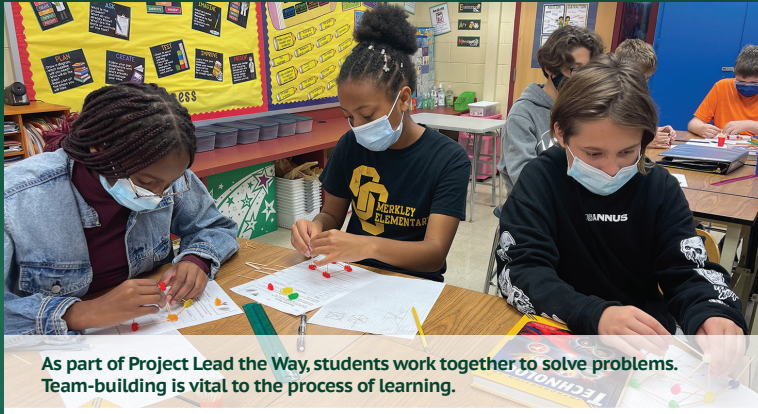




TROJAN TODAY

YOUR SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND SOURCE FOR NEWS AND EVENTS | DECEMBER 2021-JANUARY 2022



As part of Project Lead the Way, students work together to solve problems. Team-building is vital to the process of learning.



Highland Education Foundation awards \$5,590 in teacher grants

It was a grant from the Highland Education Foundation that provided Rachel Paplomatas with training to transition from a fifth-grade teacher at Warren to the Middle School's Project Lead the Way instructor.



A grant awarded in November will provide materials to help seventh and eighth graders become even better problem solvers and collaborators who learn there is more than one solution to the challenges their assignments pose.

"Middle Schoolers are the perfect age to excel at collaborative

problem-solving," the veteran teacher said. "These students are chomping at the bit to get a taste of the real world and become adults. These modules do just that. My students learn there is no straight path to solving problems, that the real learning is working until the solution solves the problem."

While this year's seventh graders are focusing on design and modeling, eighth graders are studying the magic of electrons.

"This curriculum teaches skills these students will use for the rest of their lives," Paplomatas said.

"They are flourishing right before my eyes."

2021 RECIPIENTS



LAURA BAZANT

1st Grade Teacher
Warren Elementary
Secret Stories Phonics: \$540

LAURA CHRISTOPHERSON

Third Grade Teacher
Warren Elementary
Flexible Seating: \$1,100

MARY GALLAGHER

Kindergarten Teacher
Merkley Elementary
Seat Pockets: \$330



RODNEY GLENN

Highland High School Teacher
Robotics equipment: \$1,500

MELISSA GOAD & ABBY MAKO

2nd Grade Teacher
Merkley Elementary
Young Authors materials: \$240

RACHEL PAPLOMATAS

Project Lead the Way Teacher
Highland Middle School
Logic puzzles and math manipulatives: \$750

SUZANNE RODRIGUEZ

5th Grade Teacher
Merkley Elementary
Reading board games: \$210



ALI ROSS

5th Grade Teacher
Merkley Elementary
Math board games and seat pockets: \$470

KRISTEN VERHOEVE

Counselor
Merkley Elementary
Behavioral Intervention materials: \$300



JULIE WHITNEY

Southridge Elementary Teacher
Environmental awareness project: \$150

ADMINISTRATION

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SCHOOL BOARD

Robert Kuva, President
Victor A. Garcia, Vice President
Patrick Krull, Secretary
Luanne Jurczak, member
Allencia Ballard, member

The school board meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. in the Administration Building, 9145 Kennedy Avenue, Highland.

INFO: Visit highland.k12.in.us for the latest information, including meeting agendas, school policies, board mission, beliefs and values.

School Town of Highland seeks licensed bus drivers; out-of-district candidates may enroll kids in schools

Like most other school districts in Indiana, the School Town of Highland is in great need of school bus drivers.

Many drivers who had been regulars opted out when students returned to the classroom a year ago out of concern they would contract COVID. Others found new employment when the schools implemented home-based schooling six months earlier.

Human Resources Director Ryan Erdelac said it's a good job, with good pay and a bevy of perks for the right individual.

"We are committed to hiring individuals who are as dedicated as we are to the health and safety of our children — from kindergartners to high schoolers," Erdelac said.

