



SUMMER 2026

HIGHLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PUBLICATION

# SCHOOL BELL



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## HCS MISSION STATEMENT

In order to honor God, we nurture and guide students to see the Father's creation, to sense order in a world saved by Christ, and to serve God through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

## CONTACT US

3040 Ridge Road  
Highland, Indiana 46322  
219-838-0356  
www.highlandchristian.org

HEAD OF SCHOOL  
Dr. Kyle Weener

ACADEMIC PRINCIPAL  
Mrs. Andrea Harvey

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
Ms. Kimberly Julian

DEAN OF STUDENTS  
Mr. Bryon Ritzema

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
Mrs. Amber Powell

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR  
Ms. Jodi Lineburg

PHOTOGRAPHY  
Mr. Dustin Hibbler

SCHOOL BELL LAYOUT  
Mrs. Christina Woo

PRINTING  
Lithographic Communications

## 2026-27 SCHOOL BOARD

Taylor Boice  
Blake Evans  
Joe Jonkman  
Andy Moore  
George van Laten  
Carrie Hutton Latsoudis  
John VanderPol  
Kara Vander Woude  
Kyle Vander Zee  
Sandy Van Prooyen

## 2026-27 FOUNDATION BOARD

Jim Bandstra  
Brandon Boomsma  
Ryan Davids  
Eric DeVries  
Stephanie Evanson  
Nate Laning  
Jason Smit

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## BASEBALL SEASON

written by Dr. Kyle Weener, Head of School

Whether you cheer for the Cubs, White Sox, another team, or you don't really care about baseball at all, there's something beautiful about how a baseball season comes together. Over the course of 162 games, each season is marked by special stories, heroic rookie seasons, surprise injuries, walk-off wins, and other unexpected challenges and victories. Many of these moments are seen by the fans, but far more of what goes into the season is done behind the scenes. Players train throughout the off-season by lifting weights, building agility, and improving mental stamina. Coaches observe and predict player's expected and potential abilities, make plans for lineups and positions, study other teams, and build strategies. Facilities are designed and prepared. Schedules are created for gameplay, staff, travel, meals - it's a major production requiring a massive amount of time and effort from a great many people.



There is a great deal at Highland Christian that is seen and experienced by students and families every day. However, as Head of School, I am privileged to experience the massive amount that goes on behind the scenes. The time and effort given by so many dedicated people consistently leaves me in awe.

When I attended college, I had a choir director by the name of Dr. Todd Guy. An expression that he used was, "the difference between ordinary and extraordinary is a little bit of extra." Let me tell you something... **Highland Christian is an extraordinary place to be.** In reflecting on the 2025-2026 school year, here are some "behind the scenes" ways that you (our people) make this great thing called Christian education happen:

- Community members have stepped up to provide tuition assistance to families in need. As a result, every family that has demonstrated a financial need had this need fully met!
- Outside of school hours, staff are in prayer and fast on behalf of our students and families.
- Donors helped us lower the Expansion Loan from 1.99M to 1.35M.
- Parents met every Friday morning to lift HCS up in prayer.
- Students from Girls on the Run helped raise funds for an HCS family battling cancer.

Thank you for the special role you play in the HCS community to make this amazing work happen. As we approach the 2026-2027 school year, I want to encourage each of you to consider the investment you are planning to make in the young hearts and minds of the 700+ students that have been entrusted to our care. Each effort from every member culminates to make a tremendous Kingdom impact!

