

HIGHLAND PARK ELEMENTARY



“WE ARE THE MUSTANGS”

WE ARE SAFE, KIND, FAIR and PROBLEM SOLVERS

Student and Family Handbook

2023-2024

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Purpose of this Student and Family Handbook

We are excited about what our educational programs, our school, and the variety of activities that we offer can do to support student growth, success, and achievement. We are here to serve our students, families, and community in preparation for success in middle school, high school, college, career, and life. This handbook is designed to provide students and families with an entry point to helpful information about how we serve student learning at Highland Park Elementary. The information represents a snippet of the work we do. We invite you to partner with us throughout the school year as questions, ideas, or the need arises.

As we begin this journey, we are excited to learn more about each student and family. We want to know what your hopes and dreams are for your child. We are dedicated to discovering the ways that we can partner to make those hopes and dreams a reality for every student.

As we engage in our daily challenges in this lifelong learning journey, we encourage and expect every student to learn, practice, and study every day. We want all students to participate, contribute, and make a difference as stewards of our shared community in preparation for success in learning and life. We also must partner with families and community members to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the students in a full, cohesive, and comprehensive manner.

Highland Park's Vision and Mission Statements

Vision Statement

Highland Park Elementary is an inclusive, equitable community of students, staff and families which fosters authentic relationships. We respect the whole child, focus on the joy of learning, and grow empathetic agents of change capable of pursuing diverse and fulfilling life choices.

Mission Statement

HP Commits to:

- Encouraging critical thinkers while empowering and inspiring *each* member of our diverse community
- Continuously improving and optimizing each scholar's path and growth via high academic expectations and safe, supportive learning environments
- Endowing our scholars with the social emotional intelligence necessary to build safe, secure, sustaining relationships within their community
- Affirming scholars' identity, choice, and agency in their own learning

School Culture

Vision for Excellence – The Mustang Way

Highland Park Elementary teachers and staff work with students to help them become thinkers, problem solvers, and young professionals. We do this by instilling the vision for excellence of being Safe, Kind, Fair and Problem Solvers. This vision for excellence is the foundation of what it means to be a member of the Highland Park Elementary community on the Mustang Way to achieving excellence.

(We Practice...***SLANT: Sit Up, Lean Forward, Ask Questions, Nod, Track the Speaker***).

"Mustang Way"	Teaching Time	Independent Work Time	Group/ Partner Work Time	Transitions
Voice Level		0-1 (voices Off-Whisper)	1-2 (whisper)	0 (Voices Off)
Be Safe	I keep my hands and body to myself. I follow directions the first time.	I use materials safely. I am always where I should be.	I keep my hands and body to myself. I use materials safely. I am always where I should be.	I keep my hands and body to myself. I follow directions the first time.
Be Fair	I listen to what others (adults and students) have to say. I know and follow my classroom charter.	I know and follow my classroom charter.	I include others.	I go where I am supposed to go. I move in a way that helps others learn.
Be Kind	I treat others the way they would like to be treated. I Sit SLANT.	I produce work I am proud of.	I treat others the way I would like to be treated.	I treat others the way they would like to be treated.
Solve Problems	I think about my choices and their impact.	I solve small problems and get help to solve big problems. I think about my choices and their impact.	I solve small problems and get help to solve big problems. I think about my choices and their impact.	I solve small problems and get help to solve big problems. I think about my choices and their impact.

Student Orientation

We begin building our community at Highland Park Elementary during **Student Orientation**, where we focus on learning the four elements of the Mustang Way: Safe, Kind, Fair and Problem Solving. Student Orientation is a purposeful and intensive program geared specifically to teaching the Highland Park Elementary core values, behavioral expectations, rewards, and consequences. It is also an important time where students set goals, build connections with other students and staff and begin the exciting journey of becoming a part of the Highland Park Elementary community.

The Mustang Way Student Orientation is the beginning step, as well as a learning target we will revisit routinely throughout the school year. We expect our students, parents and staff to follow the Mustang Way in all aspects of their experiences at Highland Park. We want everyone to model what it looks and feels like to be safe, fair, kind and a problem solver.

Mustang Way Focus areas for the Year and how we celebrate students.

Each month, Highland Park teachers and staff discuss, model, and enforce the character trait of the month in their classroom. Below is the schedule for which elements of the PATH we will be exploring and when.

THE MUSTANG WAY	September	X
SAFE	October	February
FAIR	November	March
KIND	December	April
PROBLEM SOLVERS	January	May
THE MUSTANG WAY	X	June

Student of the Month Assemblies

Each month, classroom teachers will identify two students who have exemplified the Mustang Way expectations for that month to honor during an all-school assembly. Student of the Month Assemblies will take place at the end of the school day on the last Friday of each month. Families are notified in advance, so they can attend the assembly and see their child be recognized and celebrated. *(All must sign in at the office to attend).*

Community Culture Circles

Students will engage in morning “Community Circle” meetings in each classroom in grades PreK-5. The purpose for this time is to begin each day as a community of caring and respectful learners. In addition, there is an overarching monthly theme where character education is taught and reinforced. This will support social emotional learning.

Morning Meetings: Community Culture Circles Daily Schedule of Events
Greeting
Sharing
Group Activity/Collaboration
News Announcements & Wrap Up

This will be a time of engagement, celebration, and introspection where the Highland Park Elementary students, teachers, and staff come together to share information, celebrate accomplishments, and further develop their understanding of the vision of student excellence and the school’s core values through enrichment activities. Students will develop the life skills necessary to effectively deal with peers, family, and society in a positive and professional manner, preparing them with a foundation of life skills required to become productive members of their communities.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WHY EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE MATTERS

Research has shown that an improved understanding of social intelligence has many benefits—some academic and some relational. Students have less anxiety and depression, have greater leadership skills, and perform better academically. Teachers are more positive about teaching and report greater job satisfaction. Communities have better quality relationships and demonstrate increased prosocial behavior.

THE RULER APPROACH

RULER is a research-based approach to social and emotional learning that is rooted in emotional intelligence theory. It supports and extends conflict resolution programs and can be incorporated into all content areas including language arts, social studies, math, and physical education. By providing a common language for social emotional learning throughout the community, we are better equipped to discuss issues and solve them together.