"As a result of the faith and responsibility we put in our drivers, we have found ways to be competitive in compensation and benefits. This can be a perfect job for someone who is responsible and wants additional income," he said.

"Many of our drivers tell us they stayed because of the relationships they have built with the students. They say the rewards are worth everything they put into the job."



SCHOOL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to licensed bus drivers, the School Town of Highland has several job opportunities available. The school district is currently looking for:

- Part-time Cafeteria Worker
- High School Art Teacher
- Dependent Care Aide
- Substitute Custodian
- Substitute Nurse
- Substitute Teachers

INFO: To apply, visit the online employment portal at highland.k12.in.us, navigate to the drop-down menu under Personnel and click on Employment Opportunities.

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

"If you see a Highland teacher in your travels this holiday season, please thank them for all they do!"

Every time I attend a sporting event or theater performance, watch students joking and laughing as they head home for the day, or see a caravan of buses bringing students to and from school, I am filled with immense gratitude.

I am thankful for so many things this year, grateful for a return to normal events and school days that are filled with thousands of moments that are stunning in their simplicity. They are the moments we would have taken for granted two years ago. I look forward to a day when we take them for granted again — well, almost take them for granted.

These moments of what is beginning to signify a new normal haven't happened by accident. They are the result of a teaching and support staff that doesn't quit. They are

the unsung heroes in helping our students get back to life.

Behind each moment where joy peeks through there is a teacher who has arrived early and stayed late to help students get back on track academically, advancing to a comfort level, a place where there is hope and bright futures await.

If you see a teacher in your travels this holiday season, please thank them for all they do. I thank them every chance I get.

Enjoy your holidays this season and all the joy they bring!



Brian Smith
Superintendent
School Town of Highland



Highland Rotary Club distributes dictionaries, shows third-graders how to use them

The globe is a gigantic place full of words both large and small. Today, each Highland third grader can tap into their very own Scholastic Children's Dictionary and its treasure trove of 30,000 words thanks to the Highland Rotary. Rotary President Tom Scully (pictured above) arrived at Johnston Elementary with his arms full. "They talk to all of them about dictionaries, what they entail, and how to use them.," Johnston Principal Amy Harrington said. "The kids loved it!" In all, the rotary delivered 300 dictionaries to the town's public and private elementary students this fall, a tradition that has been in place for at least a decade. The literacy project is funded by the Corn Roast held at Main Square every August. [photos provided]

Advisory period, academic assistance a win-win situation for high schoolers

A value-added program created to welcome students back to in-school learning at Highland High last year has proved so valuable, Principal John Zack continued the practice to keep the assistance in place.

FILLING A NEED

When students returned to the classroom, teachers quickly recognized that they needed to include holistic methods that addressed learning gaps as well as emotional vulnerabilities created – or exposed by the pandemic.

"We began with an advisory period that allowed our students and teachers to reconnect after being away for so many months. Through lessons and activities we continued reinforcing a culture where every student matters," Zack said. "The children who returned to the classroom were changed by COVID. We embraced the concept of whole-child wellness as a way to help them cope – and move forward."

BLUE DAYS

The program was so successful, Highland High has continued this school year with an advisory period that has been modified and grown to include academic assistance time for students.

Advisory and academic assistance time is built into the calendar as Blue Days – mutually agreed upon by students and teachers as time set aside where students can register for assistance.

"This has been incredibly helpful for those who need time to catch up as well as those who are struggling and recognize they need help," he said.

The bonus: The teacher is the one students have been bonding with during the advisory activities.

"Giving students scheduled time and our energy through advisory is well worth the investment in the long run, Zack said. "Having a more connected and well-rounded student in the class is the goal."

Holiday Concerts

CELEBRATE THE SEASON AT MONBECK AUDITORIUM

6:30 PM
DECEMBER 7

Featuring the **BANDS**
of HHS and HMS

6:30 PM
DECEMBER 10

Featuring the **CHOIRS**
of HHS and HMS

6:30 PM
DECEMBER 14

Featuring the **ORCHESTRAS**
of HHS and HMS

7 PM
DECEMBER 16

Featuring the **HIGHLAND**
COMMUNITY BAND

FREE
ADMISSION

OPEN TO THE
PUBLIC

