Message from the Principal...

“Live so that when your children think of fairness, caring, and integrity, they think of you.” H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

For the past six months High Plains’ students and staff have been developing a community through many means. Throughout the year we have been exploring and connecting with 7 character pillars that help define who we are and how we act. High Plains’ character pillars are:

- Responsible
- Empathetic
- Safe
- Persevering
- Empowered
- Curious
- Trustworthy

These character pillars are embedded throughout each day and reinforced through learning activities, PBLs, unstructured activities like recess and lunch, and during informal and formal conversations. These pillars will serve children well, not only during their K-12 experience, but throughout their lives.

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An interesting study came out on NPR a few years ago that caught my attention, specifically around empathy. A group of researchers from Ohio State University conducted a study on narcissistic behavior in children. The study was prompted by research showing levels of narcissistic behavior on the rise in college age students at the same time as a decline in empathy in this same age group. The researchers were attempting to identify why some children go past a healthy self-esteem into narcissistic behaviors. Self-esteem means you are a person of worth, equal to others. Narcissism means you think you are better than other people.

The study was certainly not the be-all, end-all, but a key idea from the study emerged: what adults say and do has a significant impact on what character traits children develop. Parents have great influence, especially during the formative years before schooling begins. The language they use to praise their child has great impact on how that child views themselves and their efforts. When students enter school age years, their circle of influence grows to include teachers, other adults, and other children. When students know their efforts support their achievements, they are more willing to be empathetic towards others and persevere. On the other hand, narcissistic behaviors in children tend to lead to aggressive and violent behavior, or an expectation of special treatment. I focus this message on empathy because, now more than ever, children need positive models and examples of empathetic actions and words. On March 22nd High Plains is excited to welcome back Brandon Harrington from Harrington Arts.
Message from the Principal continued

Alliance. Mr. Harrington visited our kindergarten through eighth graders in the fall, focusing his message on recognizing and stopping bullying type behaviors. The March visit will focus the message on developing and showing empathy.

Helping students develop great character takes multiple lessons and a network of people. High Plains staff will continue their work on character development, and I encourage parents to also have regular conversations with their child about what it means to be empathetic, as well as the other character pillars that make a well rounded and successful member of society. I encourage parents to ask questions that help children think about their behaviors (and words) and how they impact others. Are my words and actions hurting or helping? These conversations may offer an opportunity to understand your child’s view of themselves, their efforts, and others.

Sincerely,

Danielle Feeney

Principal, High Plains School
Volunteer Crossing Guard Program Coordinator

Thompson School District is developing a volunteer crossing guard program. The district is looking for a coordinator for the program. This position would be a volunteer position. Please see the below for a description. If you are interested in this volunteer position, please contact our principal, Danielle Feeney, danielle.feeney@thompsonschools.org.

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VOLUNTEER CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM COORDINATOR

SUMMARY: Coordinate volunteers’ schedules, liability forms, and training compliance for the Volunteer Crossing Guard Program.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

• Coordinate the crossing guard schedules to ensure all shifts are covered.
• Ensure volunteers pass an online test from the training video before they start volunteering.
• Obtain signatures on liability forms from all volunteers and send to VITAL Office.
• Ensure crossing guard vests and signs are returned to the office after use.
• Communicate with volunteers about their scheduled shifts, etc.

SCHEDULE

• Very flexible hours - An estimated 3-5 hours a week will likely be needed in the first month in the position. After that, it will taper to very minimal time, 1-2 hours per month.
Community Tours

On March 8th High Plains School will offer a building tour for community members and parents interested in hearing about the school’s program and unique design features. The tours start at 3:30PM. If interested, please RSVP to Judy Simeon at judy.simeon@thompsonschools.org

Colorado Measures of Academic Success

The week of March 27th High Plains 3rd-8th graders will participate in Colorado Measures of Academic Success. Students in grades 3rd-8th will test their knowledge and skills in Math and English Language Arts. Parents can find out more information about the assessments, and even see what the tests look like at http://www.parcconline.org/resources/parent-resources. Please also visit the Colorado Department of Education website for further information about CMAS. Parents can help their child be prepared for the assessments by making sure students get plenty of sleep, eat a healthy, nutritious breakfast, arrive to school on time, and encourage them to do their best. Please don’t hesitate to contact your child’s teacher for more information.
**Spring Conferences**

This month High Plains will hold spring parent-teacher conferences on March 6th and 7th between 3:20pm and 6:35pm. We look forward to seeing you and your child there! Please arrive on time so every parent has the full amount of their conference time. The link to sign up was sent on Feb. 24th via email and is available at [Spring Conference Sign-up](#).

**Spring Break**

Spring break officially begins March 10th for students. We hope all of our families enjoy the time and students gear up for the remaining 10 weeks of school. It won’t be long until summer is here and warm, sunny days reappear. Before that though, we have lots to learn and do!

**High Plains Music**

The music program has kicked off an apparel fundraiser to support the cost of next year’s music, instruments, and opportunities. Skazma Custom Apparels designers created these fresh new looks just for HPS! All information/ordering can be done online at: [https://skazmacustomapparel.itemorder.com/sale](https://skazmacustomapparel.itemorder.com/sale). Enter sale code: **HPS17**. Hurry, the deadline is **March 12th** at midnight.

