



MEET OUR NEW PRINCIPALS



Travis Anderson

Anderson eager to lead Highland High

Travis Anderson will be leading Highland High School already familiar with the Northwest Indiana region.

"I'm a student advocate," Anderson said. "I want to do what's best for the kids and give them the most opportunities to be successful."

Most recently, Anderson was assistant principal at Portage High School. Prior to that, he served three years as principal at Whiting High School, where he led the district to a 97 percent graduation rate, the highest in school history.

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Experience

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Education

- ♦ MA Education: Educational Leadership
- ♦ MAJORS: Mild Intervention - Teaching Special Education
- ♦ BS: Physical Education



Kimberly Hayes

Hayes looking forward to Southridge

Kimberly Hayes is bringing a wealth of experience and passion for education to her new position as principal of Southridge Elementary School.

"I am excited to be coming to Highland," Hayes said. "This is a community that has a reputation for focusing on doing what is best for kids."

With 22 years as a teacher/principal, nine of which were focused on working with students with learning and physical disabilities, Hayes is thrilled she will be working in a building that has three classrooms of students with autism.

"I will be focusing on the Highland program up close and working with educators to see what we can bring to special needs students" she said. "I am excited to get started."

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- ♦ MA Education: Educational Administration & Supervision
- ♦ MA Education: Special Education
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ADMINISTRATION

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Eric McMahon
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Kimberly Hayes
Southridge Elementary Principal
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Christina Davis
Warren Elementary Principal
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SCHOOL BOARD

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

Custodians hit it hard during summer, readying schools for students' return

From June to mid-August, Chuck Jank is the first to admit the halls at Highland schools are way too quiet.

Jank, chief custodian at Warren Elementary, said summer is all about getting the school building ready for when he and fellow custodians Alan Montano and Maria Garcia welcome the children back for a new school year.

"When the kids are off, we are able to do the jobs that take more than a few hours to complete," he said. "We clean every locker and strip every floor. We deep clean every carpet, fix windows, paint, do landscape and wipe down walls" he said.

"During the school year, Alan and Maria work evenings while I work days. In June and July, we work together as a team," Jank said. "It's fun."

A computer guy in Chicago for 35 years, the longtime Highland resident made the move to Warren 1.5 years ago, trading his lengthy commute for a five-minute walk or bike ride to work.



Chief Custodian Chuck Jank and his fellow colleagues Maria Garcia and Alan Montano make quite the team at Warren Elementary, where they take summer cleaning to a whole new level. [Christina Davis photo]

"I've always liked to fix things and worked with my dad in construction," he said. "At school, it's satisfying figuring out what needs to be fixed before anyone tells me it's broken."

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



"Scholarships, grants turning dreams into reality"

DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS

Congratulations to the 23 Highland High School graduating seniors (pictured above) who received more than \$90,000 in scholarships to help pay for the next chapter in their academic careers from Highland's Dollars for Scholars program.

DOLLARS FOR TEACHERS

I also want to congratulate Highland Middle School Asst. Principal Anthony Belli and his team who took top honors at the Highland Education Foundation's annual Trivia Night. The sold-out event raised more than \$15,000 for the next round of Innovative Grants for Kids.



Brian Smith
Superintendent
School Town of Highland



[Ethan Roberts photos]



Highland Life Skills students produce bumper crop of vegetables, flowers

Combine a group of eager Life Skills students, copious amounts of black dirt, seeds and planting pots and you'll have all you need to cultivate a bumper crop of vegetables and flowers at Highland High School.

Boosted by a \$3,000 Gratitude Grant from the Elks Foundation with an assist from the local Highland Elks Lodge, the effort was wildly successful.

Highland High Asst. Principal Cristina Campos said the grant provided funds that helped buy dozens of seed packets, dirt, fertilizer, garden tools, watering cans and seed trays for special education students enrolled in the

Life Skills classroom.

"Before we started, we sent an email to teachers asking the kinds of flowers and vegetables they would be interested in purchasing," said Project Coordinator Sue Wajvoda, an avid plant enthusiast. "From that, we created a mix of lettuces, radishes, carrots, tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers along with a selection of zinnias that were ready to be taken home for Mother's Day."

"Our Life Skills students embraced this project – from planting and daily watering to marketing, packaging and distributing the veggies and flowers – beginning on the first day," she said.

Immunization Clinic

If your child still needs one or more immunizations, the School Town, in collaboration with Franciscan Health, offers a one-stop shop.

