



TROJAN TODAY

YOUR SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND SOURCE FOR NEWS AND EVENTS | APRIL-MAY 2024



[photo provided]

ON YOUR MARK. **GET SET.** STEM.

Fourth Grade Teacher Elizabeth Biggs found an educational opportunity utilizing the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math skills needed to build the world's most elite cars right here in Indiana.

The immersive curriculum by Indiana University Health provided engaging lessons that married STEM to the Indianapolis 500 auto race.

“We enrolled in the curriculum that included lessons for math, science, social studies and language arts,” Biggs said. “From there, we were given the opportunity to apply for a mobile trip to our school. Southridge Elementary was lucky enough to be chosen for a visit in March.”

In all, 75 Southridge students participated in six stations –Indy

500 numbers, Careers, Flags, Indy 500 Gear as well as History, and Traditions. They learned about the science of a real Indy car from 1980.

“This was a day we will remember,” Biggs said. “We couldn’t have done this without the help of our parent volunteers and my 4th-grade team, which included Andrea Scardine, Miranda Porter and Patricia Bernal.”

Highland wrestling phenom named national champ!

Highland athlete extraordinaire Aleksandra Bastaic has done it again: named the 2024 USAW Folkstyle National Champion in the 140-pound weight class March 16 in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Bastaic had been looking forward to the national meet since bringing

home her second Indiana High School Girls Wrestling Championship earlier this year.

After two years of placing second in the 140-pound weight class at nationals, the distinguished athlete was determined to make this her year to stand atop the podium.

“I went into this competition working to control my breathing and my thoughts and do what I do,” Bastaic said.

“It’s hard to know who was happiest about this win. My parents were thrilled for me. I was so happy to come out on top.”



ADMINISTRATION

Brian Smith

Superintendent
bsmith@highland.k12.in.us

Ryan Erdelac

Asst. Superintendent
rerdelac@highland.k12.in.us

Cindy Adams

Chief Financial Officer
cadams@highland.k12.in.us

Britni Luster

Food Service Administrator
bluster@highland.k12.in.us

Andrea Warner

District Nurse Coordinator
awarner@highland.k12.in.us

Kris Besch

Special Education Director
kbesch@highland.k12.in.us

Mike Sukta

Facilities Manager
msukta@highland.k12.in.us

Dominic Nieblas

Transportation Director
dnieblas@highland.k12.in.us

John Zack

Highland High School Principal
jzack@highland.k12.in.us

Scheryl Corman

Highland Middle School Principal
scorman@highland.k12.in.us

Amy Harrington

Johnston Elementary Principal
aharring@highland.k12.in.us

Eric McMahon

Merkley Elementary Principal
emcmahon@highland.k12.in.us

Kevin Beveridge

Southridge Elementary Principal
kbeverid@highland.k12.in.us

Christina Davis

Warren Elementary Principal
cdavis@highland.k12.in.us

SCHOOL BOARD

Victor A. Garcia, President
Patrick Krull, Vice President
Allencia Ballard, Secretary
Robert Kuva, member
Erica Smith-Gomez, 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.



LEARNING TO RIDE: While flakes were still flying, kindergartners at Johnston Elementary got a ticket to ride thanks to Physical Education teacher Joseph Tolliver, the Johnston PTO, a grant that secured a set of Strider Bikes for Johnston and helmets donated by the Department of Transportation. "The kids are loving this," Principal Amy Harrington said. "They got to learn with their classmates the skills needed to power a bike and stay safe when they are out riding this summer." [photos provided]

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

"We have so much to celebrate – out-of-district students, graduates, record fundraising – as we wrap academic year"

This year has been one to relish and remember. In many ways, it feels like it's all gone by in a flash. We've begun the last nine-week term of the 2023-2024 school year. We began the school year welcoming 130 out-of-district students. Today, we consider them all part of the Trojan family. We are better as a school district because they are here. Parents are ecstatic with the education their children are receiving.