RULER is an acronym:

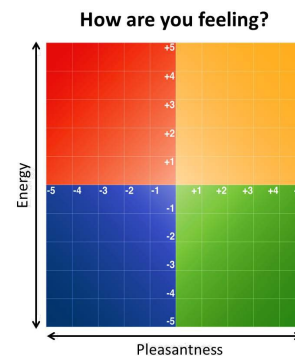
- Recognizing emotions
- Understanding causes and consequences of emotions
- Labeling emotions to describe feelings precisely
- Expressing emotions to communicate effectively
- Regulating emotions to promote learning and personal growth

MOOD METER

One tool used in RULER is called the Mood Meter. It is a tool for self-awareness to help us recognize how we feel, understand our own and other's emotions, and accurately label our feelings.

The Mood Meter is divided into four quadrants with the X axis measuring our pleasantness level and the Y axis measuring our energy level.

- **Red**= unpleasant, high energy
- **Blue**= unpleasant, low energy
- **Green**= pleasant, low energy
- **Yellow**= pleasant, high energy



Popcorn Fridays

The first Friday of each month is Popcorn Friday at Highland Park Elementary! Students can earn Mustang Money for following the Mustang Way! This money can be used to purchase a bag of popcorn. There are two ways students can purchase a bag of popcorn: 1 – use 2 Mustang Tickets for a bag of popcorn. 2 – purchase a bag of popcorn for \$.50. Students can only use up to 4 tickets for popcorn. Students can purchase up to maximum of 5 bags of popcorn using mustang tickets and money. **October 6th is the first POPCORN FRIDAY!**

Highland Park Spirit Gear and Safe Learning Environment:

With a focus on excitement for learning and to improve the educational environment for all students, we have instituted ways to celebrate who we are as Mustangs and our school pride.

Highland Park/College/Sports' Gear Fridays:

Every Friday, students can wear their HP tie-dye T-Shirt, favorite sports team color/jersey by wearing blue, sport the colors of their favorite college or university, or express their individuality by choosing any other attire that is appropriate for school. *Please contact the school office if you have questions about what attire is appropriate on Fridays.*

Formal Events/Spirit Week:

On occasion, our Student Council Committee will invite students to dress for unique celebrations or special events. These occasions will be shared in advance with staff, students, and families.

Hoodies and hats aside in the classroom:

To ensure students are always focused on learning and not disrupting class by classmates pulling on hoodies, taking, or playing with hats, or covering of face, teachers will ask students to put hats aside and take hoodies off during instructional time. These expectations will support a safe learning environment. Thank you for understanding and being supportive.

Shoes: Students run and play at recess and during PE daily. Due to students wearing flip-flops or crocs, this can cause students to fall or not be able to participate in physical activities. Please have students wear shoes that will allow them to engage in physical activities in a safe manner.

Costumes During Halloween:

Having students wear costumes to school can detract from learning and create conflicting emotions for students for different reasons. For example, some students may not be able to afford purchasing a costume; they may have forgotten their costume at home; or they may not celebrate that particular holiday. **Therefore, do not send students to school in Halloween costumes so we can stay focused on learning.**

THE SCHOOL DAY

The School Day at Highland Park Elementary runs from 7:55am to 2:25pm. **Students have early release at 1:10pm every Wednesday**, so that teachers and staff can plan for instruction and engage in professional development.

Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Students and families may enter the playground entrance off 11th Street and the drop off area off 10th Street.

*** We request and expect that all parents and visitors will respect and abide by fair parking expectations:

- ✚ DO NOT park in the bus zones
- ✚ DO NOT block driveways
- ✚ Park as close to the curb as possible to provide access for other vehicles.

Arrival

- ✚ School supervision starts at 7:30am – 7:55am each school day in the gym and cafeteria. Because student safety is very important, please **DO NOT** drop your children before this time, as supervision is not available.
- ✚ K-5 Breakfast is served from 7:30am to 7:55am in the cafeteria. PreK students eat in their classroom.
- ✚ 1st – 4th grade students – When done with breakfast, students will go to the gym to sit in their class line (reading time).
- ✚ Kindergarteners who want breakfast will be sent from the K playground to the cafeteria. A staff member will be in the hallway to ensure students go to the cafeteria and walk back to class afterwards.
- ✚ **Instruction begins when the second bell rings at 7:55am. All students are expected to be in their classroom by 7:55am.**
- ✚ If your student arrives after 7:55am, the back gates will be locked so you will need to enter the building through the main entrance on Trenton Street. Please have your student stop in the Office to obtain a pink tardy slip before heading to their classroom.
- ✚ Beginning at 7:55am, all entrances to the building are locked for the safety of students and staff. Please use the Intercom located to the right of the front door to buzz the office (we can see and hear you).

Dismissal (2:25 Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri) (Wednesdays 1:10)

To minimize disruptions at the close of our school day, we ask that parents wait until 2:25 pm to pick up students (Wednesday dismissal 1:10). Picking up students prior to the times listed is considered an **Early Dismissal**. If a student needs to be dismissed early, a parent or guardian must come to the school office and sign the student out in our Early Dismissal Log. Parents must call ahead of the pick-up time to state the time and reason for the early dismissal. Early dismissals will not be excused after 1:55pm.

- ✚ PreK students being picked up will be ready on the K playground, near their classroom.
- ✚ 1st-5th grade students being picked up or walking home will be dismissed at 2:25pm on the big playground at the back of the school. Wednesdays, 1st – 5th grade students are dismissed at 1:10 on the big playground.
- ✚ Bus Riders: K students are picked up by a staff member and walked to the bus.
- ✚ 1st – 5th grade students walk to the bus after dismissal.
- ✚ Salvation Army Students: Students walk to the bus area.
- ✚ **For the safety of all students, there is to be no lingering in the halls once students have been dismissed.** If a student leaves school property, they may not return to retrieve property. This is due to the safety of all students.... students must be supervised at all times.

