The renovation increased the available classroom space by 30%, yielding 11 classrooms, a dining room, an art studio, a nurse's room, two common meeting areas, new bathrooms, several new offices, and a sunroom. We graduated our first 8<sup>th</sup> grade class in the spring of 2004. During the next few years, the school expanded as it incorporated two classes per grade level.

In November 2007, after outgrowing the Greeley Street campus, Highlander renovated a building currently shared with Providence CityArts and moved to 42 Lexington Avenue in South Providence. We continued to grow as we accepted our first class of pre-kindergartners in the fall of 2012 and opened up a high school in the same building with our first freshman class beginning in the fall of 2013.

Realizing that we needed more space, we began searching for a new location. In the summer of 2014, grades 7 and up moved to 360 Market Street, the former Lady of Fatima High School, in Warren, Rhode Island. This new campus has over 70,000 square feet and more than 44 acres of land. We are working on renovating the Warren building to create a multi-faceted learning environment.

When Highlander reaches maximum enrollment in grades prek-12, we will reach a total of 668 students. The culture and community that is key to Highlander's success is a major focus as we continue to grow.

# MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

## OUR MISSION

Using innovative education practices as a catalyst for social change, we ensure that all children have the opportunity and support necessary to reach their full potential.

## OUR VISION

We design and provide research-based quality education opportunities and support services that are accessible to all learners, their families, and their teachers.

## OUR VALUES

Education, Accessibility, Empowerment and Excellence

## Highlander Charter High School Vision For Success

### Student Outcomes

During their tenure at Highlander High School, we expect that our students:

- Will master required competencies in the common core state standards, demonstrate highly developed 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and clearly exhibit GRIT (growth, resilience, integrity, and tenacity) habits of mind.
- Will complete rigorous coursework and produce high quality performance assessments.
- Will find a deep level of engagement with our school program through their personalized graduation roadmap.
- Will be digitally proficient and capable of learning, using, and leveraging a multitude of software options to support their learning.
- Will be adept at presenting, designing, collecting, organizing and creating via technology, and able to find, design or create high-tech solutions to challenges they face in their learning at home or at work environments.
- Will make a minimum growth rate of 1.5 years if they have significant skill gaps.
- Will demonstrate proficiency on state reading and math assessments.
- Will graduate from Highlander having taken at least one course at the Community College of RI and at least one course online.
- Will have developed and completed ELO courses in partnership with instructors and industry / community mentors. Through these experiences, we expect students to leave Highlander with professional and academic networks to support their post-secondary success.
- Will be critical thinkers that are aware of their optimal learning conditions, confident in their knowledge and abilities, capable of meeting high standards, and adaptive to working and learning in diverse environments.
- Will reach their full potential.

We expect that:

- 90% of our students will graduate in four years or less; and 100% will graduate within 5 years.
- 80% of our students will matriculate into a post-secondary educational program.

In order to realize our intended outcomes, our learning model must have the levels of flexibility and personalization created by having a proficiency-based model.

# SCHOOL INFORMATION

## SCHOOL HOURS

**The school building opens at 8:00 a.m.** There is no supervision for students prior to 8:00 a.m. A light breakfast is available in the cafeteria from 8:00 a.m. until 8:25 a.m. Class begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. Please make every effort to be on time. **Any student arriving after 8:25 a.m. will be tardy** and must sign in at the main office and get a late pass.

**The school day ends at 3:00 p.m.** and children not going home on the bus, participating in the afterschool program, or involved in school sports, may be picked up at 3:00 p.m. in the cafeteria. **Students in the afterschool program will be bused to the Providence campus to be picked up at 5:00 p.m.**

## **LATE PICK-UP POLICY**

We expect families be punctual in picking up their children, however we understand that there are times when a parent might be delayed. **If you know you are going to be late, please give the school a courtesy call to inform us.**

- You have a 30-minute grace period, from 3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., to pick up your child:
- If you are late more than 3 times beyond the 3:30 p.m. grace period and space is available, your child will be enrolled in the afterschool program and you will have to pay the afterschool fee.
- **If you are chronically late to pick up your child, you will be called in for a meeting with administration.**

## ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to arrive on time and to attend school every day. Students cannot accomplish their work when they are absent, and students who arrive late disrupt their classmates and start the day off-balanced and disadvantaged.

## **ABSENCES**

If your child is going to be absent from school, we ask that a family member call the school by 9:00 a.m. It is important to know early that all of our students are either safely in school or with their families. Upon returning to school, **the student must bring in a written notice from a parent/guardian, including date(s) and a reason for the absence to be considered an excused absence.** Acceptable reasons for excused absences include but are not limited to illness, medical appointments, a death in the family, court appearances, and religious holidays. If a note is not presented for one of these acceptable reasons, the absence is considered unexcused. **A student is not allowed to come to school to attend afterschool activities (extended day program, sporting practice or game, or social event) on a day s/he is absent.**

Please note that according to Federal Regulations, students having 10 absences or more are considered truant and have to be reported to Truancy Court. Once a student reaches 20 absences, summer school or retention are possibilities. Absences include vacations taken when school is in session.

## **TARDINESS**

Students entering school after 8:25 a.m. are considered tardy. Every 3 late arrivals are considered an unexcused absence. After 3 late arrivals in any month, a truancy officer will contact the parent/guardian to discuss strategies to remedy the tardiness. Parents will be notified of frequent tardiness. Excessive tardiness will result in more severe consequences (meeting/review with truancy officer, meeting with parent and administration, etc.)

## **TRUANCY**

The definition of truancy is absence from school without an acceptable excuse. The Truancy Officer will notify the parent/guardian of any student who has accumulated 5 or more absences in any given quarter in writing of this occurrence. If a student has accumulated 10 or more absences over the course of the school year, the parent/guardian will be notified in writing and the building administrator will investigate the situation. This investigation may include:

- Review of the student's attendance record
- Parent conference
- Filing of truancy petition

This investigation may result in retention, summer school, and/or a referral to Truancy Court/Family Court.

## **EARLY PICK-UP/SPECIAL DISMISSAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Students are not to be picked up early unless he/she has an appointment. If a student is to be dismissed early, a written note must be sent in ahead of time or a phone call must be made to the front office. **Students not taking the bus and going home with anyone other than their parents, guardians, or regular carpool drivers, MUST bring a written note from home.** If a note is not presented, the student will be dismissed according to regular dismissal procedures. Students must leave with someone on contact/emergency list unless otherwise specified. That person must be at least 18 years old. **Students may not call home to make alternative arrangements during the day.** A student 18 or older may sign him/herself out of school. A parent/guardian will be contacted.

## **SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS**

In the event of inclement weather or an emergency, officials will do their best to make timely decisions regarding school closings, delayed openings or early dismissals. Any closings, delays, or early dismissals will be announced on TV Channels 6, 10, and 12. **Please note that we are a charter school and not a Providence School. For this reason while watching the cancellation announcements on TV, look for HIGHLANDER CHARTER SCHOOL.**

We will also make a blast call to notify all families. Parents must take responsibility for: (1) making arrangements for their students in the event that no one is at home when the student arrives, and (2) making certain that the student understands these arrangements.

## **SAFETY DRILLS**

Students will practice emergency response plan safety drills in accordance with RI general law. This may include but are not limited to: intruder alert drills, lockdowns, on and off-site evacuation drills, and fire drills.

At the sound of the fire alarm, every person must vacate the school building immediately. The exit routes are posted in each room. Staff will remain with their class and take attendance. Below are the instructions for students:

- Stop all activity, leave all materials in place, and proceed quickly out of the building according to pre-planned routes
- Walk quickly (without running) and proceed to the designated exit
- Follow Emergency Response Plan Procedures
- Remain outside until the signal is given to re-enter the building, then resume former activities
- The elevator cannot be used during a drill
- There will be no talking during a drill
- The return to the building should be as quick and orderly as the exit with students reporting directly to class
- Students not following the Emergency Response Plan Procedure will receive a disciplinary referral for a disruption offense (talking) or defiance offense (refusal to line up).