CLASS OF 2024

I want to take a moment to congratulate the Class of 2024. They are a special group of students. They navigated the rigors of becoming high school freshman in the fall of 2023, only to find that new routine disrupted by COVID. I see great promise in these students as they prepare for the next chapter. They have strong academic values. There are so many of them who I believe are going to achieve great things.

TRIVIA NIGHT RECORD!

Highland Education Foundation's annual Trivia Night was one for the record books. We had record-breaking fun and raised record-breaking proceeds to help fund teacher-inspired educational programs for our students. Trivia Night is one of those events that gets better every year.

Our teams filled 28 tables – the maximum possible at the beautiful Lincoln Community Center banquet facility– and raised more than \$13,000, which is our highest one-night total ever! We had a list of teams waiting just in case a group dropped out. Stay tuned to see the projects we will be funding later this year, thanks to all of you who support the mission of the foundation!



Brian Smith
Superintendent
School Town of Highland



SENIORS GET SOCIAL: The district's first-ever weeknight ice-cream social honoring seniors who will be graduating cum laude, summa cum laude and magna cum laude in a few short weeks was an unqualified success.

"An Afternoon of Stars" celebrated not only the students, but the people who helped them along the way – their parents, guardians and mentors.

"It was a great event to these students who have dedicated themselves to excelling in their academic careers," Superintendent Brian Smith said. "It was an honor to spend time with these students and those important to them in their lives. I see great things ahead for all of them." [photo provided]

Highland High School transitioning to modified block schedule next year

Principal John Zack said a new high school schedule will be implemented in August that guarantees students will have classroom instruction with each of their teachers three days a week.

Zack envisions the new scheduling module as students having the best of both worlds.

Block scheduling is favored for longer class sessions and more learning minutes while reducing the time spent traveling between classes and on non-education functions, such as taking attendance and handing out papers. Modifying the schedule one day a week will mean shorter sessions and interaction with every teacher three days a week.

In August, the school week will typically begin with shorter sessions on Mondays with blue days following on Tuesdays and Thursdays and gold days occurring on Wednesdays and Fridays.

The modified system accommodates the needs of students who spend a portion of their day at the Area Career Center. Teachers and students will provide ongoing feedback on what they see as the advantages and disadvantages of the new system.

"We will be addressing needs as we experiment with the new system and see if it works for us," he said. "What I see as a major benefit is the frequency of interactions between students and their teachers."

SENIOR
SENIOR
SENIOR
SENIOR

DANCING THE NIGHT AWAY

Prom will be held from 6 to 10 p.m. **April 27** at The Halls of St. George in Schererville. Date request forms required for out-of-towners, freshman and sophomores can be picked up at the office and are due **April 8**.

SENIOR WALKS

Seniors will walk the halls of our elementary schools one last time – **May 15** at Johnston and Warren, **May 20** at Southridge and Merkley.

DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS

Top students gather for a morning of money at 9 a.m. **April 24** in the high school LGI (Large Group Instruction) room for Highland Dollars for Scholars Awards Day.

