Message from the Principal...

“Human behavior flows from three main sources: desire, emotion, and knowledge.” – Plato

“Why did they do that?!” Can you hear the exasperation, feel the angst? Every day is a new opportunity for both good and not so good choices. Educators cannot control the internal choice making processes within children any more than parents can with their own children or doctors with their patients. We can influence, model, remind, praise, redirect students, and control how we react so that the chances of a child behaving appropriately increases. Children can redeem themselves. Adults can help children learn the connection between their behavior and how people react to it and ultimately to them.

High Plains staff have focused on building relationships, naming behavioral norms, and teaching social-emotional and conflict resolution skills alongside academic expectations. We are fortunate to have been involved in a grant through the Colorado Department of Education that has provided materials and training in two programs, (K-8) [Second Step Social Emotional Learning](https://secondstep.org/) and (K-5) [Peace Circles](https://www.peacecircles.org/) that support teachers with tools and structures for teaching skills related to developing relationships and working through conflict. Our Character Committee has also developed a Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) that includes seven pillars of character (RESPECT), examples of behavior that exude those character traits, incentives for when students exemplify excellent behavior and character, and interventions staff can implement when students struggle to make appropriate choices.

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Message from the Principal continued

We know the efforts above are a work in progress, and are second to the skills, values, and morals families impart to their children. Students come to school with backgrounds and experiences that influence their decisions, relationships, and view of the world and people. They do not shed those things upon entering the building. We hope through our interactions and activities with our students to encourage and bring out the good so they can be the best and most successful version of themselves. If you would like to learn more about the above programs and activities teachers and students participate in each week, please feel free to contact:

- Jodi Wardlow, Dean of Students- Character Committee (PBIS)
- Your child’s teacher (any middle school teacher)- Second Step and Peace Circles

Please continue reading our December newsletter to see all of the events and activities planned for December, as well as important information to keep you in the know. It’s going to be another busy but fun month filled with learning, community building, and engaging activities!

See you in the drive line!

Danielle Feeney, principal
Parent-Student Handbook

With cooler weather and many holidays coming up, please check out the HPS Parent/Student Handbook and Pre-arranged absence form found on the website under “Resources”. Parents and students will find information to help their child dress appropriately for the Colorado changing weather that meets dress code, and how to request a pre-arranged absence when their child will miss 2 or more consecutive days. Please also check out pages 5-7 to learn about home and school communications, as well as HPS’s PBIS and counseling services.

Reminder for Late Start Wednesday

Thank you families for doing a wonderful job remembering each Wednesday is a late start for schools throughout TSD. This time allows educators to collaborate in their planning and professional growth opportunities to better support students. Students may be dropped off on campus beginning at 9am on Wednesdays.

Parents are encouraged to take advantage of Base Camp offerings, as well as the Spanish and Chess offerings on Late Start Wednesday mornings. Please read further for more details on those offerings and how to register.
School Accountability Advisory Committee & PIE Night

If you wish to be part of a group that reviews school wide data and information to make recommendations that support the school’s program, as well as community outreach, please contact Marge Carr at margecarr@hotmail.com. SAAC will be hosting another PIE (Partners in Education) Night on February 5th. Please stay tuned (January newsletter, website, FB, and teacher communications) for details, as we get closer to the date!

Spanish and Chessmates

Spanish and Chessmates will be starting up again in late January. Please check the HPS website under activities for details.
Our Mission Statement

High Plains School’s Give Next class wants to help prevent child abuse and help support child welfare. With the generous funding from local community donors, we hope to promote child welfare and aim to stop child abuse with the support of local nonprofit organizations.

Butter Braids

Give Next would like to thank everyone who bought Butter Braids and helped support us. We were able to raise 850 dollars. This fundraiser really helped us get closer to our goal this year of 1,300 dollars.

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**Trunk Or Treat**

Our Give Next class participated in our school’s Trunk or Treat. This was a good way for us to give and to participate in something with the younger kids in our school.

![Trunk or Treat](image1)

**Ornaments**

We will be selling wooden ornaments to help raise more money for the Give Next class. They will be engraved with the school’s laser engraver. Be on the lookout for an email with the order form.

![Ornaments](image2)

**Wishing you a happy holiday!**

- The High Plains Give Next Class
Counselors Corner

Character Counts!

We are working hard at High Plains to support our students’ social-emotional learning. Managing emotions, resolving conflict, making decisions, and showing empathy are all part of our social-emotional development, and it takes time and practice to develop these skills. We have several things in place at High Plains to help support this area of development! Below are descriptions of what these programs are and how you can support this learning at home.

ALL K-8 Students:

Second Step: Second Step teaches students across the grade levels how to recognize emotions in themselves and others, how to work together, resolve conflict, and develop and maintain healthy friendships. In the younger grades, Second Step teaches students skills for learning, including active listening, focus and attention, and participation. In the upper grades, students also learn about setting goals and making decisions.

- At home, ask your child about what they are learning in Second Step and how they are using these new skills at school. For example, ask your child what empathy is and how they have used empathy with someone at school. Tell your child about a time when you showed someone empathy.