## **LOST & FOUND**

**Please label all your child's belongings so that if they are found, they can be returned directly to him or her.** The school cannot be responsible for lost items. Check with the main office if you have lost something. **Unclaimed items will be donated in December, April, and June so please look for your lost items frequently.**

## **FEDERAL & RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Here at Highlander, we do not celebrate or practice any religious holiday. As a public school, we do not want, even inadvertently, to elevate any one religion or religious traditions over others. At the same time we want to educate students about different religions and cultures worldwide. So while Highlander students will not be celebrating any religious holidays, our students will be sharing religious traditions, customs, reading books containing religious convictions, and exploring the many questions and answers which face us as human beings around the world, as we try to learn who we are and what our convictions should be. We think these questions and answers are an important part of our curriculum.

As a matter of philosophy, Highlander Charter School does not formally celebrate holidays. This does not mean that these special days cannot be acknowledged or discussed within the classroom; and on some occasions, such as Thanksgiving or Memorial Day, these occasions can be important opportunities for instruction, discussion, or writing exercises.

# FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

## **Update contact information as needed.**

For the well-being of your child(ren), we need to know how to contact you. It is very important that the school office has your *current* address, place of work, and home, work, cell, and emergency phone numbers. If any of this information changes, you must inform the school right away.

## **Know how to communicate with your child and the school.**

We believe that good communication with families is important at Highlander. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to communicate with staff or faculty through writing (note, letter, email), telephone call, or text if questions or concerns arise.

**The first point of contact regarding your child is always his/her teacher or advisor.** Allow 24 hours for a response. Administration will only get involved in resolving classroom issues after other avenues have been pursued.

Although communication is key, **no phone calls will be put through to the classrooms during class time.** If you have a message for your student's teacher or for your student, you can call the main office and that message will be delivered during a break in the academic day. If there is an emergency, the main office can call your son/daughter out of class. **Parents are asked not to call or text message their student on their cell phone during the school day. School policy requires that cell phones be shut off and left in lockers. If the cell phone is found on the student's person, it will be confiscated (see cell phone policy page 22).**

## **Attend open houses, parent teacher conferences, exhibitions, ELO presentations, and school events.**

Open houses are required and scheduled during the first and third quarters. During this time families will familiarize themselves with the school systems and policies as well as meet the staff and faculty that will be working with their children throughout the school year.

Parent teacher conferences are required and scheduled during the second and fourth quarters. During this time families will have the opportunity to meet their child(ren)'s teachers and receive a face-to-face evaluation of their child(ren)'s progress as well as to discuss class requirements with teachers.

Highlander students are encouraged to exhibit their excellent work. These exhibitions combine written, visual and oral expression, and provide another form of assessment that link to priority learning standards each semester. These exhibitions and ELO presentations occur during the second and fourth quarters and will be highly publicized for all to attend. Parents are required to attend 1 exhibition and 1 ELO presentation every year.

School events include family engagement nights, academic nights, parent workshops, and sporting events. Families are encouraged to come often and show their school spirit while continuing to strengthen and support of our Highlander community.

### **Get involved.**

There are always volunteer opportunities at the campus. These include assisting with phone calls, interpreting and translating, chaperoning field trips, helping out in the classroom, tutoring, or assisting in the planning or execution of teacher/staff appreciation luncheons. **If you plan on volunteering at the school or attending a field trip, a BCI (background check) is required** and the form must be submitted to the school. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the school or fill out the volunteer interest form on the Highlander website.

Another way to get involved is to join H.A.T., the Highlander Action Team. The team is comprised of administrators, staff or faculty, and parents of children enrolled in the school. They work collaboratively to develop school improvement plans.

Finally, you can get involved by planning or attending school fundraiser events. You may contact our Development Director, Jeanne D'Agostino directly at [jdagostino@highlandercharter.org](mailto:jdagostino@highlandercharter.org), or see page 44 for more information on fundraisers and ways to give back to Highlander.

### **Remember to:**

- Ensure that your child attends and arrives to school **ON TIME** prepared to learn daily
- Ensure that your child knows the dismissal plan daily
- Help your child plan for each day, week, and school year
- Share in the mutual respect of all the school's policies

# ACADEMIC LIFE

## Why Have A Proficiency Based Middle-High School?

How is it possible that a student can graduate from high school and yet be unable to read or write well, do basic algebra and geometry, identify major countries on a map, understand how our political system works, or explain the scientific method? While it may be difficult to believe, countless students graduate from high schools every year without the fundamental knowledge and skills they will need to earn a college degree, succeed in the modern workplace, or contribute meaningfully to their communities. How is this possible?

The answer is that many schools do not use teaching, testing, grading, and reporting methods that require students to prove they have actually acquired the most critically important knowledge and skills. In fact, high schools give out thousands of grades, report cards, and diplomas every year, but many of them would not be able to tell you what their students have specifically learned or not learned.

A Proficiency-Based System eliminates this because:

- Learning standards enhance course credits. In the traditional high school system, one student may earn an A-plus while another earns a D-minus—and yet both students receive credit toward graduation. It's possible for a student to earn only Ds and still graduate. But is this student prepared for adult life? How do we know what the student has learned or not learned? Unfortunately, many high schools simply cannot answer these basic questions—but a proficiency-based diploma will.
- Standards ensure consistent learning expectations. In many high schools, each teacher decides how grades will be awarded. The result? Some courses are very demanding, while others have few requirements. Grades may be based entirely on the quality of a student's work, while others consider attendance, class participation, and homework completion. Without consistent learning expectations, schools cannot make sure that all students acquire the essential skills they need.
- Students demonstrate learning before moving on. In a proficiency-based system, every student must demonstrate what they have learned—by writing a paper, delivering a presentation, or completing a challenging project—before they pass a course, move on to the next grade, or graduate from high school. Learning standards establish *a minimum level of proficiency*, based on common high expectations that all students must meet before moving on.
- The focus is on learning, not time. In most high schools, students are expected to attend class for a certain amount of time every day and graduate in four years. The time students spend in school is consistent, but what they learn is often extremely inconsistent. In a proficiency-based system, learning expectations remain constant while time is variable. One student may graduate in three years, while another graduates in five—but every student graduates prepared for future success.

- A proficiency-based diploma certifies readiness for life. Employers and college-admissions officers want to know exactly what graduates can do and how well they can do it. They want to know if students have strong writing, public speaking, or computer-programming skills, for example. A proficiency-based diploma not only tells us what students have done, but what they can *do*.

### **How Does Proficiency Based Learning Work?**

1. *All students must demonstrate what they have learned before moving on.*

Before students can pass a course, move on to the next grade level, or graduate, they must demonstrate that they have learned what they were expected to learn. If students fail to meet learning expectations, they are given more support and instruction from teachers, more time to learn and practice, and more opportunities to demonstrate progress. Until they acquire the most essential skills and grasp the most important concepts, students do not move on to the next level.

2. *Teachers are very clear about what students need to learn.*

In every class, students know precisely what teachers expect—no guesswork required. The learning expectations for the course are clearly described and communicated, and students know precisely where they stand throughout the course.

3. *Common, consistent methods are used to evaluate student learning.*

In many schools, different learning expectations are applied from course to course, and different methods and criteria are used to evaluate what students have learned. Consequently, one Algebra I course in a school may be very challenging, for example, while another Algebra I course may be comparatively easy—and a B earned in the “difficult” course might actually represent stronger learning achievement than an A in the “easy” course. Proficiency-based learning applies the same standards to all students, while teachers use consistent methods of evaluating and reporting on student learning—everyone knows precisely what grades stand for and what each student has learned. As a result, grades mean the same thing from course to course, and schools can certify that students are prepared when they move on.