PICTURE PERFECT

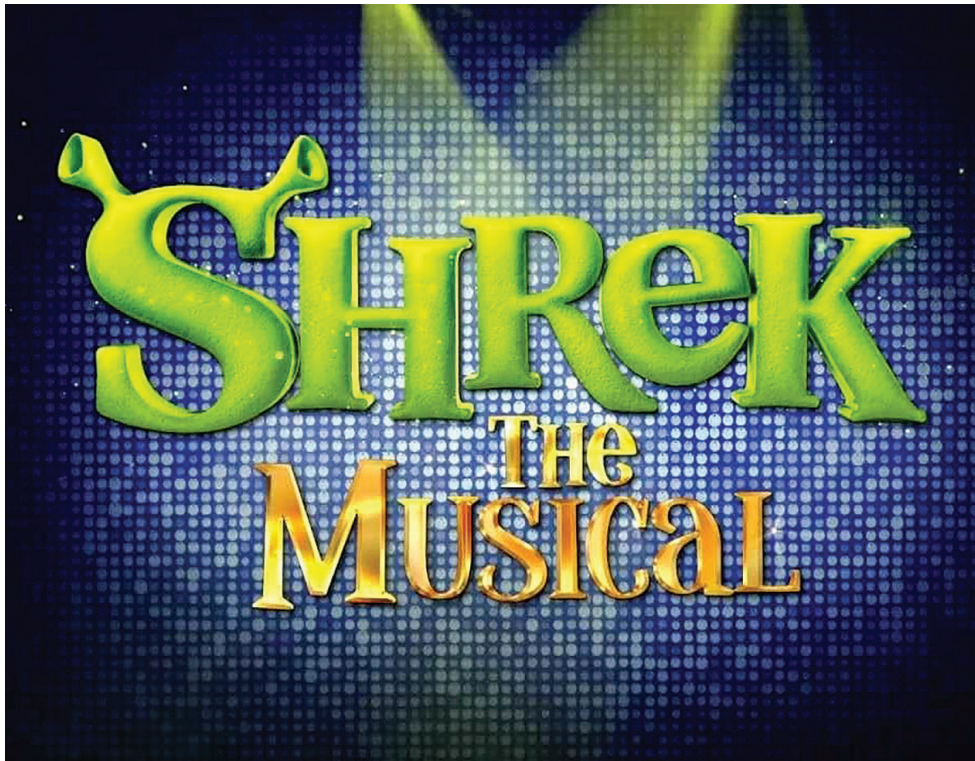
We'll take photos and rehearse for graduation from 4-5:45 p.m. **June 4** in the auditorium, gymnasium and cafeteria.

GEARING UP FOR FINALS

High school students take final exams **May 21, 22, 23 and 24**. Grades will be available online **May 30**.

POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE

The Class of 2024 gathers **June 4** for graduation. The ceremony will begin at 6 p.m. in the high school's football field. Every guest must have a ticket.



MONBECK AUDITORIUM

Shrek the Musical is a one-of-a-kind, hilarious fairy tale in which curses are reversed, monsters get the girls, donkeys and dragons find love, and princesses are beautiful in all shapes and sizes.

7 PM FRIDAY	MAY 3
7 PM SATURDAY	MAY 4
2 PM SUNDAY	MAY 5

Tickets are \$8 for seniors and students, \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 5.

www.highlandtheatrecompany.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

SPRING CONCERTS

Join us as we celebrate spring with free performances from our choir and musical ensembles.

Warren Elementary:

6:30 p.m. **April 9**

Warren Elementary School students will sing songs from "The Greatest Showman."

Johnston Elementary:

6:30 p.m. **April 11**

Johnston Elementary School students will present "Disney: The Movies. The Music."

MS/HS Spring Choral:

6:30 p.m. **May 8**

MS/HS Orchestra Concert:

7 p.m. **May 13**

MS/HS Band Concert:

6:30 p.m. **May 16**

WHERE: Highland High School Monbeck Auditorium, 9135 Erie

ADMISSION: Free

ATHLETIC GOLF OUTING

Join the Highland Trojans Athletics Department for a swinging good time at its golf outing fundraiser! Enjoy 18 holes of fun along with prizes, a silent auction and delicious food/drinks after the game. All proceeds go to Highland High School Athletics.

WHEN: Friday, **June 21** – registration is 11 a.m. with a shotgun start at noon.

WHERE: Wicker Memorial Park, 8554 Indianapolis Blvd.

FEE: \$90 per golfer, \$360 per foursome (\$390 with all golf aids). Registration deadline is Thursday, **June 15**.

INFO: Call Athletic Director Ryan Harrington (219) 922-5611 or email rharrington@highland.k12.in.us.