

April 22, 2022

Highland CUSD No. 5 Parents and Staff,

While life of late has been returning towards normal, the effects of the pandemic are still very evident and impactful in our daily school environments. There are so many things in our world causing stress for many of our students, parents, and staff. Whether it is the grind that has occurred over the last 25 months, the worries of what might happen, the challenges of mitigations, remote vs in-person, quarantines, masks, politics, etc, everyone seems to be beat down and needing a break. The good news is that summer is approaching and time is rapidly passing by. The months are flying by on the calendar and all of a sudden the end of the year is upon us. We have much to accomplish in the next month or so before we say good bye to our students and staff for a much needed break.

The end of the year calendar is generally published in a number of places. Each building has a number of programs and/or activities scheduled and will keep their respective parents/staff in the loop. I would like to share that the Highland High School graduation is scheduled for Friday, May 20 at 7:00 p.m. The plan is to conduct the ceremony on the High School football field as it was in 2021. We do have back up plans should weather become a problem and includes alternative dates on Saturday, May 21 and Sunday, May 22 should they become necessary. The last day of school is scheduled on Friday, May 27th with a half-day teacher in-service scheduled in the afternoon. Regard specific building activities through the remainder of the year, please refer to the respective building offices for information.

It was requested that I provide parents information regarding the L.U.N.C.H. Bunch program that provides meals to families in need during the summer months. This program is not affiliated with the school district, but we certainly support the efforts of our community groups who do so much to support our families and kids. The following link provides information and seeks feedback for planning purposes. Please note that feedback does not come back to the school so read carefully. To access this information, please use this link: <https://5il.co/196ij> I would like to extend an advanced THANK YOU to this group and all of the individuals who make this program happen.

You may be hearing more about a school referendum on the June election ballot over the next few months. I am beginning a tour around the communities within our district to present information regarding the referendum and what it means. I plan to provide information on our website once it is ready. I will avail myself to meet with any groups of individuals interested in hearing more about the projects included in referendum. The highest priority identified through our strategic planning is addressing the safety and security needs at Highland Primary. We have 5 to 8 year-old children under three different roofs who throughout the day travel through the parking lot at various times during the day to access programs. This is not safe and secure and we can address it at this time. We can also do it without increasing the tax rate given the timing of this referendum.

If you are a part of a group that would like to invite me personally to present in more detail the why's and how's of the referendum, please reach out to me at msutton@highlandcUSD5.org. I will be presenting to many local civic organizations and hope to schedule 2 open public meetings, one at the Highland Primary building and one at the Highland Middle School. Please take time to review the relevant information so that an informed decision can be made.

The Highland CUSD No. 5 Board of Education will conduct its regular April board meeting on Monday, April 25th. The meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. with the recognition of the district's Young Author award winners. If you would like access to the live stream, please use the following link: https://youtu.be/dqs_tbfIEB4. I hope you all have a wonderful rest of your week and enjoy the warmer weather over the next few days.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Sutton, Superintendent