*Kyle*



FIELD DAY



# HIGHLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**ICE CREAM SOCIAL**  
August 11

**FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (K-8)**  
August 13

**FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (SEC)**  
August 14 & 18

**GOLF OUTING**  
August 24

**PASTORS CHAPEL**  
September 25

**GRANDPARENTS' DAYS (SEC)**  
October 7-8

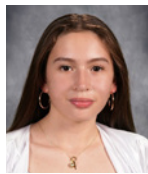
**GRANDPARENTS' DAY (K-8)**  
October 9



Naomi Ajayi



Jonah Alicea



Giuliana Arellano



Aiden Bailey



Claire Best



Brody Boomsma



Jessica Brice



Nancy Brosman



Aiden Brouwer



Noah Brouwer



Reese Brouwer



Allison Clark



Amani Clayton



Hallie Cook



Isabella Corral



Christopher Deinert



Edward DeVries Jr



Erin De Young



Gabrielle Dobynes



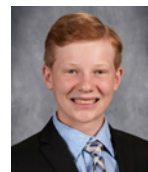
Allison Dykstra



Cole Dykstra



Mikayla Dykstra

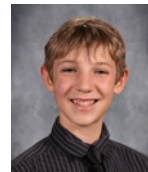


Joshua Friend



Evelyn Gerber

# Congratulations CLASS of



Seth Hadley



Braylin Hamby



Ezra Hammersten



Camila Harris



Hailey Hinson

# 2026



Conner Hook



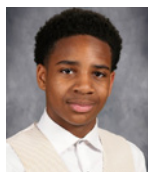
Xavier Hughes



William Jellema



Mylee Jones



Noah Jones



Katelyn Julian



Caleb Katz



Collin Kramer



T'Mai Matthews



Layla Okrasinski



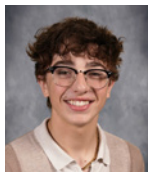
Ellie Oostman



Carly Porter



Israel Reyes



Samuel Rich



Shelby Scheeringa



Jalyne Shaver



Hallie Sitter



Leo Smit



Aubrey Staples



Lae'lah Swain



Lily Vander Woude



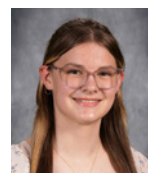
Vivian Vander Woude



Madeline Wieringa



Amanda Willis



Emma Zoeteman



Maksim Zutic



## GRADUATION 2026 - SCRIPTURE FOLLOWER

*written by Vicki Huizenga, Faith Formation Director*

The 2025-26 school year finished on May 28, and for some of the 55 graduates, this marked the end of an adventure that began in August 2017. More than 680,400 minutes of learning happened in the last nine years at Highland Christian School. These graduates learned their numbers and letters, they mastered verb tenses and inference, they comprehended inequalities and exponents, they studied patterns and systems, they acquired skill in design and organization. These graduates also became competent in interpersonal relationships on the playground, basketball court or soccer field, around the lunch table, and in the classroom. Our graduates learned to pray with and for each other, to serve alongside one another, to celebrate with each other, and to forgive one another.

The 2025/26 school theme, “**Scripture Follower**” from **II Timothy 3:16-17**, reminded us that God calls and equips us to connect to His calling on our lives by applying Scripture:

*“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

Our graduates have embraced this role:

**Students learned to let Scripture shape the way they think and live** by connecting the stories of God’s people to real-life situations in friendships, social media choices, and family relationships.

**Students learned to recognize when their actions or attitudes do not align with God’s Word** by taking responsibility for their behavior, allowing Scripture to challenge their attitudes or decisions, and working to correct behaviors that are not aligned with God’s Word.

**Students learned to respond to conviction with humility** by practicing reconciliation and apologizing sincerely, and by identifying areas to grow spiritually and personally.

**Students developed habits that help them follow Christ daily** by participating in prayer, service projects, and worship, by encouraging each other spiritually, and by modeling Christlike leadership for younger students.

Our students learned that being **Scripture Followers** means more than knowing Bible verses or stories—it means allowing God’s Word to transform daily actions and choices.

To the **Class of 2026**: your journey is just beginning-but you are ready. Follow Jesus, trust and obey His Word, and step forward in faith.

Congratulations, graduates! May you go forward to **impact the world for Christ**.



Vicki



## LOOK BOTH WAYS...

*written by Karen van Belle, Preschool Director & Teacher*

Preschool graduation is a good time to take a minute to “look both ways.” While we’re not crossing the street, we’re stopping to appreciate the growth that has occurred and the growth that is yet to come.

First, a look back: In just five years, these students have grown from infants into big kids! They’ve learned so many things along the way: how to walk (and run!), how to talk, how to recognize letters, how to be part of a classroom, and so many other things. It truly is a miracle that just five years can bring about so much change! In just the last year, these students have worked hard to gain the skills that will help them thrive in kindergarten. It is such a blessing to the preschool staff that we get to watch that growth happen!

Now, a look ahead: Five years from now, these students will be greatly changed again. They will be about to move into their junior high or middle school years. There isn’t usually a graduation at that point, but the transition will be clear. Their physical growth will be easy to see. Their academic skills will have multiplied many times over.

Today, we stand in between these points. It’s important to take some time to recognize the changes and celebrate the accomplishments that have already occurred – both big and small. We honor the growth, and we cheer for these students and their hard work. It’s also important to take a look ahead and see that there is so much growth to come.

In Jeremiah 29:11 we read: “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” While we can never know exactly what the future holds, we do know who made the plans! It’s amazing to know that we can rest in the knowledge that God is with us in every stage. He was there when these students were born, He’s here with them as they walk across this stage to graduate from preschool, and He will be with them five years from now (and at every stage after that!)