4. *While learning expectations are fixed, teachers and students have more flexibility.*

Even though learning expectations and evaluation methods are common and consistent, teachers can be given more flexibility in how they teach and students can be given more choice in how they learn. For example, teachers don’t need to use the same textbooks, assignments, and tests—as long as their students learn what they need to learn, teachers can develop new and more creative ways to teach. Similarly, students can be given an assignment (research an American president, for example) but they can choose which president to study or how they want to show what they’ve learned (one student may write an essay, while others may create a short documentary using archival photos or an audio podcast in the style of a presidential address). As long as students meet the course expectations, teachers can teach and students can learn in the ways that work best for them.

## GRADES & REPORT CARDS

Throughout each semester, parents can monitor their children's progress towards mastering the competencies required for credit in each course using Skyward. At the end of each semester, reports will be sent home indicating what competencies students have mastered and what credits were earned. If a student has not mastered all competencies in one or more courses, they will need to demonstrate mastery before receiving a credit for that course.

## HOMEWORK POLICY

In a proficiency-based system, homework—i.e., assignments completed largely outside of the classroom and without direct support and supervision from teachers—should be instructionally purposeful and connected to clearly defined learning standards.

### **HOMEWORK PHILOSOPHY**

- All homework assignments will be relevant, educationally purposeful, and driven by clearly defined learning objectives for a unit or lesson.
- Students will be given an equal and equitable opportunity to complete all homework assignments. Given that some home situations may complicate a student's ability to complete an outside-of-class assignment—such as households that have no computers or internet connection— teachers will ensure that every student has access to all necessary materials, technologies, and resources regardless of their socioeconomic status, language ability, disability, or home situation.
- To the extent possible, homework will be differentiated for students, which includes, when appropriate, student-designed learning tasks and projects that allow them to demonstrate proficiency in ways that engage their personal interests, ambitions, and learning needs.

### **ASSIGNING HOMEWORK**

- The purpose of all homework assignments will be clearly articulated to and understood by students; specifically, students will know what learning objectives and performance indicators the assignment addresses, and what criteria will be used if the homework assignment is going to be assessed.
- Students will know in advance if a homework assignment is going to be assessed, and whether the assignment will be a formative assessment or a graded part of a larger summative assessment.

### **HOMEWORK GRADING**

- The failure to complete or turn in homework on time will not affect a student's academic score, rather it will be reflected in a student's habits-of-work grade on his/her transcript.
- **A homework assignment MAY count towards an assessment grade, not just a habits-of-work grade.** When this is the case, students will be informed of this prior to being given the assignment.

- Students will be given additional opportunities to improve, complete, and resubmit homework as an additional demonstration opportunity when reasonable and appropriate. If the assignment is part of a larger summative assessment, the improved scores will be counted, not earlier scores or a combination of scores.
- Teachers will provide feedback in a timely fashion so that students know how well they performed before they take the next assessment.

### **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

The intent of Academic Probation is to provide students with opportunities to meet their competencies by the end of the semester and receive credit for courses upon their first attempts.

Competencies will be reviewed at the end of October and at the beginning of December for Semester 1 classes, and at the end of February and the beginning of May for Semester 2 classes. Upon review and teacher recommendation, students scoring below a 3 in any competency may be placed on academic probation until the student proves mastery in that competency and the teacher signs off on it.

During academic probation students will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities including but not limited to: student government, school clubs, choice time, non-academic field trips, interscholastic athletics, and scholastic social events. Students will have opportunities during school and after school to receive academic support.

If a returning student has not met his or her competencies by the end of the school year, s/he will begin the new school year on academic probation and will remain on academic probation until the competency has been met or the teacher signs off on it.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS & PROCEDURES**

Highlander follows all State and Federal requirements for identifying and servicing students with special needs. Highlander employs resource teachers, a speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, a social worker, and a school psychologist, as well as multiple specialized reading tutors. When students enter Highlander with an IEP, a meeting will be held to review and update the IEP.

### **RTI PROCESS**

The RTI (Response to Intervention) process at Highlander is a way to identify students who may not be making the progress they should be making in the areas of academic learning or social-emotional functioning. Teachers or parents may refer a student to RTI in order to brainstorm some possible reasons why the student is not making progress and to develop strategies that can be put in place to assist the student. This is a cyclical process and progress is evaluated to determine if the strategies or interventions are working.

If not, more intensive interventions may be tried. If there continues to be a concern about the student's progress, a student may be referred for special education assessment.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Students may be referred for special education assessment to see if they qualify for an Individualized Education Program (IEP) either through the RTI process or by a direct parent referral. When a referral is received, the special education team will meet to determine if there is a need for testing. If students qualify for special education services, an IEP will be developed. The Special Education Handbook has more specific information about this process and IEPs.

## **504 PLAN**

Students who do not qualify for an IEP but have a diagnosis that impacts school performance, such as ADHD, may qualify for a 504 plan that will outline modifications and accommodations they can receive.

## **EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES (ELOS)**

Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) are community-connected, student-centered programs that offer alternative paths to course credit. **ELO projects are driven by student interest** and are aligned by rubric-based assessments specific to each student's vision. This means students now play a role in where, when, and how they learn.

Designed for hands-on learning, ELOs match skilled *Community Mentors* with students to provide enriched learning inside and outside the classroom. So far we have created mentor partnerships with AS220, DownCity Design, The Center for Dynamic Learning, Rhode Island for Community and Justice, and many more.

Students are taught to ask an essential question, identify learning goals, plan activities, create a product, and demonstrate proficiency. These cross-cutting problem-solving skills are relevant in various academic practices and emphasize competency-based learning, alternative to standardized testing. ELOs challenge students to turn their passions into learning experiences. With the support of teachers, administrators, and local mentors, we believe that to teach the whole student we need the whole community. The ELO Coordinators will oversee the program.

## **DIGITAL BADGES**

Digital badges are indicators of accomplishments, skills, and high levels of engagement. Like a merit badge, these are visible and legitimized while putting a spotlight on non-traditional and specialized skills. For instance, a student may have a particular mastery over graphic design and design technologies - digital badges

allow for this student to be recognized for their exceptional skills. Badges also recognize legitimate skills gained outside of the school day, such as in an afterschool class, vocational training, or community group. These badges go on student transcripts and will help our students be recognized for skill-sets otherwise ignored by classic evaluation. At Highlander, we currently offer five unique badges: Professionalism, Civic Engagement, Technology, Creativity and Innovation, and Sportsmanship. More badges are in the process of being developed.

### **MULTIPLE PATHWAYS (HIGH SCHOOL)**

Highlander High School's model for personalization is built on the concept of a Graduation Roadmap. Thanks to the strategic integration of technology, this type of personalization is possible; driven by student needs, strengths, talents and interests, the Graduation Roadmap will offer every student multiple pathways for earning graduation credits. Some pathways include face-to-face coursework at Highlander, the Community College of Rhode Island, or another secondary or post-secondary partner; online coursework or other digital partners; and an Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs) pathway that allows students to build credit-bearing courses centered on inquiry-based projects.

While all pathways will be part of each student's high school experience, students – along with their advisors, parents, and teachers – will determine how to best leverage each pathway to achieve their goals. The entire process will be overseen by the Director of Multiple Pathways.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Educational field trips are an extension of learning that takes place in the community. All expectations for students in school apply to students during field trips. Those field trips that are related to curriculum are considered to be part of the educational experience and therefore behavior in school and/or lack of work completion will not be cause to omit students from the trip. If, however, students behave poorly on a field trip or do not complete an assignment that is a pre-requisite to prepare students for the experience, students may lose the right to attend subsequent field trips. All non-academic or reward field trips are privileges that are earned and students may be omitted for in-school behavior and/or lack of work completion.

