



TROJAN TODAY

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2019-nCoV
coronavirus

SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND SPECIAL REPORT

Virtual-learning students at risk of not graduating

Every time I report Highland schools are open for in-classroom learning, it is a good day, a good month and a good first semester.

We appreciate when parents take the time to get in touch and tell us how we have helped their children and where we could do better. Since the pandemic, most of what we hear is how beneficial it is for their children to have the classroom experience. They say it makes a difference in their education – and it shows. Students tend to learn more and remain invested in their education no matter if they are looking forward to college, an apprenticeship or occupation-specific training.

We know it's going to take months if not another full year to get many of our students back to where they should be. Of great concern now is our seniors who will not be graduating at the rate they were even one year ago.

That should be of concern to all of us. We have virtual-learning students who are so behind, they are at risk of not being able to complete their coursework or earn the credits they need to graduate.

My hats off to our teachers and guidance counselors for doing all they can to keep our virtual students from falling behind.

Not graduating puts a serious



A HUGE THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

An inquiry from a parent regarding masks and hand sanitizer led to a marshaling of resources and an outpouring of support from the community. That move to keep Highland students, teachers and staff safe during the pandemic has helped replenish PPE supplies at each of the town's six public schools. That wasn't all. Crayons, pencils, paper towels and Sharpies also made their way into donation bins. Superintendent Brian Smith said every item will be used to its fullest. "Because we have been in the classroom for the majority of the school year, we are using gallons of hand sanitizer every week, It's been working to prevent the spread of COVID," Smith said. "This generosity means so much to us and I just want to say 'Thank You!'" [photos provided]

crimp in earnings for a lifetime. The average dropout earns an annual income of \$20,241 – \$10,386 less than the typical grad.

Over 40 years, that could mean \$415,440 less in income, all because these seniors got dealt a hand that didn't serve them well.

If you know a senior who's been less-than-committed to learning, please offer a word of encouragement and send them our way.



Brian Smith
Superintendent
School Town of Highland

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Kindergarten registration is just around the corner. Having accurate and timely numbers allows the School Town of Highland to ensure it has proper staffing and materials in place to start the 2021-2022 school year smoothly for the class of 2034!

Kindergarten Round-Up will be done in two phases. Beginning 8 a.m. March 1, parents will be able to register online and provide documentation later. Here is a brief description of each phase:

Phase 1: A link will be activated at 8 a.m. March 1 on the RDS parent access page (<https://rdsappserv.highland.k12.in.us/rdsparentaccess/>) to enroll new students. It will allow parents to register their incoming kindergarten students. This link will not require a parent code to access the program. Once clicked, parents enter all the necessary information just like they would at an in-person registration. Most importantly, completing this step reserves your child's place in line with regard to our transfer process. The earlier Phase 1 is completed, the more likely your child is able to attend his/her neighborhood school.

Phase 2: Each building will hold its registration from 2:30 to 6 p.m. on the following Wednesday's:

March 10 – Johnston Elementary

March 17 – Merkley Elementary

March 31 – Southridge Elementary

April 7 – Warren Elementary

Parents need to complete the registration process on the date listed during the open window of time. Completion includes visiting your neighborhood elementary school with your child and the proof of residency requirements and other documentation outlined online at highland.k12.in.us.

Your child will be given a short Kindergarten Readiness Test to help determine appropriate placement for your child. Once BOTH of these phases are complete, your child's place is secured in an STOH kindergarten classroom. Final classroom and building placements are made during the first week of August.

ATTENTION CLASS OF 2025!

Information about graduation requirements, graduation pathways, available courses, scheduling information, and athletics will be available **Feb. 16** at highland.k12.in.us/o/hhs.

Highland High School will hold a virtual Q&A parent night from 6 to 8 p.m. **Feb. 18** for incoming freshman for the 2021-2022 school year at meet.google.com/mpd-mzrt-pxr.

Questions? Contact Asst. Principal Anthony Belli at abelli@highland.k12.in.us or (219) 922-5610 or 9th Grade Counselor Rose Vis at rvis@highland.k12.in.us or (219) 922-5613.

BOYS BASKETBALL RETURNS

Varsity Boys Basketball will be making up games canceled because of COVID-19 through the first three weeks of February. On tap will be make-up games with:

Feb. 9 – Kankakee Valley

Feb. 10 – Hammond Gavit

Feb. 11 – Andean

Feb. 12 – Hanover Central

Feb. 17 – Calumet

Feb. 18 – Hammond Academy S/T

Feb. 19 – Hobart

Athletic Director Ryan Harrington is happy to report players who tested positive are all recovering. So far, boys and girls basketball are the only school sports impacted by the outbreak of the coronavirus.

WINTER SPORTS UPDATE

All other winter sports are moving toward the conclusion of their individual seasons.

"Girls Basketball will participate in sectionals in February as will wrestling," Athletic Director Ryan Harrington said. "Of all winter sports, wrestling was our greatest concern because of the close contact that is a requirement of the discipline. We made modifications designed to keep them safe and held our collective breath that it would work. We are eager to see them in sectional match-ups."