This year's Immunization Clinic will be held from **11 a.m.-6 p.m. Wednesday, August 5** in the Highland High School LGI (enter through Door B). All required vaccinations will be available.

No appointments are necessary and parents do not need to be present. Consent forms are required and must be completed by a parent or guardian. Please bring photo ID and insurance card. If uninsured, vaccines are \$10.

QUESTIONS? Contact Nurse Andrea Warner at (219) 922-5610 ext. 1021 or awarner@highland.k12.in.us.

New Student Orientation

Highland High School invites all new students to join us for New Student Orientation on **Thursday, August 6**.

Bring your fully charged school-issued iPad and report by last names as follows:

- ♦ **A-GOM:** 9-10:30 a.m.
- ♦ **GON-O:** 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- ♦ **P-Z:** 1-2:30 p.m.

Orientation features building tours, Freshman 101, staff meet-and-greet as well as an time to meet classmates.

Back-to-School Night

Highland High School invites all returning students and their parents to join us for Back-to-School Night from **5:30-7 p.m. Tuesday, August 18**.

We'll meet in the auditorium. Please enter through Door C at 9135 Erie St. The night includes:

- ♦ Meet Principal Travis Anderson
- ♦ Teacher, staff meet-and-greet
- ♦ Guided school tours
- ♦ Staff available to answer questions

Highland Highlights



For more good news and fun stories from the School Town of Highland, check out the monthly newsletter, Highland Highlights! Scan the QR code or visit highland.k12.in.us to view past editions and subscribe.



SUMMER MEAL PROGRAM

Food Services expands free meals to two Highland locations this summer

After providing 3,551 meals as part of the Summer Feeding Program in 2025, Food Services Director Britni Luster hopes to see an uptick in the number of children taking advantage of no-cost meals at Merkley and Johnston elementary schools this summer.

The School Town of Highland was one of approximately 1,000 summer meal locations provided through local school districts and community organizations last year.

"We love being able to provide lunches for the community," Luster said. "We work hard to create menus that appeal to children and tick all the boxes for a balanced meal. We know a lot of kiddos and their siblings look forward to it and we love to be part of their day."

Locations & Times

The Food Service Department will be serving free summer meals to any child 18 years and under. Meals must be eaten on-site. There will be no meal service June 19 and July 4 in observance of the holiday.

Johnston Elementary

8220 5th Street, Highland

Breakfast 7:45-8:45 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

- June 1-5 (Monday-Friday)
- June 8-12 (Monday-Friday)
- June 15-18 (Monday-Thursday)
- June 22-25 (Monday-Thursday)
- June 29-July 2 (Monday-Thursday)
- July 6-9 (Monday-Thursday)
- July 13-16 (Monday-Thursday)
- July 20-23 (Monday-Thursday)
- July 27-30 (Monday-Thursday)

Merkley Elementary

9340 5th Street, Highland

Lunch only served at this location from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

- June 1-4 (Monday-Thursday)
- June 8-11 (Monday-Thursday)
- June 15-18 (Monday-Thursday)
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The USDA is an equal opportunity provider.

Athletics Camp

The Athletics Department at Highland High School is offering camps for basketball, football, volleyball, soccer and baseball this summer. All are welcome. Please note age and grade level.

Registration is due one week prior to camp start date and must be completed online at highland.k12.in.us. Registration will not be accepted day of camp.



BASKETBALL CAMP

June 8-11 (girls and boys)

1st-4th Grade: 9-11 a.m.

5th-8th Grade: Noon-2 p.m.

Cost: \$40 per camper

Where: Main gymnasium



BASEBALL CAMP

June 22-24 (boys)

Ages 6-14: 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Cost: \$45 per camper

Where: Baseball Field



FOOTBALL CAMP

July 13-16 (boys)

1st-6th Grade: 1-2 p.m.

Cost: \$40 per camper

Where: Main Field



SOCCER CAMP

July 20-23 (girls and boys)

Ages 6-9: 9-10:30 a.m.

Ages 10-14: 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Cost: \$50 per camper

Where: Main field



VOLLEYBALL CAMP

July 27-29 (girls)

1st-5th Grade: 9:30-10:45 a.m.

6th-8th Grade: 11 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Cost: \$45 per camper

Where: Main gymnasium



TROJAN TODAY

YOUR SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND SOURCE FOR NEWS AND EVENTS | JUNE-JULY 2026

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