Congratulations, Preschool Graduates and families! We recognize and celebrate the growth you’ve achieved so far. We also anticipate the progress that is yet to come for you. We trust that the God who has made good plans for you will walk beside you the whole way.



*Karen*





When you have a story about a nanny who is practically perfect and a cast and crew that work hard, good things are bound to happen. The Bates family had their priorities backwards – they forgot that family is important and that there are more important things than money. In the end, Mary Poppins was able to remind the Bates family (and all of us) that our relationships are what matter. Mary reminded us that when we reach for the heavens, we get the stars thrown in – or as Christians know – when we seek God first, our priorities align correctly, and our lives become more fulfilled.


# SUPERCALIFRAGILISTICEXPIALIDOCIOUS!

*written by Judy Zandstra, Librarian*

The cast was a pleasure to work with – it is always so fun to watch students reach inside themselves and show what potential they have. We will miss those students who are leaving us – Aiden Bailey, who showed true warmth and maturity on stage, Hallie Cook, who came this year and was a delight to watch on stage, Conner Hook, who played Michael to a tee, Evelyn Gerber, who delighted us all as Mrs. Brill, Joshua Friend, who has been our comic relief in two plays, Carly Porter, who charmed us all when asking us to feed the birds, Reese Brouwer, who was steady influence to all those in the play, T'Mai Matthews, who taught us that words can be made out of many letters, Aiden Brouwer and William Jellema, who shone their light on the actors and allowed us to hear them, Nancy Brosman, whose organizational skills kept the costumes in order, Lily VanderWoude's leadership on stage left, and Amani Clayton's ability to spin those periaktoi. We will miss all of you in so many ways, but know that you are ready to tackle any production or activity that awaits in your future!

Special thanks to Sarah Van Drunen who dreams big while directing every production and Mark Rinkenberger who directed the tech booth. We could not do these productions without the unending enthusiasm of all the students who were involved – they make the stage a place that feels alive with possibilities.





*“Spiritual nurturing is seen  
in the thoughts and actions  
of our students that reveal  
the truths that are biblically  
grounded in their hearts.”*

- Mrs. Zandstra, Librarian

In March, the Blaw family visited HCS and spoke to three 8th grade science classes about the science of Down Syndrome.

## VISION IN ACTION

written by Kimberly Julian, Assistant Principal

Last month at a conference, administrators were challenged to find evidence of our vision happening around us at school. We were encouraged by how easy it was to find. Teachers pour into students with diligent repetition, stories of life experiences, variety, and foundations in each content area to make sure they are equipped with the tools they need academically for the years ahead. Students in 2nd grade have been doing UFLI since Kindergarten, on very similar slides and routines daily. Teachers are building in the phonemic awareness that students need to read through short stories in 3rd grade, Hatchet in 5th grade, and missionary biographies in 6th grade. I watch teachers break up the monotony, making learning with repetition fun and engaging. At times, it is with kangaroo hops in 1st grade or a celebration dance in 2nd grade.

Junior high teachers were purposeful this year in inviting experts to visit, taking “academic equipping” beyond the textbook. Miss Bultema had students interview HCS parents who were born in different countries. After a unit on chromosomes, Mr. Mack had a family with a child who has Down Syndrome share with classes about the joys and challenges of Down Syndrome.

Students in each grade level are being Biblically grounded through a cohesive map of the Bible but also from how their teachers live out their faith. Students are memorizing whole passages of the resurrection and the Christmas story. Kindergarten students in Mrs. Zandstra’s class learn the Shema prayer from Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Mrs. DeBoer

has 1st grade students create a 1-page full of tiny pictures drawn to remind them of their favorite part of a Bible story. 2nd graders are praying out loud every morning for their requests in Mrs. Vugteveen’s room by choice. They follow their teacher’s example, making their requests known to God. Students learn about how to study the Bible in Mrs. Huizenga’s Bible class as she takes them line-upon-line, looks for patterns, and defines words. In each class, I saw an openness to questions and students knew their questions were valued.

Our librarian, Mrs. Zandstra, said, “Spiritual nurturing is seen in the thoughts and actions of our students that reveal the truths that are biblically grounded in their hearts.” Students are supported throughout their day and years at Highland Christian through the lens that each student has different gifts, talents, needs, and hurts. Teachers and staff nurture the spirit of students to take note of those talents, and have a place to live them out. They nurture the students who are facing fearful situations and remind them of God’s presence and His truth that guides every step whether it is one of joy or pain.

This is only a small part of the evidence but how exciting it is to be able to live out the vision as we prepare students who are academically equipped, biblically grounded, and spiritually nurtured to impact the world for Christ.