Whenever possible, we encourage families to give monetary donations towards funding the field trips. **Parents or family members over the age of 21 interested in chaperoning school field trips must provide the school a BCI (background check) prior to the date of the trip.**

### **TOWN MEETINGS**

Once a week, the middle school community and high school community of students will meet to hear news, announcements, and a “thought of the week” (in the form of a skit, poem, presentation, or activity) led by rotating advisory groups. Guest speakers will occasionally be invited to join our town meetings.

## TECHNOLOGY

Highlander provides computers, tablets, and other forms of technology to be used as instructional tools for our students. Students are encouraged to use these tools in order to increase their knowledge of curriculum and also to increase their skills and help them become adept to technology use for non-entertainment purposes.

Internet access is available to students at Highlander Charter School. The Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to students. Our goal for all students and teachers is to promote educational excellence in school by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

With access to computers and people all over the world, comes the availability of materials that may not be considered educational value in the context of the school setting. Although Highlander Charter School has taken precautions to control all materials, an industrious user may have the ability to discover controversial information. Nevertheless, we believe that the valuable information and interaction accessible on the Internet far outweighs the possibility that users may access inappropriate material.

It is essential for each user to recognize his or her responsibility in having access to the vast services, sites, systems, and people that are located on the Internet. As a user, your son or daughter is ultimately responsible for his or her actions in accessing the Internet services. **The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. This privilege may be revoked at any time for abusive conduct.** Such conduct includes but is not limited to:

- Giving out personal information, including – but not limited to – name, address, age, sex, telephone number and e-mail address
- Playing games on the Internet without permission
- Changing or adding passwords and settings that can adversely effect the operation of the computer.
- Plagiarism (copying word for word)
- Trespassing in other people's files
- Using the Internet for illegal activities such as accessing, processing, receiving, or sending pornographic materials
- Using someone's name or password without his or her permission
- Using the Internet for personal e-mail, instant messenger or chat rooms
- Using the Internet to harm others, i.e. bullying, hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and any other antisocial behavior
- Creating web sites that contain inappropriate content
- Interfering with other students' or adults' computer files
- Vandalizing, destructing, or abusing hardware, software, data, and network integrity including harmful spreading of viruses
- Downloading or uploading files to computers without permission

- Accessing social-networking sites or apps during the school day including, but not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, or Kik Messenger.
- Making school specific passwords public

**A parent/guardian of a student will be billed for the cost to repair any damage to technology due to reckless or negligent behavior on the part of the student.**

# STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

## **Students will be on time for class.**

Tardiness has a negative impact on student success. Students who are tardy miss important instruction and often times disrupt the delivery of instruction.

Students will have 5 minutes to pass in between classes. **This is more than sufficient time to prepare for class, arrive in class, and be seated and ready to learn BEFORE the bell rings.** Once the bell sounds, doors will be closed and class will begin. Students without passes will be sent to the office to sign the tardy tracker log and get a tardy pass.

The Discipline Specialist or Administrator will review the tardy tracker log out and follow up with the students who were tardy at the end of the day or at the start of the next day. Below are the consequences for tardiness to class:

- First offense – verbal warning
- Second offense – phone call home, written warning to be signed by parent, 1 week of behavior probation
- Third offense – phone call home, written warning to be signed by parent, parent meeting, and behavior probation for the remainder of the quarter

## **Students will leave their cell phones and other electronic devices in their lockers.**

At the start of each day, students will SHUT OFF their cell phones and put them in their backpacks or lockers. They may not access them during the day (passing periods, lunch, bathroom breaks, etc.). **A cell phone may not be kept on the student's person** (skirts, pants, etc.). Students in the extended day program or involved in afterschool sports may not access their phones until they are dismissed.

If a cell phone is found on the student's person, or if it is being accessed during the school day, it will be confiscated by a staff member. Refusal to surrender your phone when asked is considered defiance. Defiance may result in disciplinary consequences, including suspension. Parents will be contacted.

Below are the consequences for the violation of Highlander's cell phone/electronics policy:

- 1st offense-confiscated, given to the Discipline Specialist, and released to student at end of school day
- 2nd offense-confiscated, given to the Discipline Specialist, and released directly to parent/guardian
- 3rd offense-confiscated, given to the Discipline Specialist, and released at the end of the quarter
- 4th offense-confiscated, given to the Discipline Specialist, and released at the end of school year

**\*The school is not responsible for any lost or stolen cell phones/electronics.**

**Students will respect the locker & backpack policy.**

Students are provided the use of lockers for the safe-keeping of outer clothing, books, and learning materials. Each student will be assigned an individual locker along with a combination number. Students are expected not to give out their combination number. **Backpacks must be stored in lockers.** Home lunches that are stored in lockers must be taken home daily. Students will be permitted to go to their locker before 1st period begins, between classes, before and after lunch, and at the end of the school day. Administration retains the right to search lockers, backpacks, and purses, especially if there is suspicion.

**Students will use hall passes.**

Students are not permitted to leave class during the first and last 15 minutes of class. Students who are granted permission to leave class must wear an official school hall pass around their necks. Students must show passes to any staff member upon request. If a student is found in the hall without a pass, s/he must report to the main office and sign in to the tardy tracker log and get a pass. This will count as a tardy offense.

**Students will adhere to the dress code policy.**

Students are expected to wear clothing that meets the Highlander dress code. Clothing must be neat, clean, in good repair, and appropriate at all times. **Pants and shorts must be worn on the natural waistline - no sagging or visible underwear.**

**Uniforms (Monday-Thursday)**

**Tops:**

- Red or black long-sleeve or short-sleeve polo shirts with school logo
- Shirts worn underneath the uniform shirt must be solid red, black, or khaki
- A solid gray hooded-sweatshirt or a black cardigan with or without the school logo is allowed over a uniform shirt (no other logos or prints allowed on the sweatshirt)
- A Feinstein sweater or Highlander Hawks sweatshirt/pullover may be worn over a uniform shirt
- Coats, jackets, and fleeces cannot be worn in the building on any day of the week
- Sports uniform tops may be worn by student athletes on game days only

**Bottoms:**

- Khaki pants
- Khaki shorts, skirts, or jumpers (cannot be shorter than fingertips when hands are on the side)

**Footwear:**

- Closed-toe shoes or sneakers (no open-toe shoes such as flip-flops or sandals)
- Sneakers must be worn (or brought to school) on physical education days

### **Dress Down Day (Friday)**

While we value students' rights to express themselves through their dress, we expect all students to conform to certain standards of cleanliness, neatness, and appropriateness for school. Faculty and administration reserve the right to determine what is appropriate. In general, no student's clothing should be such as to distract others from the educational purposes of school.

**Tops must cover the torso, abdomen, and undergarments.** Inappropriate tops include strapless tops, tube tops, halter tops, plunging neckline tops, spaghetti strap tops, see-through tops, midriffs, muscle shirts, tank tops with straps under 2-inches, or tops with inappropriate wording or images.

**Bottoms must cover undergarments and be an appropriate length.** Skirts, dresses, and shorts cannot be shorter than fingertips when hands are on the side. Jeans should be intact. If they have holes or tears, they must not be above the knee and must be worn with tights underneath. Pajama bottoms are not allowed.

**Footwear must be closed-toe shoes or sneakers.** Open-toe shoes such as flip-flops or sandals are not allowed. Sneakers must be worn (or brought to school to wear) on physical education days.

**Jackets, coats, and fleeces are not to be worn in the building. Hats, caps, visors, and other headgear are not to be worn in the building.**

### **Other Dress Code Policies:**

- Team/group members are permitted to wear official uniform when the group has a performance/game
- High school students may wear white, red, or black long-sleeve or short-sleeve Oxford shirts with the school logo on it along with the Highlander tie (available for sale at the main office) in place of the red or black polo shirts Monday through Thursday.
- Under special circumstances (religious beliefs, health or handicapping conditions) students may be exempt from the provisions of the dress code policy.