Transportation Changes

If you need to alter your student's transportation on a particular day, please feel free to send a note with the student or call the main office **BEFORE 1:30pm – 206 252 8240**. If you have a major change in transportation (such as a change of address or after school care), please contact SPS Transportation at 206.252.0900 directly, as this will help you get your student's transportation changed more quickly.

Playground Safety

The school playground is a place for students to play and participate in physical activities. Students are expected to follow the **Mustang Way** at recess.

In order for the Highland Park playground to be a safe, enjoyable place, it is expected that students:

- Show respect for others and their personal space.
- Follow instructions given by playground supervisors.
- Be responsible for returning all checked-out playground equipment to the playground supervisor when finished.
- Share equipment fairly with other students.

When your hands are safe, the following should not occur –

Laughing at another student who is hurt, fighting, pushing, kicking, shoving or tackling.

When being kind, the following should occur

We say thank you, invite others to play, share playground equipment, help a friend who is hurt, walk a student to the nurse who is hurt (with permission)

Never wear Heelys (shoes with wheels) to school. These items cause safety and storage/security concerns. Students must always remain on school grounds unless supervised by a staff member/permission from parent is required.

Elevator Use

The school elevator is to be used by students who have a medically diagnosed condition preventing them from using the stairs. Permission to access the elevator is issued through the school Nurse.

Students are not allowed to ride the elevator for fun. Two staff members must accompany a student on the elevator.

Calendar of Events

This 2023-2024 Seattle Public Schools calendar does not include Highland Park-specific events and activities. Dates for these will be announced in the weekly Mustang Flyer and the monthly Mustang Newsletter, which will be emailed you through the SPS School Messenger system. They are also posted the Highland Park PTA website.

Communication

Communication between home and school is of the utmost importance for the success of your student. We ask that you let your student's teacher know immediately if there is anything in your student's life that might affect their school performance and/or behavior. We encourage your participation and help in the classroom. If volunteering isn't an option for you, we suggest arranging regular check-ins with your student's teacher.

Teachers, Staff and the PTSA use a variety of communication strategies to ensure families are aware of important activities. This includes, but is not limited to:

- ✚ The monthly Mustang Newsletter, which is sent both electronically and in student folders
- ✚ Emails sent through the School-Messenger system
- ✚ Backpack mailers
- ✚ Flyers on the Lobby Bulletin Boards and hung around the building
- ✚ Robo Calls (recorded messages sent to your home or cell phone)

Parent Involvement

School Commitment

Highland Park Elementary is committed to the goal of providing quality education for every student in our school. To this end, we want to establish partnerships with parents, adult family members, and the community. Everyone gains if the school and families work together to promote high achievement for our children. Neither home nor school can do the job

alone. Parents and adult family members play an extremely important role as children’s first teachers. Support for their children and for the school is critical to children’s success at every step along the way. We intend to include parents and adult family members in all aspects of the school’s programs. The goal is a school-home partnership that will help all students to succeed.

Mustang PTA

Welcome to Highland Park Mustang Partners! We welcome involvement from all school families, staff, and community members. Our goals are to empower caregivers to find a voice, to advocate for all students, to partner in realizing the academic achievement plan, to create community, and to understand and commit to making decisions around equity.

- ✚ Please come to our general meetings, which are held on 2nd Tuesdays with dates to be determined for each month, 5:30 - 7:00 pm in the school cafeteria, library OR Zoom. We will let you know.
- ✚ We know that kids do better in school (and in life) when their parents/families are involved in their school. We also know that for many of our students, “parents” can mean many different things. You may be a parent, a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, an older brother, or sister, or a foster parent; regardless, your involvement in our school community will help your student to succeed.
- ✚ We hope and expect that the person or people who support our students at home will be involved in our school. There are many ways that you can get involved – just a few are listed below.
 - ❑ Volunteer in a classroom
 - ❑ Be a room parent
 - ❑ Chaperone a field trip
 - ❑ Volunteer to make copies, help with bulletin boards, or support our teachers in other ways
 - ❑ Attend PTSA meetings
 - ❑ Join a committee such as Staff Appreciation or Fundraising
 - ❑ Become a Committee Co-Chair
 - ❑ Come to and help with events at the school
 - ❑ Attend parent-teacher conferences
 - ❑ Encourage another family to become involved
 - ❑ Sign up to run an after-school program.

Attendance Policies and Procedures

Attendance

School attendance is a shared responsibility among students, families, and school staff. Students who do not come to school miss valuable instruction time and may fall behind in their learning. We must make every effort to see that students are in school and on time each day.

Excused Absences

- Planned absences may include, but are not limited to medical appointments, religious events or holidays, educational trips. or other special one-time events.
- Planned absences are Excused when you submit a request to the Principal at least three school days before the start of the planned absence *and the Principal approves the absence*.
- Unplanned absences are Excused when your child’s personal illness or injury, or the illness, injury or death of a family member, prevents your child from attending school, and you notify the school within 48 hours of the absence. The school may require a note from your child’s doctor if your child is absent due to illness or injury for an excessive number of days (more than 10).
- Absences due to short-term discipline of your child are Excused.

Unexcused Absences

- Any absence not described as Excused above will be considered Unexcused.
- A parent/guardian’s request to “excuse my child’s absence” without a stated reason will cause the child’s absence to remain Unexcused.

Late Arrivals

Please make every effort to have your student arrive before the first bell rings each day at 7:50 am. If your student is consistently late, a letter will be sent home, and we may request a meeting or conversation to find a solution. Excessive tardiness may result in required parent meetings. During this meeting, parents and school administrator(s) will review the Tardy Policy, sign an Attendance Contract, and develop a plan for improvement. **Students who have acquired seven or more Late Arrivals may be subject to the Truancy Process, which could result in more serious consequences.**

Absences of 20 or more consecutive school days

Students who are absent for more than twenty (20) consecutive school days, whether the absences are Excused or Unexcused, will no longer be enrolled in the district.