*Kimberly*

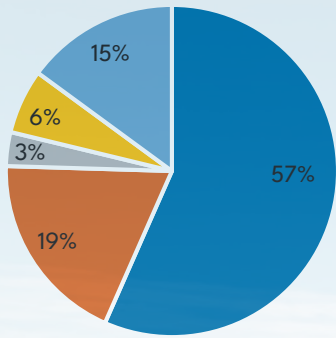


In January, Miss Bultema’s 6th grade social studies classes enjoyed hearing from a panel of guest speakers from Costa Rica, Nassau, Bahamas, and Mexico to wrap up their unit studying these areas. Students were given the opportunity to ask questions to the speakers to connect their learning in class to the presentations. Thank you Mrs. Castro, Mrs. Medina, and Ms. Hepburn for taking the time to share about your culture and help us learn more about these beautiful countries

## ANNUAL BUDGET NUMBERS

K-8 Tuition Rate	2025/2026 Based on 600 K-8 students	2026/2027 Based on 615 K-8 students
	\$9,150	\$9,590
Budget	\$6,596,848	\$7,027,594

## FOUNDATION GIFTS BY SOURCE



- \$150,000 - etc...a thrift store
- \$8,743 - Tribute Gifts
- \$39,577 - Annual Appeal
- \$50,000 - Estate Gifts
- \$16,662 - Fundraising

## FAMILY LEGACY FUND DISTRIBUTIONS

Distributions received in 2024/2025 totaled \$38,221. This represents a 6% increase over 2023/2024.

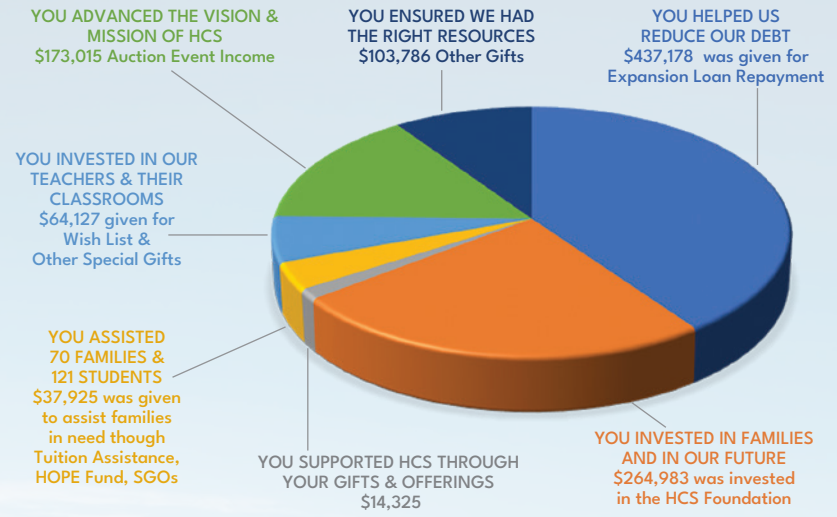
## GIFTS IN MEMORY

Shirley Dykstra  
 Kenneth Evenhouse  
 David Hofstra  
 Adele Kroll  
 Bruce Leep  
 Lindsay Moes  
 Debbie Ooms  
 Ida Mae Peerbolte  
 Jennie Schoon  
 Doug Sluiter  
 Kenneth Toren  
 Chris Van Til  
 Garrett (Gary) B. Zandstra  
 Duke Zuidema

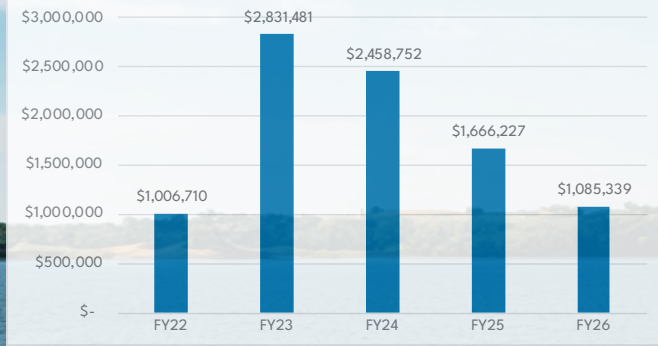
## GIFTS IN HONOR

Henry Huizenga - 90th Birthday  
 Gail Achterhof - Retirement from HCS, 30 Years of Service  
 Kathy Vant Hoff - Retirement from HCS, 21 Years of Service

## THANKS FOR MAKING THE DIFFERENCE AT HIGHLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL! Here's what your generosity looked like this year!