Every morning, the Discipline Specialist and teachers on arrival duty will check uniforms. **Students will be reminded to put coats, hats, or non-uniform sweaters in their lockers to avoid a uniform infraction. Students at this time will also get one free reminder to pull up their pants.** Students not in compliance with the policy regarding tops, bottoms, or footwear will be sent to the nurse's office to change into a borrowed school uniform or to call home for the appropriate clothes to be brought in to the school. The nurse will call students to return borrowed uniforms at the end of the day. This infraction will be recorded in the dress code log and submitted to the office. Students will also be given a reminder to put coats, sweaters, or jackets away after lunch.

**Teachers will check uniforms at the start of each class as well. This includes checking for sagging pants. Students violating the policy will be sent to change. Students with sagging pants will be sent to the nurse for suspenders. Any infraction will be recorded and submitted to the office via messenger.** These infractions will be recorded in the dress code log. The Discipline Specialist or Administrator will review the dress code log and follow up with the students at the end of the day or at the start of the next day. Below are the consequences for uniform infractions:

- More than one infractions in the same day – loss of next Dress Down Friday privilege
- First offense – verbal warning
- Second offense – phone call home, written warning to be signed by parent, loss of 1 Dress Down Friday privilege
- Third offense – phone call home, parent meeting, exclusion from Friday choice time, & loss of Dress Down Friday privileges for the remainder of the quarter

# STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Highlander Charter School recognizes that acceptable behavior is essential for the development of responsible, self-disciplined, and productive citizens. Here at Highlander, we are committed to fostering the social and emotional well-being of all students. In turn, we expect students to act responsibly and respectfully and to contribute to a safe and positive school environment.

Those who choose not to abide by our standards, or who otherwise affect the community negatively, will be held accountable for their actions. The rules and procedures outlined below apply under normal circumstances. However, if there is a situation that requires an immediate, non-standard response, the school reserves the right to deal with this instance of inappropriate behavior in a timely and efficient manner, taking actions deemed to be in the best interest of the school, its faculty, and its students.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Integrity is valued in all aspects of school life. Dishonesty in any form is a serious violation of our rules. Academic dishonesty normally falls into one of two categories: cheating or plagiarism. Cheating is giving or receiving help in any form on a test, exam, or assignment where collaboration was not permitted. Plagiarism is presenting the work, words, or ideas of another as one's own.

1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	A disciplinary referral will be filled out and the student will be sent to the office. A parent/guardian will be contacted. The student will receive a 1 for their Habits of Work competency and be placed on academic probation for the remainder of the quarter.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	A disciplinary referral will be filled out and student will be sent to the office. The student will have 1 day of in-school suspension and a parent/guardian will have to come in for a meeting. The student will receive a 1 for their Habits of Work competency and be placed on academic probation for the remainder of the semester. A formal letter will be placed in the student's permanent file and will be signed by the parent, student, and administrator.
3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense	A disciplinary referral will be filled out and student will be sent to the office. The student will have 3 days of out-school suspension and a parent/guardian will have to come in for a meeting. The student will receive a 1 for their Habits of Work competency and be placed on academic probation for the remainder of the year. A formal letter of "no confidence" will be attached to the student's high school transcripts. The student will become ineligible for school-based awards or scholarships.

## **RESPECT FOR OTHERS**

Every member of the Highlander community has the right to work, to learn, and to grow in an environment of mutual respect, compassion, and support. This is especially true when considerations of socially significant identities are involved, such as those based on race, class, ethnic origin, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Our community must be free from verbal, physical, and psychological intimidation of any kind. Behavior that disregards the self-esteem of others and is uninvited and unwanted will not be tolerated.

**No student shall intentionally commit, or conspire to commit, an act of harassment, intimidation, bullying, sexual harassment, teen date violence, or sexual assault against another student.**

This policy applies to all conduct on Highlander’s premises and at school-sponsored events, conduct during transportation to and from school and school-sponsored events, and to conduct off Highlander’s premises, including through the use of social media and technology, that has an adverse affect upon a student’s educational environment.

- **“Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying”** means any intentional gesture, or any intentional written, verbal, or physical act or threat by a student that:
  - A reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:
    - harming a student; or
    - damaging a student’s property; or
    - placing a student in reasonable fear or harm to his or her person; or
    - placing a student in reasonable fear or damage to his or her property
  - Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student
- **“Sexual Harassment”** means unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
  - Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s participation in the educational process; or
  - Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a factor for educational decisions affecting the individual; or
  - Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s education, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
- **“Teen Date Violence”** is behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner.
- **“Sexual Assault”** includes behaviors that are attempted or perpetrated against a victim’s will or when a victim cannot consent because of age, disability or the influence of alcohol or drugs. Sexual assault or threatened physical force, use of weapons, coercion, intimidation, or pressure may include but is not limited to:
  - intentional touching of someone in ways that are unwanted; or
  - public display of images that were taken in a private context or when the victim was unaware

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

- Any student, and/or parents/guardians of a student, who believe the student has been harassed, intimidated, bullied, sexually harassed, sexually assaulted, or been a victim to teen date violence should immediately report the situation to the Discipline Specialist or other school personnel.
- Any employee who receives a report of, becomes aware of, or in good faith believes that a student is a victim of harassment, intimidation, bullying, sexual harassment, teen date violence, or sexual assault is required to report the matter to the Discipline Specialist or Building Administrator immediately.
- Any employee who witnesses harassment, intimidation, bullying, sexual harassment, teen date violence, or the sexual assault of a student should take immediate appropriate action to intervene.
- Any student who witnesses or becomes aware that a fellow student is being subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, sexual harassment, teen date violence, or sexual assault should immediately report the incident to the Discipline Specialist, Building Administrator, or staff member.

## **INVESTIGATION AND REPORTING**

When a report of harassment, intimidation, bullying, sexual harassment, sexual assault, or teen date violence is received by the Discipline Specialist or Administrator, the following steps will be taken:

- Obtain a written statement from the complainant regarding the allegations;
- Obtain a written statement from the accused;
- Obtain written statements from witnesses if any; and
- Prepare a written report detailing the investigation.

The investigation should be completed within 10 days.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- Upon completing the investigation, the Discipline Specialist or Administrator will communicate his/her findings and intended actions to be taken to the victim and the accused.
- If there is sufficient evidence to support the allegation, disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, or other appropriate penalties, may be taken against the offender.
- If there is insufficient evidence to support the allegation, no record will be made of the allegation in the complaining student's permanent record or the accused student's permanent record.
- In the event the investigation discloses that complaining student has falsely accused another individual knowingly or in a malicious manner, the complaining student may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension.

- In the event the harassment involves violent or other conduct which could be reasonably considered to be criminal in nature, the Discipline Specialist or Administrator will refer the matter to the local law enforcement agency.

## **PROTECTION AGAINST RETALIATION**

No retaliation will be taken against a student or adult who reports harassment in good faith. Any person found to have retaliated against another individual for reporting an incident of harassment may be subject to the same disciplinary action provided for harassment, intimidation, bullying, sexual harassment, sexual assault, or teen date violence offenders. Those persons who assist or participate in an investigation are also protected from retaliation under this policy.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any investigation will be conducted, to the maximum extent possible, in a manner that protects the privacy of both the complainant and the accused. However, if it is suspected that child abuse has occurred, such abuse will be reported to the proper authorities as required by state law (see page 42).