Thank you for supporting the arts!
Middle School Field Trip – Call for Volunteers

The middle school team (grades 6-8) is planning a field trip to the Museum of Nature and Science in Denver on Monday, April 10, 2017. This will be an all-day field trip (8:00-3:00pm)

We are in need of 10 registered volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering to chaperone this trip, it is mandatory that you are a registered volunteer with the Thompson School District.

To register, please click on the link below, scroll down and click on the blue button titled, New Volunteers, and follow the instructions to set up an account. Please be aware it can take a few weeks to be approved.

http://thompson.k12.co.us/page/2277

Once you have registered, please contact Janelle Joers via email (janelle.joers@thompsonschools.org) to let her know of your interest. April is right around the corner, so register soon!

Thanks in advance for your help!

8th Grade Team Building Day!

On Friday, February 17, 2017, the 8th grade class participated in a day of team building. The morning started by walking to the Lake Club (clubhouse) where the 8th graders were taken through a series of get-to-know-you and team-building activities by facilitator Michael James. The students brainstormed ideas for end of the year activities and how they want to leave their legacy, being the first 8th grade class of High Plains School. In the afternoon, they headed to Loveland Laser Tag to continue team-building activities of laser tag and the ropes course. Based on conversations with students, they seemed to find value and fun in the day.

A BIG thank you to the Thompson Education Association Student Achievement Grant program for the funding the morning activities. This allowed us to rent an off-site space and bring in a trained team-building facilitator to work with students.

Another BIG thank you to Highland Concrete and Design, LLC for their generous donation that allowed the 8th grade to have lunch and a team-building afternoon at Loveland Laser Tag.
**Scholastic Book Fair at High Plains**

The Scholastic Book Fair will be here once again during parent/teacher conferences! Students will have the opportunity to visit the fair during school hours before conferences, and the fair will be open from 3:10 to 6:50 p.m. on both Monday, March 6th, and Tuesday, March 7th. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy seeing the wide selection of books and fun school supplies that will be available for purchase. The fair directly benefits our students, and the kids love seeing new books in our library. We deeply appreciate your support!

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**Easy Access to Great Books!**

Reading over break is a great way to reinforce vocabulary acquisition, increase comprehension, and just enjoy a good story! The High Plains library offers thousands of digital books for students of all ages and reading levels. Accessing them is easy:

1. Visit our school's website ([highplainsschool.org](http://highplainsschool.org))
2. Select "Library" under the "Popular" tab.
3. Click on the Follett Destiny icon in order to search our catalog.
4. Log in to read a book digitally.
   - **Student user name**: first initial, middle initial, last name, last two digits of their graduating year (example: jtdoe23)
   - **Password**: student number preceded by two zeroes (example: 00123456)
5. Enjoy!
**Code for Girls**

Cubelets are robot blocks that easily connect to form robots that inspire kids to become better thinkers. For ten sessions twelve wonderful 2nd and 3rd grade girls got the opportunity to discover Cubelets and what the Cubelets could do. They learned that each robot needed power, a sensor, a thinker and an action cube. When they put several Cubelets together excitement and creativity was shown in their robots.

Mrs. Payton

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**High Plains School Hour of Code Wall of Fame**

The following students have completed Course 1:

Aiden A., Daniela O., Owen J., Owen M., Ryker T., Tony S. and Zahara H.

The following student has completed Course 2:

Josie F.

Congratulations and keep on coding!
High Plains PTCO

What’s Up!

- Panera Fundraiser - Wednesday, March 1st from 4:00-8:00 pm
- Next PTCO Meeting - Tuesday, March 21st @ 6:30 pm
- Save the Date!! - Thursday April 27th Bison Stampede student jog-a-thon event!

PTCO is proud to help funnel the hard earned funds raised by our community toward these exciting projects. More to come - stay tuned!

iPad Apps

Mrs Payton and Mrs Mayberry have received a grant for $3,000 which will go to fund the purchase of educational and fun apps to fuel the school's collection of iPad tablets for learning. Kids will practice coding, publish books, complete math challenges and literacy skills and more with apps!

High Plains Art gets FRAMED

Our student's art will be shown with style thanks to Mrs Thompson's request for support to frame all High Plains student art for the upcoming District Art show.

Girls on the RUN

This spring, more girls from High Plains School will be participating in the Girls on the Run program thanks to scholarships provided by PTCO fundraising.

Amazon Smile - earn money for our school while shopping on Amazon

Go to smile.amazon.com and login to your amazon account, then search for and select High Plains PTCO in Loveland, CO. The same Amazon products you love will be available!

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases the PTCO.

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High Plains PTCO
What’s Up!

Volunteer Opportunities

- All Volunteers must register online: www.thompsonschools.org/volunteer
- Current Opportunities: www.highplainsptco.com/volunteer
- Volunteer to help with our first annual Bison Stampede Jog-a-thon
- Help catalogue books for our Scholastic Reading Library

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.
March 1: PTCO Panera Fundraiser
March 6: Spring Conferences 3:20pm – 6:50pm
March 7: Spring Conferences 3:20pm – 6:50pm
March 8: Community School Tour 3:30pm
March 9: Early Childhood Conferences
March 10: No School
March 12: Daylight Savings
March 13-17: Spring Break
March 21: PTCO Meeting 6:30pm
March 27-30: CMAS