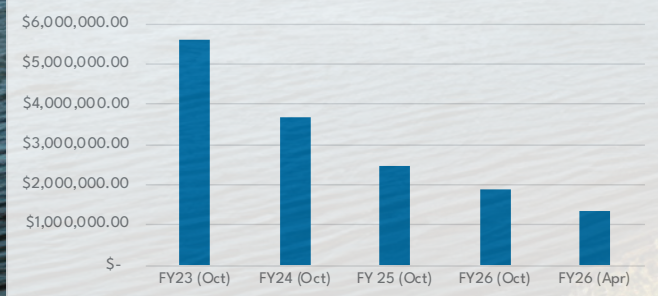


## ANNUAL GIVING YEAR OVER YEAR

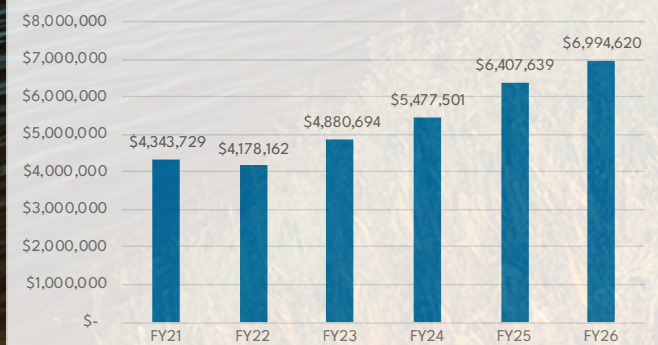


## REDUCING EXPANSION DEBT

We've paid off 76% of the 2023 Expansion Costs and are making continued progress towards our goal of being debt free by 2030!



## GROWING THE FOUNDATION FUND



## 2025/2026 ADVANCEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Many of you attended our Legacy Leader Conversations and provided meaningful feedback through our donor survey, which we appreciate!
- Three new family funds were established this year: The Taylor and Janna Boice Family Legacy Fund, The Jennie Palmboos Scholarship (FLF), and The Klooster Family Science and Engineering Family Legacy Fund.
- As a result of your generosity, announcements can be heard in 100% of spaces inside and outside our building! Thanks for equipping the purchase and installation of our new PA System!
- With donor-directed funds, we were able to offer small group support sessions for students and establish a new long-term fund for Parent Advocacy: Mental Health & Diagnostics. Our Student Services classroom spaces will be re-configured and slightly expanded. With minor changes, we will be equipped to meet new state standards and more effectively support students.
- 100% of tuition assistance needs were met this year as a result of the gifts you've given to the annual HCS Foundation gift, the Feikema Family Memorial Tuition Assistance Fund, General TA Fund, The HOPE Fund, and SGO Scholarship program.
- You gave \$437,138 for 2023 Expansion costs, and we reduced our debt to \$1,355,315.
- A new giving goal was reached during the HCS Foundation Appeal through a special campaign and matching gift offer.

# Walking in the Path OF BLESSING

*written by Jodi Lineburg,  
Development Director*

As this year comes to a close, we celebrate the opportunities we've had to partner together in one of the greatest missions possible this year! Christ-centered education is more than academic learning. It is a process of whole-child development; encompassing heart, soul, mind and strength. **Each person that serves, gives, works, and dreams about the good of our students and the future of our school leaves a path of blessing for others to walk in.**

This year at Highland Christian School we studied what it means to be a Scripture Follower. Deuteronomy 30:19-20 summarizes the heart of the matter so well: "Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to His voice, and hold fast to Him. For the Lord is your life..." Being a Scripture Follower is shema. It is listening and obeying. This is what we invest in day-in and day-out: to teach them what it means to love the Lord, to walk in His ways, to listen to His voice, and to live life for His glory.

While our immediate, measurable goal is academic learning, our greater goal is that our students walk in the path of God's blessing. Thank you for participating with us in this calling.

# SPRING SPORTS RECAP



## BOYS' VOLLEYBALL & CO-ED TRACK

*written by Luke Hillegonds,  
Athletic Director & 3rd-8th PE Teacher*

The 7th grade boys volleyball team had a great season in which they showed great promise and improved greatly. The team was coached by Josh and Lisa Blocker. They finished with a 4-2 record in the regular season and earned the number three seed in the conference tournament. Ultimately, they fell short of the championship but did a fantastic job of representing Highland Christian.