## **RECORD OF ALLEGATIONS**

Highlander will keep and maintain a written record, including, but not limited to, witness statements, investigative reports, and correspondence, from the date any allegation is reported to school personnel. This information in the written record will also include the action taken by the school in response to each allegation. The written record will be filed and maintained for three years from the date of the resolution of an investigation unless new circumstances dictate that the file should be kept for a longer period of time.

## **WEAPONS & ASSAULT**

The presence of weapons and violence will not be tolerated by Highlander Charter School. This policy provides the power for the Discipline Specialist or Administrator to address potentially dangerous situations. This policy applies to all cases involving weapons or assaults in school or on school grounds, on the bus, at the bus stop, on the way to or from school, and at school sponsored activities.

- **“Weapons”** are devices, instruments, materials, or substances that can be used for, or are readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury
- **“Assault”** is defined as an act of physical violence or threat of physical violence by a student on another student or staff member. When considering what constitutes assault, the factors to be weighed include: age of student(s) involved, seriousness of bodily injury, the intent of the individual(s) involved, any disability affecting the behavior of the individual, and any other factor deemed relevant.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- **Law enforcement officials may be notified after administrative assessment of the situation.**
- Any student found to be in possession of a weapon, or involved in an assault, will **immediately be suspended**. During this suspension, the school administrator will take the necessary steps in determining any additional action, which may include long-term suspension and possible expulsion.

## **ALCOHOL & DRUGS**

The purpose of this policy is to promote and maintain a safe and healthy environment for the entire school community. In order to meet this goal, Highlander Charter School adopts a substance abuse policy, which delineates a plan of action that will aid students to abstain from the use of alcohol & drugs. Highlander will intervene when student use is detected, take corrective disciplinary action, and provide aftercare for said student.

## **PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

Highlander Charter School will provide students with a varied program of instructional activities that will focus on preventing students from using alcohol and drugs. The school has a school psychologist and social worker onsite if students need additional services.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- Any student found possessing, using, or selling illegal or unauthorized drugs or alcohol or possessing illegal drug paraphernalia shall be **immediately suspended**.
- **Law enforcement officials may be notified after administrative assessment of the situation.** In this case, all evidence will be kept in a secured location until it is turned over to the appropriate authorities.
- The parent/guardian of the student will be notified, and a conference with the administrator will be scheduled as soon as possible

## **AFTERCARE**

Students returning from suspension or an inpatient or outpatient treatment program will be given aftercare educational support from one or more of the following: school psychologist, school social worker, and Discipline Specialist.

## OTHER INFRACTIONS & CONSEQUENCES

When other infractions occur, and teachers have already made attempts to redirect the student in class, teachers will fill out a disciplinary referral and the student will be sent to the Discipline Specialist for a student conference. When the Discipline Specialist is not available, the student will be sent to the Building Administrator. The student will not return to that class and will be responsible for making up all missed work while sitting at the office. The parent/guardian will be contacted and the referral will go home to be signed by the parent/guardian. **The student is expected to make amends with the teacher within the next 24 hours.**

**Highlander follows all State and Federal regulations regarding the discipline of special education students.**

	<b>INFRACTION</b>	<b>CONSEQUENCE</b>
<b>MINOR</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">Disruption</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Inappropriate Displays of Affection</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Offense: student conference, parent contact</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: same as above and behavior probation for 2 weeks</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: same as above, behavior probation for the remainder of the quarter, and a parent meeting</p>
<b>MODERATE</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">Abusive Language</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Disrespect/Defiance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Skipping Class</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Technology Violation</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Offense: student conference, parent contact</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: same as above and behavior probation for 2 weeks</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: same as above and behavior probation for the remainder of the quarter, 1 day of in-school suspension, &amp; parent meeting</p> <p><b>Repeated offenses may lead to out-of-school suspension.</b></p>
<b>MAJOR*</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">Fighting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Threat</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theft</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vandalism</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Offense: student conference, parent contact, behavior probation for two weeks, 1 day out-of-school suspension</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: same as above, behavior probation for the remainder of the quarter, 3 days out-of-school suspension, parent meeting</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: same as above, behavior probation for the remainder of the semester, 3-10 days out-of-school suspension, parent meeting, and possible expulsion</p> <p><b>*Law enforcement may be contacted at any level of offense depending on the severity of the offense. A parent/guardian of a student will be billed for the cost to repair or replace any damaged or stolen property.</b></p>

## BEHAVIOR PROBATION

Students assigned to behavior probation will be ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities including, but not limited to:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School dances</li> <li>● School parties</li> <li>● Town Meetings</li> <li>● Friday Choice Time Activities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sporting events</li> <li>● Non-academic field trips</li> <li>● After school clubs</li> <li>● Sports teams</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**If a student receives 3 disciplinary referrals in one month for different infractions, s/he will automatically be placed on behavior probation for two weeks.**

**Highlander Charter School  
Disciplinary Referral**

**Student Information:**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_ Advisor/HR Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

**Problem Behavior:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abusive Language    | <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate Displays of Affection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Dishonesty | <input type="checkbox"/> Skipping Class                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying/Harassment | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology Violation                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disrespect/Defiance | <input type="checkbox"/> Theft                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disruption          | <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drug/Alcohol Use    | <input type="checkbox"/> Weapons                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fighting            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                         |

**Specific Information Regarding Incident:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Action Taken by Dean of Discipline/Administrator:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Probation                | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of Privilege: _____              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Probation                | <input type="checkbox"/> Out-of-School Suspension (Days: ____) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conference with Student           | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Contact                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Detention                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Time in Office                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In-School Suspension (Days: ____) |  |

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Future Action Required:**

- None
- Student/Teacher/Administrator Conference
- Student/Parent/Administrator Conference
- Student/Parent/Teacher/Administrator Conference

**Please sign and return:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## **STUDENT RESTRAINT POLICY**

Here at Highlander Charter School, we realize that sometimes children may not be able to safely control their bodies at times of emotional crisis. In these situations, they may physically lash out at themselves, other students, faculty or staff, which may result in physical injury to them or others. In order to ensure the safety of all, physical intervention may be necessary.

Faculty, staff, and teachers will try several intervention strategies to assist the student in de-escalating and regaining control. Should such interventions fail, physical restraint will be used as a last resort. To ensure safety, certain staff members have been trained in physical restraint techniques. These staff, and only these staff will respond in situations where physical restraint is needed. Parents will be informed if their children needed to be restrained during the day.

## **SEARCH & SEIZURE POLICY**

Periodic searches may be conducted based upon reasonable suspicion that school rules or town, state, or federal laws have or will be violated. A search may only be conducted by a building administrator. Administrators are authorized to seize illegal items or contraband that may present a threat to the safety of the individual or others. Items seized shall be retained in proper order to preserve a controlled chain of custody for purposes of prosecution by the police department if necessary. Items that are used, or may be used, to disrupt or interfere with the educational process or environment may be temporarily removed from a student's possession.

## **SCHOOL BUS SAFETY**

Students attending Highlander Charter School will have the option of riding the bus to school. Students arriving by bus may not leave school grounds and are to report directly to school. In order to ensure that students are safe while riding the school bus, we expect all of our students to behave responsibly on the bus.

### **BUS RULES:**

- follow directions given by bus personnel willingly and promptly, and sit in assigned seats if they are given
- respect the bus driver, bus monitor, and fellow students
- respect student and bus property
- use inside voices and appropriate language
- be safe: remain seated, refrain from hanging out of the windows, throwing things in the bus, at someone, or out the window, and keep hands, feet, and arms inside the bus at all times
- keep the bus clean: no eating, drinking, or smoking on the bus

If a student is written up three times by the bus monitor, s/he will be suspended from the bus for 5 -10 days. Any damage to the bus will require parental/family compensation to the bus company. Extreme behavior will result in an immediate 5-day suspension from the bus.