(All absences from school are unexcused unless the parent/guardian contacts the school in a timely manner. A phone call to our office (206.252.8240) the morning of the absence, prior to 7:45 am, is recommended. If this is not possible, a signed note stating the reason for the absence must accompany the student upon their return to school. The attendance secretary will make every effort to contact parents/guardians of absent students who have not yet contacted the school on a day a student is absent. However, we are not always able to connect with parents/guardians for a variety of reasons (changes in phone number, disconnected phone, no one at home). If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian and a note does not arrive with the student upon their return to school, the absence will be marked unexcused. (See the Truancy Definition for more information regarding multiple unexcused absences.)

- ✚ Excused absences include but are not limited to the following: medical illnesses or family emergencies.
- ✚ All other absences are considered unexcused, including student or parent/guardian oversleeping, student missing the bus, transportation problems, etc. An unplanned absence, such as those listed above, may be changed to excused if a good reason is provided. In disputed cases, the principal will make the final determination.
- ✚ Students returning to school from an absence must bring a note to the main office upon their return to school no later than 7:45am with the following information: student name, grade, student number, parent signature, date of the note, date of the absence(s), reason for the absence, and a phone number where the parent/guardian may be contacted. All students who do not bring a note within three (3) days will have their absence recorded as unexcused.

A model attendance excuse letter is shown in the example provided:

Date Please excuse Principal McDaniel for her absence on Wednesday, September 4, 2019. He had a doctor's appointment. Student # _____ Grade _____ Sincerely, Principal McDaniel 206 252 8240
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Planned or Prearranged Absences

A planned or prearranged absence request must be submitted to the principal and teacher prior to the start of the planned absence. This request can be made by completing a Planned/Prearranged absence form, which is available in the school office.

Make-Up Work

Work missed during absences may be made up, provided the teacher is contacted about make-up work. For students who have prolonged absences (serious illness, family emergency, etc.) parents/guardians should make a plan with the student's teacher regarding make-up work or work that can be taken home.

Exceptions

- There is written agreement between the Principal and the student's parent or guardian.
- Student is receiving home/hospital services.

Truancy Definition

Washington State Law requires that parents and guardians be informed of the compulsory education requirements of the state. Parents/guardians of children at least eight years old and less than 18 years old must have their children in school on a full-time basis or in an approved home instruction program. Any exceptions must be granted according to law. If students have more than five unexcused absences within a month or more than ten unexcused absences within a school year, school districts are required to file a petition in juvenile court directed toward the students, parents/guardians, or both. Parents may be fined or ordered to complete school community services, and students may be detained or ordered to participate in certain alternatives for established violations of the law.

If a student has more than two unexcused absences per month, a letter will be sent home requesting a meeting with the parent/guardian, student, and our truancy officer. This procedure allows us to help resolve truancy issues without filing petitions with the court. Once a student has five unexcused absences in one month or 10 over the course of the year, we are required by Washington State Law to file paperwork with the court system.

NOTE: It is very important that we have up-to-date contact information for parents/guardians. This allows us to contact families immediately regarding emergencies and attendance information. If you have a change in address, phone, email address or other contact information, please contact the main office at 206.252.8240.

Bathroom Procedures

As students can often use the bathroom as an excuse to miss class, it is critical that we monitor bathroom use closely at Highland Park Elementary, so that students are only using these facilities when necessary. **Students requiring frequent use of the bathroom will be required to have medical documentation of this condition. This information will be shared with teachers and staff as soon as it is officially documented.**

Bathroom Schedule best practice expectations:

- ✚ **Kindergarten:** Kindergarten rooms are either equipped with single stall restrooms or located adjacent to multiple stall restrooms. Kindergarten students are encouraged to use the restroom whenever they need to do so.
- ✚ **Grades 1-2:** Students are expected to use the bathroom accordingly: (1) After Morning Meeting; (2) Before Lunch; (3) After Lunch (4) As developmentally needed (and must be sent in pairs). During these times, adults will monitor/supervise bathroom areas to ensure proper behavior.
- ✚ **Grades 3-5:** Students are expected to use the bathroom accordingly: Anytime during the class period in collaboration with the teacher.

Bus Policies

School Bus Expectations

The following regulations exist to protect your child and must be followed unless specific other arrangements have been made with the appropriate district office. The only way school authorities will grant permission for a student to change bus stops, ride another bus, or have a friend ride with them is if a letter from the parent/guardian is sent to the School Office. Students will not be allowed to use the phone to get permission to make any of these changes. Per district rules:

- ✚ The driver is in full charge of the bus and passengers and safety rules must be obeyed. If a supervisor is assigned to the bus by the district, he/she will be responsible for the behavior of the students while the driver remains responsible for the safe operation of the bus. Students must obey both driver and supervisor.
- ✚ Students shall ride only on their assigned bus unless written permission to do otherwise has been received by school authorities.
- ✚ Unless written permission is obtained by school authorities, no student shall be permitted to leave the bus except at his/her regular stop.
- ✚ If a student is assigned to a seat, he/she will use only that seat unless permission to change is authorized by the driver.
- ✚ Classroom conduct must be observed on buses. Noise must be kept down to avoid distracting drivers.
- ✚ Buses must be kept clean. Eating and drinking are not allowed.
- ✚ Students will not open windows without the driver's permission.
- ✚ Students will not extend any part of their body out of the bus windows at any time.

- ✚ Students should refrain from talking to drivers unless necessary.
- ✚ Once inside the bus, students must always go directly to a seat and remain seated unless the driver instructs otherwise.
- ✚ Students must get on/off the bus in an orderly manner and must obey the instructions of the school safety patrol if on duty. There will be no pushing and shoving when boarding or leaving the bus. Once off the bus, students must adhere to rules for pedestrians.
- ✚ When off-loading, students must never cross the street behind a yellow school bus unless they use pedestrian crosswalks or traffic lights. Students riding Metro buses must wait for the bus to depart the stop and then cross the street. Students are never to cross in front of a Metro bus.
- ✚ Students must stand away from the roadway curb when any bus is approaching or leaving a stop
- ✚ If there are no sidewalks, students going to and from their bus stops must walk on the left-hand side of the roadway facing oncoming traffic.
- ✚ If lap belts are available on the bus, students must use them.
- ✚ Emergency Exit Drill procedures will be followed as prescribed by the driver.
- ✚ Parents of students identified as causing damage to buses will be charged with the cost of the incurred damage. Students causing the damage may be suspended from transportation.
- ✚ Student misconduct constitutes sufficient reason for suspending transportation privileges.
- ✚ Students shall ride their regularly assigned bus at all times, unless school authorities have approved other arrangements. Unless permission has been granted, no student may leave the bus except at his/her regular stop.
- ✚ Bus drivers occasionally write referrals when students make bad choices on the bus. These are the consequences if a student receives a bus referral. In addition, in the case of a fight or some other egregious action on the part of the student, a student may receive an immediate bus suspension without accruing a certain number of referrals.