**7TH GRADE VOLLEYBALL**  
COACHES: JOSH & LISA BLOCKER

Jay Aardsma, Tyce Blocker, Zeelan Constantino, Noah Cubelo, Ethan DeBoer, Ryker Evanson, Moises Garcia, Matthew Neibert, Cameron Parks, Andrew Schutt, Paxton VanderPol, Levi Yukon



The 8th grade boys volleyball team competed hard all year and played a fun style of volleyball. The team was coached by Nikki Van Dyke and Caitlin DeBoer. They finished with a 2-4 record in the regular season and earned the number five seed in the tournament. The 8th grade boys improved greatly throughout the season and were a lot of fun to watch..

**8TH GRADE VOLLEYBALL**  
COACH: CAITLIN DEBOER & NIKKI VAN DYKE

Joshua Friend, Aiden Brouwer, Collin Kramer, William Jellema, Eddie DeVries, Cole Dykstra, Brody Boomsma, Leo Smit, Caleb Katz, Noah Jones, Sammy Rich, Xavier Hughes



The girls track team enjoyed a great season in which they worked hard and represented Highland Christian well. They were coached by Cambrie Van Roekel and Darcy Nichols. The girls won the first two conference meets of the season. They, then, finished the season winning the League Championship for the second consecutive year.

The boys track team competed hard and showed great potential despite only having eleven athletes. They were coached by Cambrie Van Roekel and Darcy Nichols. They improved greatly from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. They finished 6th in the league meet but competed hard and enjoyed growing as a team. Well done, Huskies!

*Sube*



**BOYS' TRACK:** Tyce Blocker, Aiden Brouwer, Zion Campbell, Zeelan Constantino, Eddie DeVries, Jack Earnshaw, Connor Freel, Noah Jones, Brandon Pierce, Andrew Schutt, Leo Smit, Paxton VanderPol, A.J. Verkaik

**GIRLS' TRACK:** Naomi Ajayi, Giuliana Arellano, Maria Blauw, Jessica Brice, Allison Clark, Isabella Corral, Kobi DeVries, Gabby Dobyne, Briar Dotson, Ezra Hammersten, Kiley Harris, Camila Harris, Sadie Holwerda, Grade Holwerda, Camille Jellema, Sadie Jellema, Dove Jones, Jayda Luttjeboer, Norah Natelborg, Ellie Oostman, Shelby Scheeringa, Naomi Schutt, Hallie Sitter, Shayley Summers, Chloe Turner, Vivian VanderWoude, Victoria Willis, Amanda Willis, Emma Zoeteman



## A YEAR OF LISTENING

*written by Dr. Kyle Weener, Head of School*

Did you know that 85% of what we learn is through listening - not talking or reading? This year, HCS made a concerted effort to listen to our parents and staff in order to help us evaluate the effectiveness of Highland Christian. This goal was pursued through hosting 'Parent Listening Sessions', implementing the Best Christian Workplaces Survey, and conducting a Parent Satisfaction Survey.

**Listening Sessions** - As members of the administrative team met with eleven different groups of parents over the course of the year, we were able to ask questions about school culture, faith formation, communication, and opportunities for further growth. Following nearly every listening session, a change was made from the explicit feedback we received. While many of these changes were small tweaks, these changes have improved the experience for students and families.

**Best Christian Workplaces Survey** - This year, all HCS staff were invited to participate in a nationally normed survey designed to measure the success of 65 different indicators. These indicators fell in eight different categories that measured organization health. After reviewing our data, we were awarded the standard of being a Best Christian Workplace. While we are proud to share this designation, we know there are many opportunities to improve and have been excited to implement plans, in response to this survey, to support further improvement.



**Parent Satisfaction Survey** - With over 110 participants, HCS was able to collect feedback from parents concerning a variety of factors. Overwhelmingly, parents are extremely satisfied with the Christian education their children are receiving. When asked what the school is most effective at, their response was: Christian Formation, Engaging Teaching, Academic Progress, School Communication, and School Leadership.

Furthermore, in the survey, parents were asked a question about how likely they would be to refer HCS to a friend or family member (10 being the highest and 1 being the lowest). This is commonly called a Net Promoter Score. Based on how the score is calculated, an organization can range from -100 to 100. In 2021, HCS scored a 76. In 2026, that score improved to an 88. These scores are deemed world-class. Based on the explicit feedback we received, the school is better equipped to make future decisions.



The blessing of continuous improvement is that learning and listening never ends. Next year, we are looking forward to continuing these processes to listen, obtain feedback, and grow as a school community!