### **AUTOMOBILES AT SCHOOL (SENIORS ONLY)**

Students who wish to drive and park a vehicle at the school must register their cars with the main office. Students must have a signed parent/guardian waiver, and proof of license, registration, and insurance. Parking permits will then be issued to the students. Parking permits must be visible on cars at all times when they are on school property. **Students will lose the right to park on school grounds if they violate the provisions of the Vehicle Registration Contract.** This contract requires the following:

- Student cars are to be parked in designate student parking areas only
- Students are to follow the 10 mph speed limit on the property
- Once parked, students may not enter their cars or move their cars until ready to go home
- Students will not loiter in front of their cars with other students
- Students driving cars to school are to observe traffic and safety regulations at all times.
- Students will submit to car searches by administration if suspicion arises
- Students will not drive other students without written parent consent

### **SCHOOL DANCES**

Students at Highlander Charter School will have the opportunity to attend school dances as an extracurricular activity. School dances allow students to socialize and get to know one another outside of the classroom setting. Admission is open to all Highlander students. Students may bring a guest to a dance that is of high school age, no older than 20 years old. Doors are closed 1 ½ hours after the dance begins. No admittance is permitted after that time. Any student(s) who leave prior to the scheduled end of the dance is/are not allowed to return. The indoor lobby is to be used only by individuals who have paid admission.

Behavior and attire must be in accordance with school guidelines and expectations, and individuals may be removed from dances for behavior or attire that is not appropriate or not in line with these established rules.

A student about whom there is a reasonable suspicion of consumption of alcohol may be asked to submit to a breathalyzer test. No breathalyzer test will be administered if a student acknowledges consumption of alcohol. If a student tests positive, parents/guardians will be called to transport their student home. If a parent/guardian is not available to transport a student, local police will be called to do so. Emergency medical personnel will be sought if the student is assessed to be in need of medical assistance. Students determined to have consumed alcohol will be subject to disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Handbook (see page 30).

## AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

The Highlander Afterschool Program provides Highlander students with safe, exciting, high quality afterschool programming through a 21st Century Community Learning Center federal grant. For students in grades 7-11, Afterschool is offered four days a week (Monday - Thursday/ 3:00 - 4:30 PM). **All students are provided bussing back to Highlander's Providence campus at the end of Afterschool. They must be picked up at 5:00 P.M. If parents are not on time, students must wait outside because programming is still going on at the Providence campus.**

Each semester new clubs and activities are added. Film Club, Leaders Club, Gay-Straight Alliance, Art in Nature, Volleyball, and Yoga are all examples of the programs provided through the Highlander Afterschool program. Parent Cafes, information nights, and workshops are also offered to help connect our staff and parents, as well as offer valuable community resources.

**The first day of afterschool programming will be Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup>.**

# ATHLETICS

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is a requirement for students in all grades. Students are expected to fulfill the requirement of at least 50 minutes per week. Students are expected to complete 4 years of physical education. However, students may choose to fulfill these requirements through a pathway other than physical education classes.

- Students are not required but have the option to change out of uniforms into clothes acceptable for physical education.
- Students are not allowed to wear pajamas, baggy pants, cutoffs, etc.
- Sneakers are required.
- Medical excuses from a physician must be provided if there is an illness or injury
- The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen items from gym lockers. However, if theft takes place and subject is found, immediate action will take place.

## ATHLETIC PROGRAM

The athletic program at the Highlander Charter School is an integral part of a student's life. A well-rounded program of athletic activities is vital to the academic and social/civic development of students to promote sportsmanship, character development, and leadership.

The Highlander Charter School is a member of the Coastal Prep League, whose purpose is to organize, regulate and promote secondary athletics for Rhode Island schools. As a member of the Coastal Prep League, Highlander Charter School abides by their rules and regulations, and subscribes to the guidelines set forth by this organization.

For any questions regarding the policies and procedures created by the Highlander Charter School Athletic Program, please see the Student-Athlete Handbook. Lastly, any questions about any aspect of the program not addressed here should be directed to Mr. Melo, Director of Athletics.

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

School is a place for healthy students. We do our best to maintain a healthy environment in school. We also teach students how to stay healthy and make healthy choices.

Highlander has a certified school nurse teacher on staff. The nurse is responsible for administering medication in school, first aid, maintaining health records, working with families and students around chronic illness, performing and/or arranging health screenings (vision, scoliosis, dental, and hearing), and teaching a health curriculum. The school nurse notifies families in cases of contagious illness (such as strep throat) and works with the Rhode Island Department of Health in cases of outbreaks (chickenpox, etc.).

If there is a medical emergency while the student is in school, the nurse or administrator may have the student sent to the hospital immediately, while also calling the family. **It is important that the school has emergency numbers in the event we are unable to contact you if your child has become ill or has sustained an injury while at school.**

The school will call a parent/guardian to pick up his/her child if s/he becomes ill in school, or if there is a question of contagious illness, which may spread to other students.

Please call the nurse if your child has any illnesses, allergies, needs to take medication in school, or if you have any questions regarding your student's health.

## HEALTH GUIDELINES

**Please DO NOT send your child to school if s/he has any of the symptoms referenced below within the previous 24 hours.** We need your cooperation in order to prevent the spread of contagious diseases.

**If while at school your child displays symptoms of any of the conditions below, you will be notified and asked to pick up your child immediately:**

<b>Diarrhea</b>	Please keep your child home if s/he has diarrhea in the morning. Your child will be sent home if s/he has two or more loose stools while at school.
<b>Fever</b>	Please keep your child home if s/he has a fever in the morning or had a fever over 100° the night before. Your child will be sent home if s/he has a temperature of 100° or higher while at school.
<b>Head Lice</b>	Please keep your child home if s/he is being treated for lice and still has live lice on his/her head. Your child will be sent home if lice are detected while at school. S/he may return to school after appropriate treatment is completed.

<b>Infectious Rashes</b>	Infection associated rashes such as ringworm, impetigo, or scabies are contagious. Please keep your child home until s/he has been on prescribed skin medicine for 24 hours. Your child will be sent home if we suspect that your child has an infection associated rash. Please take your child to the doctor and request a note clearing him/her to return to school.
<b>Pink Eye</b>	Viral Conjunctivitis, also known as pink eye, is contagious. Please keep your child home until s/he has been on prescribed antibiotic eye medicine for 24 hours. Your child will be sent home if we suspect s/he child has conjunctivitis while at school. S/he may return to school after receiving the antibiotic eye medicine for 24 hours.
<b>Strep Throat</b>	Strep throat is contagious. Please keep your child home until s/he is fever free for 24 hours and has been on antibiotics for 24 hours. Your child will be sent home if we suspect s/he has strep throat.
<b>Vomiting</b>	Please keep your child home if s/he vomits in the morning, or vomited repeatedly during the night. Your child will be sent home if s/he vomits while at school.

### **MEDICATION IN SCHOOL**

Highlander students who take medication at school must have a School Medication Form completed and signed by the child’s doctor, and signed by the parent/guardian as well. Medication should be brought to school at the beginning of the school year by a parent/guardian and must be kept in the nurse’s office. **Medication forms must be renewed annually.**

#### **PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION**

Highlander’s nurse will administer prescription medication during school hours only as approved by a licensed physician. Prescription medication must arrive at the school in a pharmacy-labeled container, and will be stored in a locked cabinet in the health office. Students may not carry medication with them, with the exception of Epi-pens and bronchodilator inhalers with physician approval. All medication will be dispensed under the supervision of the school nurse except for students approved for self-medication by the prescribing physician and by the parent/guardian.

In the case of school-sponsored field trips, accommodations will be made for safe administration of medication. We ask that parents/guardians request their student’s physician sign off for self-medication inhalers, in case the nurse or the child’s parent is unable to accompany the child on the field trip.