School Bus Consequences

It is very important that parents/guardians reinforce the fact that the same rules for behavior apply whether their students ride to/from school on Metro or regular school buses.

Safety of self and other students is a top priority.

First Referral	Parent Phone Call
Second Referral	Bus Behavior Practice Class
Third Referral	One-Day Bus Suspension
Fourth Referral	Two-Day Bus Suspension

Communication Policies

Address / Emergency Contact Information

It is imperative that any changes in contact information be sent to the office immediately. This includes changes in address, phone numbers, living arrangements, and emergency contacts. The people you choose for your emergency contact list should be authorized to pick up your child in the event of an emergency or illness in case we are unable to contact you directly. People, even family members, who come to school to pick up your student and are not on the emergency contact list, need written authorization from a parent/guardian (the parent/guardian can also call the main office and let office staff know that an alternative person is coming to get their child.) Without verbal or written permission, the office staff cannot release the student to anyone not on the list.

Messages to Students

We do not interrupt instructional time during the day to deliver lunches or messages to students (except in the event of an emergency). If you need to speak directly to your child in case of an emergency, we will call your child to the office from their classroom. Please be patient, as this can take time. **PARENTS: Please try to schedule all student appointments for outside of the school times during school breaks or after dismissal.**

Office Phone Use

The office phone is available to students for EMERGENCIES ONLY. Students must ask the office staff for permission before using the phone. If you need your child to contact you before or after school, please send a note with your child indicating that you need them to call home; otherwise, they will not be allowed to use the phone.

Confiscation Policy

“If we see it or hear it, we take it!” – Students who bring electronic devices, including cell phones, smart watches, cd/mp3 players, and portable game players to school should turn them in to the office before school and pick them up at the end of the day. If a student is using a cell phone or smart watch anywhere on campus during the school day, the item may be confiscated by a staff member and turned into the main office. The first time this happens, the student can retrieve the item after school. Subsequent occurrences will result in the student’s parent being contacted and designing a plan to support better decision-making.

If a student doesn’t check in their phone or electronics to the main office, Highland Park Elementary will not be responsible for any loss of prohibited items.

- **Inside the classroom, the usage of headphones and cell phones are at the teacher’s discretion for educational purposes.**
- **The school campus outside of the classroom is a No Cell Phone, Smart Watch, or Headphones Zone.**

Examples of items we expect students to keep at home are:

- iPods, MP3 Players
- Radios/CD Players
- Cameras
- Electronic Games
- Scooters/Skateboards
- Hats/Sunglasses (see hoodie/hat expectation)
- Laser pens
- Fidget Spinners
- Toys
- White-out Pens or Liquid
- Gum
- Sports cards/Collectibles
- Sharpie Markers

If a student brings any of these items to school, or any other item that is found to be the cause of interruption to the learning process, the item may be confiscated. **Items confiscated the first time may be returned to the student at the end of the day or to a parent at the parent’s earliest convenience. A second time may result in a parent conference to determine how to address the problem and plan for a better outcome.**

Food Policies

SPS Nutrition Services

- ✚ Free breakfast and lunch for ALL students this school year.

Sack Lunches

Your student may prefer to bring their lunch to school. Please observe these guidelines:

- ✚ Please do not send items that must be heated, including ramen noodles – the cafeteria does not have a microwave available for student use.
- ✚ DO NOT SEND candy or soda – these items are not allowed in the lunchroom. **Hard candy can become a choking hazard.**
- ✚ Gum becomes glue underneath tables, chairs, and the bottom of shoes – **No Gum.**
- ✚ If your student has a classmate with a severe food allergy, the classroom teacher may institute additional guidelines for sack lunches to maintain student safety.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying is an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act that:

1. Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property
2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education?
3. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
4. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school?

Conduct that may rise to the level of harassment, intimidation and bullying may take many forms, including, but not limited to: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, ostracism, physical attacks or threats, gestures, or acts relating to an individual or group whether electronic, written, oral, or physically transmitted messages or images relating to an individual or group. There is no

requirement that the targeted student possess the characteristic that is the basis for the harassment, intimidation or bullying.

HIB Reporting Process and Procedure

Any student who believes he or she has been the target of unresolved, severe, or persistent harassment, intimidation or bullying, or any other person in the school community who observes or receives notice that a student has or may have been the target of unresolved, severe, or persistent harassment, intimidation or bullying may report incidents verbally or in writing to any staff member.

An Incident Reporting Form may be used by students, families, or staff to report alleged incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying against a student. The form can be found on the SPS website.

Statement of Support for Gender Diverse Students

The ideal school environment is welcoming and supportive, where bullying and teasing are not permitted and where children are actively taught to celebrate differences. Harassment and discrimination based on a student's actual or perceived gender identity or expression is expressly prohibited here at Highland Park Elementary. Demeaning racist, sexist, homophobic, and transphobic jokes and comments will be challenged. Silence signals consent to the act of discrimination.

Childhood and adolescence are considered critical periods of identity formation. During this time, gender and sexuality are understood as fluid, and their accompanying expressions may change frequently. Strict gender roles and sex role stereotyping can severely limit a child's natural gender expression. Understanding issues related to gender identity is critical in creating a safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive school. It is vital in supporting the health and well-being of transgender students, as well as all students. At Highland Park Elementary, we are committed to awareness and education with gender diversity, in order to help every student feel validated and celebrated.

