



May 2023

## Attendance: A Core Value of New Heights School

This is the last scheduled correspondence our families will receive from the school this year, other than final report cards of course. I'm sure you'll agree, it has been an interesting ride over these past few years, especially with the pandemic, but also with all of the social "noise" that is distracting our students from being the best they can be as students. Aside from school, there are many forces competing for the attention of young people, which can be a bit concerning at times. So, I want to take this opportunity to plant this seed in the minds of our parents as we move toward the end of the year, but also as we begin to move toward the beginning of our next school year.

The pandemic, in particular, seems to have created a new "normal" when it comes to student-based commitment to school and school-related behaviors. There are things we want to improve upon as we close out this year so that we will have momentum as we move into next year. Attendance is probably the number one thing I have written about all year long-because our school wide rate of attendance needs to improve. **Attendance** is one of the fundamental cornerstones that any quality school must be built on if the school's culture is going to be one of achievement and respect. Looking over the data, it seems that the efforts and messaging from the school have clearly made an impact, as our school wide attendance rates for the current school year are as follows: Semester 1 (first half) 88%; Semester 2 (second half so far) 92.5%. The total rate of attendance for the year is currently 89.9%. It's improving, but we still have work to do.

*In order to be successful in school,  
students are expected to attend at a  
rate of 90% or better at a minimum.*

The school wide rate of attendance, as you can see, is just below 90%, but should be closer to 94% school wide, taking into consideration that some students in the school have excellent attendance with fewer than 5 total absences; they are helping the total attendance for the



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### IMPORTANT DATES

- May 9th—Board of Directors Meeting 4 pm
- May 29th—No School, Memorial Day
- June 2nd—K-5 Last Day
- June 5th 5:00 pm—Graduation Ceremony Stillwater Public Library
- June 6th—6-12 Last Day
- June 6th—Secondary Valleyfair Fieldtrip





school because there are many students who simply aren't attending at an acceptable rate.

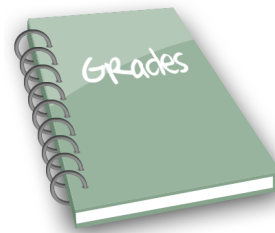
Currently, 20%, 1 in 5, of our students have missed 18 days or more of school and we still have a month of school remaining in the year. There are several students who missed as many as 30 days, which is not acceptable. School is the place where students form pathways in their brains that they will take with them into their adult lives. Missing 15% or more of a school year, which could lead to missing 15% of a work year as an adult, is not okay. Students with poor attendance miss critical instruction that they need in order to be successful at school; which should not be confused with getting assignments done. In many cases, teachers have generously provided work to students that was due weeks earlier and was technically considered "dead," meaning, the teachers allowed students to make up work that was significantly past the deadline. It doesn't really work that way in the world of work. Employees who miss 15% of their scheduled days aren't doing what their employers hired them to do on a daily basis. Either the employer loses productivity, business and revenue, or the employer fires those employees and finds someone else to do the job-it can actually be that simple. So, moving into next year, we need to change our thinking about our obligations to the school and to our children's education, especially in terms of attendance. 100% of school success begins with attendance; without it, students won't gain anything from the school.

*Membership at New Heights requires honoring the expectations of the organization.*

We are setting an aggressive goal that 100% of our students next year will attend school at a minimum rate of 90%, barring extraordinary

circumstances, of course. We will be administratively aggressive in our pursuit of reaching this goal, which will mean using all resources at our

disposal to achieve it. As families think about school choice moving forward, we would encourage all families to include in their considerations that enrollment at New Heights means we as a school community agree that attendance is very important and that every effort, barring extreme circumstances that could physically or mentally limit one's ability to attend school, will be given to getting our students to school each and every day, on time, and that our students will remain at school for the entire day whenever possible. There are schools where attendance may be incidental, but New Heights is not among them. Strong school attendance is a core value that has always been attached to New Heights and will continue to be a cornerstone of the program.



*We hope you will join us as we move forward past the pandemic level of thinking and return to a more "normal" state when it comes to the approach to school attendance, engagement, respect, and responsibility.*

If we can get our students to honor the basic tenets of what New Heights aspires to be, we will have an awesome school year in 2023-24!

Thank you and we look forward to serving you, but also in working with you and your family next year.



## From the School Counselor

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. According to [MentalHealth.gov](https://www.mentalhealth.gov), mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. Now, arguably more than ever, it is critical to be practicing self-care.