- 6th-8th grade families: Check out ParentTeenConnect.org. This free resource provides advice and tools for navigating real parent-teen issues.

Kindergarten – 5th Grade:

Peace Keepers: Peace Keepers is a restorative practice that teaches students how to identify their feelings, share appreciations with others, and gives students language for addressing concerns and conflicts they may have with their peers. This process allows students a safe space to practice these skills with one another in order to help them resolve conflicts and show gratitude with each other outside of the Peace Keeper circle. At home, ask your child how they would share an appreciation or concern, and encourage them to use these skills outside of school. Some families find that using these skills at home is a great way to communicate!

Appreciation:

“_______, I felt _____ when you ______. I really appreciated that you did that for me. Thank you!”

Concern:

“_______, I felt _____ when you ______. Next time, I need you to ________.”

continued on next page
Counselors Corner

6th – 8th Grade:

House: This year, our middle school is piloting a house system in which all middle school students are sorted into houses. The House system focuses on building our culture and community through team building and friendly competition. There are four houses designated by a specific color (orange, yellow, blue, and green). All staff members in the building are also assigned to a house, casting a larger net of support and expanding our community. Ask your student what they like about house and how it is positively influencing our community!

High Plains School Spelling Bee 2018-2019

Friday, December 7th, 2018

1:30-3:30 pm in the Cafeteria

Parents and guests are welcome to attend! Please check-in at the office upon arrival. Grades 6th - 8th will begin at 1:30 pm with grades 1st – 5th to follow. The top 5 finalists in 6th-8th grade and top 11 finalists in 1st - 5th grade from our School Bee will be invited to participate in the Thompson School District Spelling Bee on Saturday, January 26th, 2019. This will take place at Thompson Valley High School and is an all-day event. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me! Happy Spelling!

Jessica Soulek
Spelling Bee Coordinator

Jessica.Soulek@thompsonschools.org
High Plains PTCO
What’s Up!

The PTCO Funded $11,989 to Help Support Our School! Items approved include:

- Snacks for Vision Screening Volunteers
- Quick Books for PTCO Budget
- 42 Chromebooks for 1st Grade
- Supply Money for Give Next Students
- Project for 1st & 6th Graders

Mark Your Calendar!!

- Kids Night Out at the Chilson – December 15th from 7:00-10:30 pm
- PTCO Meeting – December 18th at 6:30 pm
- PTCO Meeting – January 15th at 6:30 pm
- Bingo for Books – January 25th from 6:30-7:30 pm

We Appreciate Your Support

Our Trunk-or-Treat was a huge success!! Thank you to all the families who participated!

Thank you for clipping Box Tops, as a school we have brought in just over 8,000 box tops and earned $800 for our school! We will have another box top competition for a hot chocolate party in January, so keep on clipping!

Caps4Cash - Morning Fresh Dairy Products

You can earn cash for our school by drinking milk or juice! Caps4Cash is a Morning Fresh Dairy program where High Plains School can earn cash by collecting caps from Morning Fresh Dairy bottles.

Each bottle cap earns 5¢ for our school and all you have to do is save your bottle caps, bring them to school and drop them off in the collection bucket located in the office!

We can earn even more money by getting our friends and family involved! Ask them to save Morning Fresh bottle caps for our school too!

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High Plains PTCO
What’s Up!

King Soopers Gift Card fundraiser - Sign up online to get your card
- Simply load your card before purchasing groceries or gas
- 5% of your everything you spend will benefit the High Plains PTCO
- Get more details and sign up at www.highplainsptco.org/fundraising

Amazon Smile: Did you know you can earn money for High Plains School while shopping on Amazon?? AmazonSmile is the same Amazon that you know. Same products, same prices, same service. Follow these 3 easy steps and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the High Plains PTCO. Thank you for helping support our school!
- Go to smile.amazon.com and login to your amazon account.
- Search for and select High Plains PTCO in Loveland, CO.
- Start Shopping!! The same Amazon products you love will be available!

** In order to support the PTCO you must always start your shopping at www.smile.amazon.com.

Volunteer Opportunities  All Volunteers must register online:
www.thompsonschools.org/volunteer

Current Opportunities: www.highplainsptco.com/volunteer

The High Plains Parent Teacher Community Organization (PTCO)
- Visit our website to learn about who we are, why we are here, and how you can help! www.highplainsptco.org
- Have questions? Would like to volunteer? Shoot us an email! highplainsk8ptco@gmail.com
- Like us on Facebook for up-to-date information!

The purpose of the High Plains PTCO is to enhance and support the educational experience, to develop a close connection between school, home and community by encouraging parental involvement, and to improve the environment at High Plains School through volunteer and financial support.
High Plains Families,

High Plains School will join in on the largest learning event in history: Hour of Code, during Computer Science Education Week (Dec. 3-7). More than 100 million students worldwide will be doing Hour of Code and your student will be a part of this. All High Plains Students will participate in coding throughout this week. Kindergarten thru 5th grade will do both Plugged and Unplugged activities. Kindergarten thru 8th will not only participate in the Hour of Code week, but will incorporate coding throughout the rest of the year into their technology class.