Homework Policy

Homework is an important part of your child's learning and is used to reinforce lessons done in the classroom. Homework is given by most primary teachers on a weekly basis and nightly by intermediate teachers. Please check with your student's teacher to learn their individual homework policy. We expect that your child will complete their homework and turn it in as assigned. We also understand that homework can cause stress and concern at home and have included tips and suggestions below to make homework a more positive experience. It is essential that students continue their learning at home with written, standards-based homework.

Checklist for Helping Your Child with Homework

Show You Know Education and Homework Are Important

- Do you set a regular time every day for homework?
- Does your child have the papers, books, pencils, and other things needed to do assignments?
- Does your child have a quiet place to study with lots of light?
- Do you set a good example by modeling reading and writing yourself?
- Do you stay in touch with your child's teachers?

Monitor Assignments

- Do you know what your child's homework assignments are? How long they should take? How the teacher wants you to be involved?
- Do you see that assignments are started and completed?
- Do you read the teacher's comments on assignments that are returned?
- Are TV viewing or video games cutting into your child's homework time? If so, it may be helpful to set specific times for watching or playing AFTER homework is complete.

Provide Guidance

- Do you understand and respect your child's style of learning? Does he work better alone or with someone else? Does he learn best when he can see things, hear them, or handle them?
- Do you help your child to get organized? Does your child need a calendar or assignment book? A bag for books and a folder for papers?

- Do you check your child’s binder and backpack on a regular (daily or weekly) basis?
- Do you encourage your child to develop good study habits (e.g., scheduling enough time for big assignments; making up practice tests)?
- Do you talk with your child about homework assignments? Does she understand them?

Talk with Someone at School When Problems Come Up

- Do you meet the teacher early in the year before any problems arise?
- If a problem comes up, do you meet with the teacher?
- Do you cooperate with the teacher and your child to work out a plan and a schedule to fix homework problems?
- Do you follow up with the teacher and with your child to make sure the plan is working?

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF:

- Assign homework, which is relevant, challenging, meaningful, and reinforces classroom learning.
- Give clear instructions to make sure the purpose is understood.
- Give feedback and/or correct homework—depending on the assignment.
- Communicate with other teachers to align curriculum as necessary.
- Involve families and contact them if a pattern of late or incomplete homework develops.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF FAMILIES:

- Set a regular, uninterrupted study time each day in a quiet, well-lit study area.
- Monitor your child’s organization and daily list of assignments.
- Don’t just ask your child if the homework is done. Review all work to make sure that everything has been completed. Take a look and go over the assignment together.
- When a reading assignment is finished, ask your child about the selection, the main characters and what problem/conflict was resolved.
- Help your child understand assignments and monitor completion of assignments in a timely manner. Students should be encouraged to complete homework as independently as possible.
- If you find that your child continually has difficulty with a particular subject, speak to the teacher about what you can do to help at home.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

- Write down assignments and their due dates
- Clarify with the teacher any instructions not understood; don’t be afraid to ask questions if necessary.
- Complete all assignments neatly and as accurately as possible. Turn in homework by the due date.
- Identify “homework buddies” you can call after school for discussion, clarification, or questions regarding homework assignments. (This may be done by parents for students in lower grades.)
- Arrange a proper study area, that is relatively free from distraction (television, phone calls, texts, emailing, Facebook, electronic games, etc.)
- Plan time to complete all assignments.

GRADES/PROGRESS REPORTS

The purpose of report cards is to report progress and growth. Students in grades K-5 will receive progress reports three times during the school year. Seattle School District has implemented a Standards-based report card. Under each subject, is a list of standards or specific academic skills, which students are expected to learn in that particular grade. Families will be provided with a more detailed outline of the standards-based report card during Parent-Teacher Conferences. The grading scale uses numbers 1-4.

Safety and Emergency Procedures

Fire, earthquake, lock down, and evacuation drills are held for all students and staff throughout the year. In the event of an earthquake or lockdown, parents are requested NOT to phone the school or attempt to enter the school. Parents will

be notified of any accidents to children as soon as emergency needs are met. In the event of a real fire or earthquake, parents should go to the gate behind the school to meet their children. Staff will verify parent/guardian identification and then bring their child to them. Students who are stranded will be provided with food and water and emergency first aid provisions, which are stored either in the classroom or in a large container on the playground. Unless there is imminent danger, students will remain at school in the custody of school officials.

Snow and Inclement Weather Information

In the event of snow or inclement weather, please listen to radio and TV stations for information about late start, delays, or closures. Information will also be posted on the web at www.seattleschools.org.

- Please LISTEN to radio and TV for announcements about delays to the start of school, or closures.
- If TV and radio stations do NOT mention Seattle Public Schools, then Highland Park will operate at the usual times, and bus routes will also operate as normal.
- You may also check current district status on the web at www.seattleschools.org

In the case of snow or inclement weather, one of the following situations is possible:

- If schools operate on time, then transportation will operate on time, in which case, no announcement will be made.
- If schools operate two hours late, then transportation will operate two-hours late using regular routes/stops.
 - In this case, there will be NO door-to-door service; no Head Start; and no AM or PM half-day kindergarten (all-day Kindergarten will still operate).
- Schools will be closed.

Safety Instruction and Practice

Highland Park Elementary is a safe school because we know what to do in case of emergency. It is critical that the students, faculty, and staff at Highland Park take the time and effort to learn about how to take care of ourselves, each other, and our community in times of crisis. Our school community will be conducting a variety of training activities throughout the year to support school safety. This may include:

- Fire Drills
- Evacuation Drills/Reverse Evacuation
- Shelter-in-Place/Lockdown Drills
- Earthquake Drills
- Other as needed per situation and/or district direction.

Safety Committee

The Safety Committee primarily focuses on “Critical Incident Management,” which refers to school-wide emergencies. An example would be an earthquake. Families can help by donating non-perishable food and bottled water to classroom teachers. The principal works closely with SPS Security team to update a school-wide management protocol and process.

