

NEW HEIGHTS SCHOOL

Academics • Balance • Citizenship
The Power of Choice

January 2022

Based on Principal



Dear Families,

Let me start by wishing you all a Happy New Year and add that I hope a happy new year is more than just a wish. Who could have believed that two years later we'd still be dealing with the pandemic? As you well know, New Heights has felt the impact of Covid by having several positive cases affect students and staff, and in many cases we have had to send out notifications and quarantine both students and staff. In a few cases, including recently, we even had to keep an entire class home partly because we could not find substitute staffing to teach the children. Every aspect of the school operation has been impacted, including meal service, busing, maintenance, staffing, and literally every aspect of running in-person classes. That said, we are going to keep moving



forward and, barring some sort of governmental directive, we expect to remain open and continue to offer in-person learning to our students for the remainder of the year-though we do anticipate some potential interruptions to individuals and small groups from time-to-time as the latest Covid variant makes its way through our community.

New Heights Policy Reminders:

As communicated earlier in the school year, we are going to be enforcing school policy and rules at a higher level as we move into the second half of the school year. One thing that the pandemic has made a mess of is “normal” structure.

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IMPORTANT DATES

- Jan. 3– School Resumes
- Jan. 11—Board of Director's Meeting
- Jan. 11 –13 – Elementary FAST Testing
- Jan. 17– No School
- Jan. 21– End of Semester 1
- Jan. 24—No School
- Jan. 25–28 Secondary FAST Testing
- Jan. 23-29– School Choice Week



Based on Principal Cont. from page 1.

By that I mean many of our students are not adhering to the traditional structure that needs to be in place in a public school setting. Things have become too casual for some students. For instance, schools have scheduled hours of operation for both staff and students. The schedule for students is Monday-Friday (unless noted on the calendar) 9:05 am until 3:40 pm. Those are not suggested times, they are the actual scheduled times for school and students are required by law to attend school each and every day unless they have a valid reason to be absent. Over the past year and half, it is understandable that with school running on and off the schedule and sometimes even forcing families into distance-learning, families and their children have gotten mixed messaging and that has corrupted expectations about school structure.

As we see it, the time has come to try to get back to something closer to normal, and that has to start with expectations. As we move into the 2nd half of the school year, we are going to expect/require our students to arrive at school on time, attend their classes as scheduled, dress appropriately for school, attempt to do their assigned schoolwork to the

best of his or her ability, and comply with all school rules and policies. These expectations have been in place all along, but for whatever reason, some students are having a hard time getting back on track. We have taken a very slow and gentle approach to getting back on track, but it is time to step it up. Our messaging to our students will be clear enough that our student population should work with us to get back to a normal school climate. Parents can assist us by having a gentle conversation with your student at home reminding them that school has a purpose and each student has a responsibility to follow the lead of his or her teachers, to treat others and their property with respect, and to do the best he or she can do at paying attention and completing class assignments.

Although school can and should be fun and social for students, school is not a club or casual social activity. School is the training ground for the world of work, which starts with gaining certain knowledge and skills, learning boundaries, and building solid work-related habits. There is a lot at stake and we would be failing our students by not moving forward and getting back to a more normal level of structure at this time.

So, let's continue to work on regaining appropriate school-related structure. Things that need improvement include:

- *Arriving to school on time each and every day, dressed appropriately and ready to engage*
- *Attending each and every class on time, prepared mentally and with appropriate materials*
- *Treating others and their property with respect at all times*
- *Attempting to complete all assignments to the best of each student's ability*
- *Asking for assistance when needed on academic or social issues*
- *Bringing only school-essential items to the school*
- *Being responsible with phones and other forms of technology*
- *Accepting direction and redirection from all staff members*

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Based on Principal Cont. from page 2.

The timing of this newsletter is perfect. We at New Heights sincerely wish all of our families a Happy start to the new year, but rather than to hope for it, let's work together to ensure it. In order to get back to the type of school culture New Heights is accustomed to, which is capable of offering a happier school experience for everyone, we are going to have to make a concerted effort to have it. Hopefully we are all in agreement and will work together to achieve this important goal to have a great year in 2022.

- Tom Kearney, Principal

National School Choice Week

During the week of January 23– January 29, New Heights will celebrate National School Choice Week.

Started in 2011, National School Choice Week is the largest celebration of educational choice and families' opportunities to choose the best educational setting for their child.

National School Choice Week recognizes each student has their own unique talents, interests, abilities, challenges and preferred learning environment, and families have the right to choose the best fit.

As the first K-12 charter school in the nation, New Heights was one of the original "choice schools" and after 29 years, remains one of the longest running.

New Heights' small, relational environment continues to offer students an alternative to larger schools in the area. New Heights has the latest start time in the area, smaller class sizes, and no assigned homework.

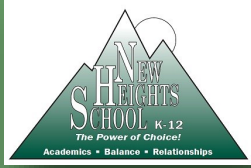
Traditionally, New Heights has celebrated School Choice Week with various activities, dress-up days and contests, and this year will be no different.

The staff is currently working on determining this year's festivities, so stay tuned for more details.



For more information on National School Choice Week visit the website at <https://schoolchoiceweek.com/>



JANUARY 23-29, 2022



January Monthly Planner

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2	3 <i>Classes Resume</i>	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 <i>Elementary Fast Testing</i> <i>Board of Directors</i>	12 <i>Elementary Fast Testing</i>	13 <i>Elementary Fast Testing</i>	14	15
16	17 <i>No School—MLK Day</i> 	18	19	20	21 <i>End of Q2/ Semester 1</i>	22 
23	24 <i>No School Grading Day</i>	25 <i>Secondary Fast Testing</i>	26 <i>Secondary Fast Testing</i>	27 <i>Secondary Fast Testing</i>	28	29
National School Choice Week!						
30	31					