Our Hour of Code is a statement that High Plains School is ready to teach these foundational 21st century skills. We will continue to bring programming activities to your students. This is our chance to change the future for our students and the world.

See Hour of Code for details.

Sincerely, Mrs. Megan McGee and Mrs. Nancy Payton

Nurse News

What did the gingerbread man put on his bed? A cookie sheet!

Hello from the health office! Here are just a few reminders as we go into cold and flu season...

- When do you need to keep your student home?
- If your child has a fever above 100.4 (without medication)
- Has vomited or had diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Has live lice
- Is visibly too sick to be in school (severe or disruptive coughing, lethargy, pain that cannot be controlled at school or would not be able to fully participate in school activities)

Thank you for helping to keep High Plains healthy!
News from the Library

The Impact of Social Media on Our Children

It’s an easily observable fact that many young people spend a lot of time in a digital world. As they become teenagers, in-person interactions can take a back seat to time spent on social media sites, texting, video-chatting, and online gaming. Whatever our personal feelings may be about this societal shift, there is no doubt that the digital world plays an influential role in the lives of young people. Common Sense Media recently compiled the results of several studies and released an illuminating report entitled “Social Media, Social Life: Teens Reveal Their Experiences” that examines social media habits and their impact on kids. Here, you can read the full report, get the key findings, or view an infographic that summarizes much of the information. Being aware of the digital world of our children can help us as adults make positive decisions, facilitate healthy conversations, and implement sound family structures.

Digital Books Available for Every Student

The winter nights are upon us. What better way to spend an evening at home than by enjoying a good book? At High Plains School, we are fortunate to have a wealth of digital resources that HPS students have at their fingertips. Thousands of ebooks can be accessed at any time by following these five easy steps:

- Visit our school's website (highplainsschool.org)
- Select "Library" under the "Resources" tab.
- Click on the Follett Destiny icon in order to search our catalog and read or borrow ebooks.
- Choose to log in using Google SSO if in district or by entering district credentials:
  - Student user name: student’s district username (if an email address is requested, simply add @thompsonschools.org to the username)
  - Password: student’s district password (student number preceded by three student-specific numbers/letters) (Note: You can find your child’s username and password on Parent Portal. Please contact Megan McGee at megan.mcgee@thompsonschools.org if you have any questions.)
- Happy Reading!
Drama Club/Theater Arts

December is quickly approaching and the students are working diligently to get ready and prepare for their production of “The Christmas Grinch” (Otherwise known as “How the Grinch Stole Christmas”)

The play will be presented Monday, December 17th in the gym at 6:00pm. There are 11 scenes with one Intermission. Treats and hot cocoa will be served in the Bison Café before the play and during intermission. We are currently looking for family donations for store bought cookies, brownies, or cupcakes, hot cocoa mix, cups for cocoa and napkins. These can be delivered to Ms. LaBianca anytime on Friday, December 14th or on Monday, December 17th. We also need parent volunteers to help with the serving of the cocoa and treats the night of the play. The proceeds will go towards next years Christmas production. If you can help in any way, please notify Nanci LaBianca at nanci.labianca@thompsonschools.org.

A big thank you to all parents who have helped gather props, boxes, made scenery, sew costumes, or donated other supplies. Without your help, this production would not be possible.

We look forward to seeing you on Monday, December 17th for our rendition of how a grumpy grinch learns the true meaning of Christmas from a little girl who befriends him.

Exercise Stations

HPS Families,

We are exploring the possibility of adding some exercise equipment in various locations throughout the school for student use during the school day. We are looking for exercise bikes, mini trampolines, balance boards, and rowing machines. Would any of you have any of these gathering dust in your basement? Would you be willing to donate them to High Plains School? Please take a picture of the piece of equipment and email it to: katherine.weaver@thompsonschools.org.

Please do not bring equipment to school until you hear from me to confirm your donation. Thank you so much for considering donating your exercise equipment to our school.

Katie Weaver OTR, High Plains School
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 8th</td>
<td>Select MS Choir National Anthem at Eagle’s Hockey Game</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 12th</td>
<td>Late Start 9:20am</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 14th</td>
<td>Giving Tree gifts are due (wrapped with tag attached)</td>
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<td>December 14th</td>
<td>MS Winter Dance</td>
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<td>December 15th</td>
<td>Kids Night Out 7:00pm @ Chilson Rec Center</td>
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<td>December 17th</td>
<td>The Christmas Grinch 6:00pm</td>
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<td>December 18th</td>
<td>PTCO Meeting 6:30pm</td>
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<td>December 19th</td>
<td>Late start 9:20m</td>
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<td>December 19th</td>
<td>Giving Tree gifts pick up</td>
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<td>December 20th</td>
<td>4th/5th Grade Winter Concert 6:30pm @ Mountain View High School</td>
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<td>December 24th</td>
<td>Winter Break – No school</td>
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<td>January 4th</td>
<td>School resumes</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 7th</td>
<td>Late Start 9:20am</td>
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