*Kyle*

# RETURNING TO CAMP ROGER

*written by Jackie Mulderink, 5th Grade Teacher*

This year, our fifth grade class had the opportunity to return to Camp Roger in Rockford, Michigan, for our second annual trip. With its wooded paths and peaceful surroundings, camp once again provided the perfect setting for students to step away from the classroom and experience learning in a whole new way. Although the first day greeted us with chilly temperatures, the weather soon warmed up and gave us beautiful sunny days to enjoy the outdoors.

Throughout our stay, students were actively engaged in a variety of exciting outdoor activities. They practiced skills like compass navigation and archery, challenged themselves on the rock wall, and explored the area on nature hikes. Time at the pond gave students a chance for hands-on discovery, along with opportunities to fish and canoe. They also enjoyed arts and crafts, where they could slow down and express their creativity. Each activity helped students build confidence, work together, and appreciate God's creation all around them.

Faith remained a central part of the experience. Camp offered intentional time for prayer, reflection, and growing closer to God. One highlight of our trip was the beautiful candlelight chapel service where students came together to sing, pray, and reflect on their personal relationship with Jesus. It was a truly meaningful and impactful experience.

We are incredibly thankful for our parent volunteers and staff who made this trip possible. Their support, encouragement, and willingness to serve played a huge role in making the experience so positive for our students.

Our trip to Camp Roger was filled with new experiences, stronger friendships, and continued growth in faith. We are grateful for this opportunity and look forward to building on this tradition in the years ahead.

*Jackie*



## WALKING THROUGH HISTORY

*written by Joyce Groen, Jr. High Social Studies Teacher*

At 5:00 A.M. on Tuesday, May 12, our 8th grade class embarked on our now annual Philadelphia trip. This year, in addition to our many stops, the trip included beautiful weather, wonderful scenery, and great food. Forty-four students, five adults and eight chaperones left Highland Christian to travel to the Gettysburg National Battlefield and Philadelphia, the capital of the United States from 1790–1800.

We began our trip on Tuesday, May 12. After an 11-hour drive, we arrived in Gettysburg at the Gettysburg National Cemetery to see where Abraham Lincoln gave his famous Gettysburg Address. Afterwards, we ate at a wonderful restaurant where students could play a few games and unwind after the trip. Since our bus drivers, Allen and Christina, were so prompt, we even had time to explore downtown Gettysburg. We, then, checked into our hotel for our first night.

Our tour coordinators, Leslie and Mike, were waiting for us with keys and well wishes. Students and chaperones headed to their rooms for a good night of rest. After a 6:30 A.M. wake-up call, we headed to the Gettysburg National Battlefield, where we picked up knowledgeable guides for our bus tour. They explained all three days of the battle, stopping to discuss different artillery, show battle lines for both the North and the South, and explain the Battle of Gettysburg in detail. We climbed a battlefield tower and learned about Little Round Top, a key Union victory point. On one bus, we even learned about pigs - you will have to ask about that!

For lunch, we went to Perkins and then toured the Shriver House Museum, which helped us understand the battle from a civilian point of view. We then left for Philadelphia and arrived at Pizzeria Uno for dinner. After arriving at our new hotel, students played games, gathered around the outdoor fire, and prepared for Day 3.



On Thursday, we toured the Benjamin Franklin Museum, saw the Liberty Bell, walked through Elfreth's Alley, the oldest continuously inhabited residential street in the United States, and toured the National Constitution Center. The Signers' Hall is always a favorite with students. One of the best lunches on the trip was at Philly Gourmet Cheesesteak. Dinner that evening was at Maggiano's Little Italy. No Philadelphia trip would be complete without a run up the famous "Rocky stairs" at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. One problem? Our students no longer know who Rocky Balboa is—yikes!

On our final touring day, we got up early and were privileged to walk through Independence Hall. Students saw "the room where it happened," where the United States Constitution was signed in 1787. Guides shared our nation's history in that iconic place. We learned about George Washington's chair and where all the delegates sat and debated while shaping the beginnings of the United States.

We also toured the Independence Seaport Museum and enjoyed walking through the USS Becuna and the Olympia, the vessel used to transport the remains of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to Arlington National Cemetery. From there, we traveled to Valley Forge, the winter headquarters of the Continental Army. We experienced firsthand the cabins soldiers built for their winter stay and learned about the harsh, freezing conditions they endured. We then headed back to Philadelphia for some much-needed souvenir shopping and dinner at the Hard Rock Cafe.

We left Philadelphia early on Saturday and made the 11½-hour trip home. Parents greeted us as we pulled into the parking lot. Everything went smoothly this year, and we thank everyone involved, including Mrs. Huizenga, Mrs. Wieringa, Mr. Seagrave, Mrs. Zandstra, Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Oostman, and Mrs. Julian for serving as chaperones, and Mrs. Groen for spearheading the trip.