If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health, please reach out. You are not alone. ***A mental health crisis can include, but is not limited to; anxiety, feelings of depression, hallucinations, hopelessness, panic attacks, rapid mood swings, or thoughts of suicide.***

If you are in need of immediate assistance, please access some of the following resources:

- ***If a person is a danger to self or others, call 9-1-1.***
- *Washington County Crisis Response Unit - Phone number: (651-275-7400)*
- *Crisis Text Line - Text MN to (741741) - You will be connected with a counselor who will help defuse the crisis and connect the texter to local resources. Crisis Text Line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.*
- *National Suicide Prevention - Phone number: 988*
- *Crisis and Support - YouthLine: Call (877-968-8491) Text: teen2teen to (839863)*
- *Outfront Minnesota: Domestic Violence, LGBTQ+ - Call (612-822-0127) option 3*
- *Crisis, Support, LGBTQ+ - The Trevor Project: Call (866-488-7386) Text: START to (678678)*

***According to the National Alliance of Mental Health (NAMI), here are some practical suggestions on how to practice self-care:***

- *follow healthy daily routines*
- *Get enough sleep*
- *eat a balanced diet*
- *maintain healthy hygiene habits*
- *find time to exercise and move your body daily*
- *practice mindfulness and meditation*
- *stay connected with others*



# Quarter 3 Academic Honors

## Principal's Award:

Students with an **A** in all of their classes will be recognized as Principal's Award Students.

<i>Alaina Aldrich (7)</i>	<i>Natalie Gruba (9)</i>	<i>Abigail Bell (11)</i>
<i>Tyler Mathias (7)</i>	<i>Derek Kirby (9)</i>	<i>Andre Maruska (11)</i>
<i>Ellen Gruba (8)</i>	<i>Miriam Campbell (10)</i>	<i>Emily Busta (12)</i>
<i>Elizabeth Granlund (9)</i>	<i>Jocelyn Schmidt (10)</i>	<i>Brady Wegge (12)</i>

## Honor Roll:

Students with a Grade Point average of **3.5** or above will be recognized on the **Honor Roll**.

<i>Donald Blackwell (6)</i>	<i>Cody Siewert (8)</i>	<i>Kidus Yohannes (11)</i>
<i>Katrina Collette (6)</i>	<i>Eloise Campbell (9)</i>	<i>Amanda Augustine (12)</i>
<i>Addyson Morris (6)</i>	<i>Maria Costilla (9)</i>	<i>Camden Briggs (12)</i>
<i>Landon Stilwagon (6)</i>	<i>Alivia Johnson (9)</i>	<i>Zander Harper (12)</i>
<i>Abrianna Bell (7)</i>	<i>Claire Herder (11)</i>	<i>Kolby Warrington (12)</i>
	<i>Anna Johnson (11)</i>	

## Honorable Mention:

Students with a Grade Point average of **3.0** or above with no D's or F's will be recognized as an **Honorable Mention**

<i>Dari Lange (7)</i>	<i>Gavin Braun (9)</i>	<i>Jillian Briggs (11)</i>
<i>Dan VanDyke (7)</i>	<i>Samuel VanDyke (9)</i>	<i>Will Carlson (11)</i>
<i>Alisa Collette (8)</i>	<i>Gus Campbell (10)</i>	<i>Vannessa Koeckeritz (11)</i>
<i>Cora Harding (8)</i>	<i>Emily Mai (10)</i>	<i>Joshua Murphy (11)</i>
<i>Desirae Larson (8)</i>	<i>James Schuster (10)</i>	<i>Kyle Brown (12)</i>

# ELEMENTARY HONORS

The following Elementary students have received a 4 on their report card, meaning that they have Exceeded Expectations in the core areas of Math or Reading.

## **Math Honors:**

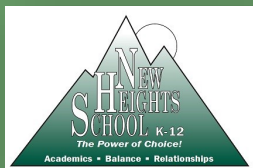
*Joseph Misfud*  
*Oscar Solovitz*  
*Joe Bell*  
*Chloe Stilwagon*  
*Nolan Klover*

## **Reading Honors:**

*Josephine Olson*  
*Joe Bell*  
*Chloe Stilwagon*  
*Nolan Klover*  
*Brecken Aldrich*  
*Alexander Hofmann*

## **Elementary Field Day**

The Kindergarten through fifth graders  
will be participating in a field day on  
Friday, May 26th!



# May/June Monthly Planner

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Elementary Reading MCA	3 Elementary Reading MCA	4 Elementary Reading MCA Make-up Day	5	6
7	8 	9 Science MCA <b>Board of Directors Meeting 4pm</b>	10 Science MCA	11 Science MCA Make-up Day	12	13
14 	15	16 Elementary FAST Testing	17 Elementary FAST Testing	18 Elementary FAST Testing Make-up	19 Secondary Como Zoo Fieldtrip	20
21	22	23 6-12 FAST Testing	24 6-12 FAST Testing	25 6-12 FAST Testing Make-up	26 <b>Elementary Field Day</b>	27
28	29 <b>No School</b>  <b>Memorial Day</b>	30	31	1  	2 <b>Last Day of School K-5</b>	3
4	5 <b>Graduation Ceremony 5:00 pm</b>	6 <b>6-12 Last Day of School</b>	7 <b>No School— Staff Day</b>	8 <b>No School— Staff Day</b>	9	10