#### **OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION**

Parental authorization is required in order for students to take over-the-counter medications in school. Highlander sends home a form for this purpose at the beginning of the school year. A limited supply

of Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen, Benadryl ointment, and cough drops, are available in the health office for the treatment of unanticipated ailments during the school day. These may be given at the nurse's discretion.

Over-the-counter medications sent in by a student's parent/guardian must be in the original container, and the parent/guardian must sign a consent form. These medications, including cough drops, must be kept in the health office. Students may not carry these in school with them. If a student requires over-the-counter medication on a daily basis, the physician must sign consent as well.

### **ALLERGIES & SPECIAL DIETS**

If your child has any food allergies or dietary restrictions please inform the school in writing, and also discuss this with the nurse and your child's advisor by the first day of school.

If your child has seasonal allergies, please treat these at home in cooperation with the student's physician, as we are unable to treat this condition at school.

### **MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

#### **ORTHOPEDIC INJURY**

If your child has sustained an orthopedic injury (fracture, dislocation, sprain/strain), please inform us of the appropriate plan of care. If a fracture (broken bone) has occurred, a physician's note detailing any restrictions that need to be addressed in school must be provided (gym, recess, sports, after-school activities, elevator access, etc.).

#### **ASTHMA**

The school nurse teacher, classroom teacher, and physical education teacher should know all students with asthma. They should have an asthma action plan completed by their doctor and access to a peak flow meter and rescue medication as prescribed. The rescue medication should be sent to school at the beginning of the school year with the completed medication form.

### **BREAKFAST & LUNCH**

Light breakfast is provided without charge to students and is eaten between 8:00 a.m. and 8:25 a.m., before classes begin. **Students are not allowed to come in with breakfast from outside.**

Lunches are provided by Sodexo and served by their staff. There is a salad bar option at lunch to allow for healthy choices. Menus are sent home on a monthly basis. Students may bring their own lunches if they so choose. **However, please note students who wish to bring a lunch from home do not have access to a microwave. Also, parents are not allowed to purchase and drop off lunches during the day.**

Lunch applications are sent home to all families, and all families are required to fill out lunch applications whether they qualify for free or reduced lunches or not. If your student does not qualify for free or reduced lunch, we encourage you to purchase meals in advance for your student since the cafeteria does not send bills unless your student has reached a pending balance of \$10.00 or more. Please be advised that if payment is not received on time, your child will be given sunflower butter and jelly sandwiches until you pay the outstanding balance. Please send a check made out to Providence Schools with the student's name and submit it to the main office. Please make a note on the check if you are paying for more than one student.

**Breakfast- no charge**

**Lunch- \$1.45/day**

**Milk- \$.40/day**

**(Prices are subject to change)**

### **FOOD & DRINK POLICY**

- Water will be the only beverage allowed in the classroom (it shall not be consumed when using technology).
- Students may bring other snacks and drinks to be consumed in the cafeteria at lunchtime (no soda allowed).
- Eating healthy snacks in class is permitted at the discretion of individual teachers.
- Gum chewing or the consumption of candy is not allowed at school. If a student is caught chewing gum or eating candy, s/he will be told to spit it in the trash. If a packet of gum or candy is out in class, the teacher will confiscate it and throw it away.
- Any leftover home lunch must be taken home at the end of each school day and not left in a locker.

### **LATEX-FREE BUILDING**

It is extremely important that families are aware that there is a severe latex sensitivity within the school. Any latex in the building can create a serious, life-threatening reaction. Therefore, our school is a completely latex-free environment. **It is critical that each and every family ensures that no products containing latex come into the school building at any time.**

Some common items that have come into the school in the past have included the following: rubber bands, plastic gloves, bandages, hair elastics, erasers, pencils with erasers, paint, rubber jewelry, rubber toys, and balloons.

## ADVISORY SYSTEM

Every student at Highlander has an advisor, a staff or faculty member, to whom the student turns for advice. The advisor monitors the student's progress at Highlander and communicates with the parent when communication is in order. The advisor is the link between school and home, the person to whom the student, his or her teachers, and the parents will turn when they have the need. S/he will also assist the parent/guardian in understanding the student's learning ability, in scheduling conferences, and in dealing with neighborhood, bus, or school issues.

Advisors of new students contact the parents during the summer for a home visit in order to get acquainted and build a collaborative parent/advisor relationship.

Students will spend the first 15 minutes of every morning with their advisors during which time the advisor will check attendance and dismissal plans, and run a morning meeting to build positive relationships with and among students.

Students will then have a 30-min advisory period every afternoon. One day will be a town meeting. Two days a week will focus on the development of life/study skills and the other two days will be a study hall with advisor support.

## GUIDANCE

The role of a post-secondary counselor is to promote and enhance student learning. The counselor will utilize programs that encourage independent and creative responses to many challenges. The school counselor employs a variety of strategies, activities, delivery methods, and resources to promote student development.

### **THE COUNSELOR IS AVAILABLE TO:**

- Provide students with career information
- Provide students with vocational and technical school information
- Provide students with post-secondary educational opportunities and information
- Work with groups of students

## **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL HEALTH**

Students have access to the school psychologist or social worker during the school day. The purpose of all counseling at the school is to address behaviors that impact school performance. A student's teacher, support staff, or advisor may refer students to the school social worker or psychologist. They interact with students to address a wide range of concerns that have the potential to negatively impact their academic performance. Some of these concerns could include, but are not limited to: emotional/social/behavioral issues, drug and alcohol issues, stress, and anxiety. The school psychologist and social worker are available to parents/guardians to help access resources, fill out applications, and find services or resources in their communities.

## **MANDATED REPORTERS**

All school personnel are legally defined as mandated reporters. Mandated reporters are legally required to report any suspected signs of abuse or neglect to the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). Abuse is defined as emotional, physical, sexual, or medical mistreatment.

If a staff member suspects abuse or neglect, s/he will raise the concern with the school nurse, building administrator, school psychologist, or social worker and then a call is made to DCYF. Concerns must be reported to DCYF within 24 hours of learning of the information. While Highlander takes this responsibility quite seriously, the staff does not have the ability to decide whether the information is valid. The school must report anything that could be interpreted as abuse or neglect.

It is DCYF's responsibility to listen to the staff member's report, decide if there are reasonable grounds to investigate and then make a decision based upon the evidence that they find. Only DCYF has the ability to determine whether or not there are sufficient grounds to investigate the claim. DCYF may decide to investigate the claim at the school or in the community. School personnel may not refuse a DCYF request for investigation. In the cases where a DCYF investigator believes it is necessary, the investigator has the legal ability to assume temporary guardianship and remove the child from the school.

As with any sensitive information, faculty and staff will take care to protect the student and family's privacy regarding this matter.

## GIVING BACK TO HIGHLANDER

Education and strong community ties are important to all of us, especially Highlander students and families. That is part of the reason Highlander is so successful. We know that we need the community to work together to change the lives of students.

We are working to increase our philanthropic capacity as we grow and our state and government funding decreases.

The strength of our staff and family giving will send a strong message of support for the work of Highlander and set the pace for a more robust annual giving program.

All staff and families can play a role to elevate annual giving to Highlander by helping us to expand our base of support, acquiring new annual donors, and asking current donors to increase their annual gifts.

Each year we have at least one large and several small fundraising events, send out donation mailings to a broad audience, ask for grant funds, and have a Friends and Family Campaign. We are asking all staff and families to join us and give a meaningful gift to Highlander.

We truly understand that each of us has a different capacity to give personally, but collectively we can do great things!

You can help by:

- Participating in one or more events
- Sending a gift during the annual mailing
- Refer us to new grant funders
- Introduce us to new friends
- Tell your friends and family how much Highlander means to you

For more information contact our Development Director, Jeanne D'Agostino, at:

[jdagostino@highlandercharter.org](mailto:jdagostino@highlandercharter.org)