*Joyce*



## TOGETHER, WE RAISED...

*written by Jodi Lineburg, Development Director*

Thanks for bringing so much good to bear on Highland Christian School through Auction 2026! Christian education requires significant resources and involves many relationships, and once again, you brought the goods on April 25. **Together, we raised \$172,000!** Thank you for being faithful, diligent, and generous partners in this work.

Great thanks are due to all who gave so much to reach this goal!

- To our **Incredible Committee** (who, once again, made a complex event look easy) – Thank you! You made greatness happen! Your commitment is great, your impact greater!
- To our extraordinary **8th Grade** Class and their families – Thanks for giving back to the community that has poured into you! We rejoice in the good work God has begun in you and look forward to celebrating the new space that will soon be yours as an ALUM of HCS!
- To our **Bidders and Buyers** – Thanks for making the difference! You go above and beyond each year to see that we are well equipped and we appreciate you.
- Last but not least, we wouldn't have an event without our **Sponsors**. Way to represent! Thanks for sharing the vision and investing in our mission to see students academically equipped, Biblically-grounded and spiritually nurtured to impact the world for Christ!

## FINANCIAL RECAP & IMPACT

Funds raised during this year's Raise Your Paddle event will be used to purchase a new, upgraded AV System with permanent live stream capacity for the gymnasium. The balance of the funds we raised have been allocated for the 8th Grade Fund, HCS Foundation Fund, HVAC Improvements, Preschool Classroom Revision Project, Kitchen Equipment (a New Dishwasher!), Special Education Spaces, and Student Technology.

What a tremendous blessing you are! What an incredible provision this is! Thanks again for making HCS GREAT!





## IMPACT WEEK 2026

written by Vicki Huizenga, Faith Formation Director

The Oxford Dictionary defines **IMPACT** as “the action of one object coming forcibly into contact with another.” Not exactly what we hoped to accomplish during Impact Week. A second definition, however, comes much closer to our goal: “to have a strong effect on someone or something.”

As **Scripture Followers**, our words, attitudes, and actions should have a strong and lasting effect on those around us. At Highland Christian, students learn daily to make an **IMPACT** on each other by encouraging one another, by choosing a servant-hearted attitude, and by treating others with forgiveness and grace.

During **Impact Week**, Christ’s love had an **IMPACT** through hands-on service, including:

- Raking leaves at **Ross Reformed Church, Sweet Home Missionary Baptist, and The Old Firehouse**
- Weaving placemats for seniors at **Park Place**
- Delivering some of our favorite books to local **Free Book Libraries**
- Sorting and hanging clothes at area thrift stores
- Preparing meals for families in need
- Creating backdrops for Summer VBS at a local church
- Sharing songs and stories to encourage seniors at **Hartsfield Village**

Beyond our local community, students also extend Christ’s love globally by:

- **Filling shoeboxes** for *Operation Christmas Child*, sharing the Gospel through the gift of a Christmas box
- **Making fleece blankets** for *Phil’s Friends*, providing comfort to those battling cancer
- **Packing food boxes** at *Feed My Starving Children*, helping to fight global hunger

When we intentionally recognize that we are to be **Scripture Followers**, mercy and compassion, love and faithfulness, kindness and gentleness become the effect we leave with someone or something. During **IMPACT Week**, students at Highland Christian partner with God and others to bring Shalom and restoration into people’s lives, into communities, and throughout the world. God is truly honored by this life-changing and lasting **IMPACT**.

Vicki



# NEW HIRES

## WELCOME TO THE TEAM

We are delighted that you are joining us!



**JOSIE WINTERS**  
K-5 Special Education  
Teacher



**ALEXA VAN BEEK**  
7th & 8th Grade  
Social Studies Teacher



**MEGAN KAMP**  
Director Finance



**JERIME MASON**  
Jr High Bible &  
Academic Support  
Teacher



**JARED JONKMAN**  
Director of Facilities



**ASHLEY COOK**  
ELL Aide



**KATELYNN WILTJER**  
School Nurse



**JAMES LATSOUDIS**  
Recess Aide

**HCS  
ALUMNI!**



SCAN ME

Moved?

Married?

New Baby?

New Job?

New Life Achievement?

We want to know!



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CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

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Highland, IN 46322

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**HIGHLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL FOUNDATION**

# **GOLF OUTING**

**2026**



**INNSBROOK COUNTRY CLUB**

**MONDAY, AUGUST 24**

**REGISTRATION : [highlandchristian.org](http://highlandchristian.org)**