Emergency Drills are a Fire Code requirement as well as a requirement of Seattle Public Schools. The safety of all children at Highland Park Elementary School as well as the safety of the school staff, parents, guardians, and visitors is very important to us. In order to maintain a safe environment for our children to study and learn, it is necessary that we regularly participate in safety drills so that we can be prepared in case of an emergency. We want each student to understand and be aware of the importance of these drills and not be afraid when the fire alarm is sounded. By practicing, they will know what to do and how to do it.

FIRE DRILL

A loud, continuous sound, coming through the public address system, signals a fire drill. Fire drills are scheduled throughout the school year to teach students the safest, quickest route from school buildings. Whenever a class leaves a room for any emergency, students are to stay with their teachers until they hear the signal that means “time to return”. During a Fire Drill, students are to:

- Follow the directions of the teacher.
- Leave all work and line up immediately to exit from the classroom.

- Walk silently in line until they have reached their designated area.
- Remain in line until an administrator gives the teachers directions to go into the building.
- Return to their room in a quiet and orderly fashion.



EARTHQUAKE DRILL

Upon command, during shaking, or sound that there is a drill, students and staff will:

- Drop, cover and hold. Keep away from windows, file cabinets, and bookshelves.
- Get under/below equipment (desks, tables)- backs are to the windows.
- Grasp equipment (legs, etc.) with both hands, hold tight. Keep body under or below equipment.
- If no protection is available, drop to floor and cover heads with hands.
- Stay in this position and wait for further instructions.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS — REVERSE EVACUATION – SHELTER-IN-PLACE DRILLS

The purpose of these drills is to:

- Move to a safe location within the building in case of an emergency.
- Secure the school building.
- Safely shelter all students, staff, and visitors from any danger outside or inside the building.

ALL DOORS AND WINDOWS TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING WILL BE LOCKED AND WILL REMAIN LOCKED until the danger or issue outside or inside the building is removed. To enable everyone to remain safe, no one will be allowed to enter the building or leave the building until Police or Administrator verbally gives the “All Clear” signal. The Main Office staff will not answer the phone during a lockdown due to the necessity of keeping the phone lines open for communication with our staff and emergency personnel.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE

If severe winter weather threatens to delay, cancel, or close school early, announcements will be made:

- on all major radio, TV stations,
- on School Messenger,
- on the district website www.seattleschools.org and
- on the Public Schools Emergency Communications website www.schoolreport.org.

Student Behavior Support Plans

There may be times when students make a mistake and don't think before making choices. The idea is for the teacher and parents to help students to be successful in the classroom, at school, and to make sure that one student does not interfere with the learning of others. Remember that when a student is disrupting the class, the student is taking away important learning time from all the other students. Teachers, counselor, and Youth Services Assistant (SEL Team) and administrators want to help students recognize that they are making choices and to help students make better choices about their behavior.

The Objective of a student behavior support plan is to:

1. Teach and encourage positive behavior.
2. Have student participate in Check-In/Check-out Process
3. Help students learn a lesson that will positively affect his/her present and future behavior.

4. Put emphasis on the behavior as a choice, rather than on the person.
5. Guide students toward appropriate and effective ways of interacting and communicating with peers and adults
6. Help students to be responsible for their own behavior.
7. Maximize the home school connection with communication regarding behavior.

Teacher Guidelines for Intervention Support

The following is a guide for teachers to use when a student violates/breaks classroom rules or policies.

1. Individual and/or class reminder of expectations and support for appropriate behavior
2. Discussion of the problem with the student.
 - a. **Highland Park Meta-Moment:** Teacher may also ask student to write something to reflect on the problem and make a plan for better behavior.
 - b. **Cool Down Areas** inside most classrooms provide the student an opportunity to use RULER strategies to calm down and then rejoin the learning in the class.
 - c. **Check-In/Check-Out:** Student meets with a staff member to discuss expected behavior, set goals,
3. Assign a classroom-based consequence.
4. Think time (Recess/Lunch/After school)
5. Call Parent or Guardian.
6. Request support from a health team member who may escort student to the break room near the main office.
7. Consult team members.
8. Referral to counselor or referral to administrator.
9. Team meeting with student, parent, teammates, counselor and/or administrator

Administrative procedures

Administrators assign supports/intervention actions in a progressive manner. The following is a list of possible administrative responses: mentoring/restorative justice process, Lunch clean-up, community service, mediation, suspension, or expulsion. The response, intervention action and additional interventions will depend on the behavior, how many times the student has been referred, and the circumstances involved. All formal disciplinary actions are guided by the Seattle School District policies. The policy is available for you in the main office and can be accessed online at www.seattleschools.org. Please be aware that certain intervention actions require parent/guardian permission, specifically, after-school interventions.

Missed Instructional Log

The MIL is a way to communicate to parents the action and behavior of a student(s). If an unsafe incident is documented by a staff member, the school administrator or YSA will meet with the student to listen and learn what happened and if necessary, a school-based consequence is issued. The MIL form is completed and emailed, mailed, or sent home with the student. A Notice of Disciplinary Action form is documented in Power School for severe incidents.

Severe Incidents

Students engaging in dangerous, verbally, physically abusive, or illegal behavior should be referred directly to Administration. There will be no other steps; student will be sent or escorted directly to the office with the referral.

Severe behaviors include (but are not limited to):

1. Fighting or being physically abusive with another person.
2. Harassment and Bullying: verbal threats, intimidation, bullying behaviors, racial slurs, unwelcomed religious-based or sexual comments, including jokes, or inappropriate touching or gestures.
3. Willfully damaging or taking property.
4. Possession, use, sale or barter of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.
5. Possession of any weapons, fireworks, or other objects that may be potentially dangerous or appear to be dangerous.
6. Repeated unsafe violations of school/classroom expectations.

Suspension and Re-entry

These incidents may result in a student being dismissed from school for a short-term suspension or a long-term suspension. Prior to returning from any suspension from school, a re-entry conference must be scheduled and held with the parent or legal guardian listed at the time of suspension and a re-entry plan must be created.

(All students deserve to learn in a safe environment)

Visitor Policy

Parents, community members, and other guests are welcome and encouraged to visit classrooms, our campus, and any activity sponsored by the school. So that instruction can continue undisturbed when visitors are present, and to prevent the intrusion of disruptive persons, it is necessary to maintain visitor controls. **Visitors** must make an appointment with the Classroom Teacher and receive administrative approval prior to visiting a classroom. Visitors are not allowed to conduct drop-in visits to the classroom during school hours as this can be disruptive.

IMPORTANT: All community members, guests and non-school staff must report to the school office and seek approval to be on campus prior to any visit to any location on campus. Visitors will need to buzz the main office at the front of the school, provide identification and purpose of visit prior to entering the school during the school day (7:50am-2:25pm).

All visitors must sign-in and wear the appropriate "Mustang Visitor Pass" issued by office staff. Any adult on campus without a pass or SPS ID will be redirected to the main office for support and may be escorted off campus.

Student and Family Support Services

Counselors

Highland Park has a fulltime counselor, Rykiel Eufeminiano, (Monday – Friday) to meet the needs of our students and families. Referrals to other services will be made as necessary to further support students and families. The school will make every attempt to accommodate meetings at the school building as is necessary.

Health Services

Highland Park's school Nurse, Tina Urso, is on campus 2.5 days a week (Tuesday, Wednesday (Alt) and Thursdays). The office staff provides routine first aid and approved medications if the nurse is not available.

- ✚ If your child becomes seriously ill or injured while at school, every effort will be made to notify you immediately. Remember to notify the office if your contact information changes; this is VERY IMPORTANT in cases of emergencies.
- ✚ Please do NOT send sick children to school. This exposes other children and staff to your child's illness. Any class work that is missed due to illness may be made up by contacting the teacher for make-up work.
- ✚ We also have a partnership with the NeighborCare Health. Nurse Shelley will work with and/or refer you based upon the needs of the students. If you have a specific medical concern, please talk with Nurse Shelley. Registration forms for NeighborCare were sent home in the first day packets.

Medication

If your child needs medication to be given in school, including over the counter and prescriptions, you must complete a "**Medication at School Authorization**" form and it must be on file with a physician note and parent authorization. These forms are available from the School Nurse. This includes over-the-counter medications, such as pain relievers and cold medicine. Medications must be in original containers. Forms are available from the school nurse. **Students must never carry medications at school. All medications must be dropped off by parents/guardians at the main office – to be given to the nurse.**

Illness at School

If your child is injured or becomes seriously ill while at school, every effort will be made to notify you immediately. The school does not have facilities to adequately treat a prolonged illness. Students should not remain at school if they appear to have a contagious or infectious illness. Students with a fever will be sent home. Prepare a home plan for care in the event of sickness.

Emergency Telephone Numbers

We need updated emergency phone numbers to contact parents or guardians during the school day.

Please include an email address – *if you have one*. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to keep such information (i.e., residence address, telephone numbers, etc.) current at all times. **Call blocking should not be activated with respect to school telephone numbers** as this makes it impossible to reach a parent/guardian in an emergency. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, staff will attempt to reach individuals listed by the family on the student's emergency contact form. All medical care provided to a

student must be authorized by their parent or guardian. **However, in a medical emergency, where a child is in a serious or life-threatening condition, the school will call 911 and the family.**

DRUG AND ALCOHOL- FREE SCHOOL

Under the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, Highland Park Elementary School must be totally free of unlawful drugs, marijuana, and alcohol. No one is allowed to possess, use, or distribute drugs or alcohol while at school or while taking part in any school activities. Disciplinary actions will be taken for drug and alcohol violations.

WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS OBJECTS

Carrying a dangerous weapon* onto, or possessing a dangerous weapon, on school property, school-provided transportation, areas of facilities being used exclusively as school district property, or at school-sponsored events or activities is forbidden. Seattle Public Schools has a policy of no tolerance for weapons.

RCW 9A.41.280(2) indicates that bringing a dangerous weapon on school property constitutes grounds for expulsion. In the event a student has brought a dangerous weapon to school but has not used it, the student will at a minimum be temporarily excluded from the school environment while a thorough assessment of the particular situation is completed.

RCW 28A.600.420(6) also states that a school district may suspend or expel a student for up to one year, if the student acts with malice as defined under RCW 9A.04.110 and displays an instrument that **appears to be a firearm**, on public elementary or secondary school premises, Weapons-Free Zone signs shall be posted in all school facilities.

**State-defined weapons include: nun chuck sticks; throwing stars; air gun; sling shot; sand club; metal knuckles; any knife having a blade which opens, or falls, or is ejected into position by the force of gravity, or by an outward, downward, or centrifugal thrust or movement; any dagger or dirk furtively carried; any portable device manufactured to function as a weapon and which is commonly known as a stun gun, including a projectile stun gun, that emits an electrical shock, charge, or impulse.*

District-Defined dangerous weapons include: BB gun of any type; pellet gun of any type; "soft air" gun; slingshot; hand club; sandbag; Chaco sticks; metal pipe or bar used or intended for use as a club, billy club, black jack; switchblade knife; fixed blade knife (e.g., kitchen knife, steak knife, and hunting and military-type knives that do not fold); large folding knife with a blade over 2.5 inches long; any knife with a blade that locks open; any knives with more than one blade; razor blade; box cutter; blowgun; taser gun; bullets; and pepper gas or spray. A hand-held laser device is considered a dangerous weapon if the light is deliberately aimed at another person, whether or not there is intent to cause harm. The definition of a dangerous weapon also includes any object that can reasonably be used to inflict serious bodily injury when a student uses such an object with the intent to harm or intimidate someone, or when there is no other reasonable purpose for possessing the object except to use it as a weapon.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING TIME TO READ ALL PAGES OF OUR "STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK." THIS INFORMATION WILL HELP YOU KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED OF STUDENTS AND FAMILIES AND HOW WE RESPOND THE TO THE NEEDS OF OUR AMAZING STUDENTS.

MUSTANG PRIDE!

Title 1/LAP Programs

Highland Park Elementary receives additional funding through the state Learning Assistance Program and Federal Title 1. These programs are designed to provide supplemental support to eligible students who are identified as in need of additional assistance to meet the state's academic reading and math standards. Funds provide extended day classes and opportunities to include parents in the education of their children.