



TROJAN TODAY

YOUR SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND SOURCE FOR NEWS AND EVENTS | APRIL-MAY 2025



LADY TROJANS AIMING HIGH FOR 2025-26 SEASON

The HHS Girls Basketball meteoric rise from a 2-6 season start to a berth in the final four at semi-state was a journey that unfolded week by week.

Coach Eric Kundich said this was a team that surprised sports pundits throughout the state.

"When I started at Highland last summer, people were talking that this would be a rebuilding year," he said. "I knew after watching these girls that we definitely had the talent and

grit to win the sectional. When we were practicing for regional, I looked at these 17 girls who were working so hard. It was then I knew we had what it takes to win the Regional."

In his first year as head coach, Kundich, the team and staff dedicated time off the court getting to know each other, which turned out to be a turning point for the Lady Trojans.

Kundich credited captains Jordan Steele, a junior, and Haylie Houchin,

a senior, with holding the team together like a family.

"We had an amazing run this season and are already looking forward to 2025-2026," he said.

"We have a young team full of determination and the drive to be the best," Kundich said. "In June, we will be rooting for Jordan, who has accepted an invitation to be part of the Indiana Basketball All-Star Classic team this summer."



Girls Basketball Coach Eric Kundich named Times 2025 Coach of the Year

HHS Athletic Director Ryan Harrington was thrilled, excited and overjoyed when he heard Girls Basketball Coach Eric Kundich had been named The Times 2025 Coach of the Year. He wasn't surprised.

"Eric was a late hire last summer that came after a lengthy telephone interview," Harrington said. "I knew he was the coach this team needed when I heard the excitement in his

voice and how he rattled off the stats of each one of our players."

After 15 years coaching girls basketball in East Chicago and another couple at Munster, Kundich knew Highland was the team he wanted to mentor.

"This team is incredible. I have been blessed to be their coach," he said.

"It's the best job I've ever had."

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SCHOOL BOARD

Patrick Krull, President

Robert Kuva, Vice President

Erica Smith-Gomez, Secretary

Victor A. Garcia, member

Richard Alyea, member

The school board meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. in the Administration Building, 9145 Kennedy Avenue, Highland.

INFO: Visit highland.k12.in.us for the latest information, including meeting agendas, school policies, board mission, beliefs and values.

Family and Consumer Sciences wing gets culinary facelift, new equipment

After more than 40 years, the kitchens in the Family and Consumer Sciences Department are ready for a makeover.

The plan is to begin as soon as the school year concludes with the spacious food sciences area of FACS ready to welcome students in August.

A remodel of the seven kitchens – used by students to learn the basics of prepping and cooking classroom assignments as well as a demonstration area for teacher Shana Janes – will include new ovens and range tops, as well as cabinets, counter tops and sinks.

“We have great groups of kids – about 175 per semester – who spend time in the food labs,” Janes said. “I love that so many take the class because they want to learn the skills they will need to feed themselves when they go away to school and as they move into their careers.”

HHS Principal John Zack is pleased with the number of students who choose culinary skills as part of their curriculum.

“It’s the kind of class that gives students the building blocks they need,” Zack said. “The upgrades to the department will spur even more of an interest.”



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

When the remodel is done, the spacious culinary arts classroom and its seven kitchens will have all new:

- ◆ Industrial Cabinets
- ◆ Counter tops
- ◆ Flooring
- ◆ Sinks
- ◆ Ceiling tiles
- ◆ Appliances, including refrigerators, sinks, electric and gas-range tops/ovens and microwaves

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

“Here’s to another outstanding year of Trojan Pride”

Spring Break is my official notice that the sprint to the finish line of the school year has begun. Before we all check out, I would like to offer my congratulations for another fantastic year.

Congratulations to the 17 members of the girls basketball team who did us all proud as they set their sights high – and surpassed them – when they made it to the semi state round of the IHSAA girls basketball championship.

As a result of her exemplary performance, co-captain Jordan Steele will be playing in the Indiana Basketball All-Star Classic in June.

Congratulations to first-year Girls Basketball Coach Eric Kundich, who was selected The Times 2025 Coach of the Year and to Nick Ecsy, who was named Swim Coach of the Year for our conference. I remember shaking Nick’s

hand when he graduated in 2014. He now teaches English at HHS and coaches both boys and girls swimming and diving.

I want to close by saying “way to go” to the mentors who were honored by graduating seniors at the Ice Cream Social a few weeks ago. Every senior was asked to invite not only their parents, but teachers and others who had made a profound impact on their young lives.

I want to thank each one of those mentors and teachers from the bottom of my heart. They were so special that they were singled out for appreciation. They made an impact in someone’s young life. It’s what we all hope for. Congratulations to these teachers for being that person.



Brian Smith
Superintendent
School Town of Highland

An Evening with the Stars ...



High School Asst. Principal Andrew Locke shares a moment with senior Jordan Tillman, who is graduating magna cum laude, during an ice cream social recognizing Highland High School seniors graduating with honors. [Photos by Ethan Roberts]



Senior and summa cum laude Joslyn Figueroa celebrates with her mentor High School Teacher Jodi Olah.



Girls Basketball Coach Eric Kundich is proud of senior Jordan Boyd, who is graduating summa cum laude.

Ice cream social kicks off senior events

The Ice Cream Social kicked off two months of activities to cap off four years of success. HHS Principal John Zack is already feeling nostalgia with a heaping dose of pride in the 200 students who will be moving on to their next adventure.

"I have been getting to know these students since they arrived as freshmen," Zack said. "It's really cool to see how much they've grown."

"To a student, they have become this solid group of confident kids who know their vibe. They have direction and think for themselves. They may not have all the answers yet about what they are going to do, but they certainly know what they are not going to do," he said. "I am fortunate to know each one of them. I can't wait to see what this next chapter brings for them."



DANCING THE NIGHT AWAY

Prom will be held from 6 to 10 p.m. **April 26** at The Halls of St. George in Schererville. Date request forms are required for out-of-towners, freshman and sophomores. School attendance policy must be met to attend. Tickets go on sale **April 15**.

DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS

Top students gather for a morning of money at 9 a.m. **April 30** in the high school LGI (Large Group Instruction) room for Highland Dollars for Scholars Awards Day.

SENIOR WALKS

Graduating seniors will walk the halls of our elementary schools one last time **May 19** at Johnston, Merkley, Southridge and Warren.

GEARING UP FOR FINALS

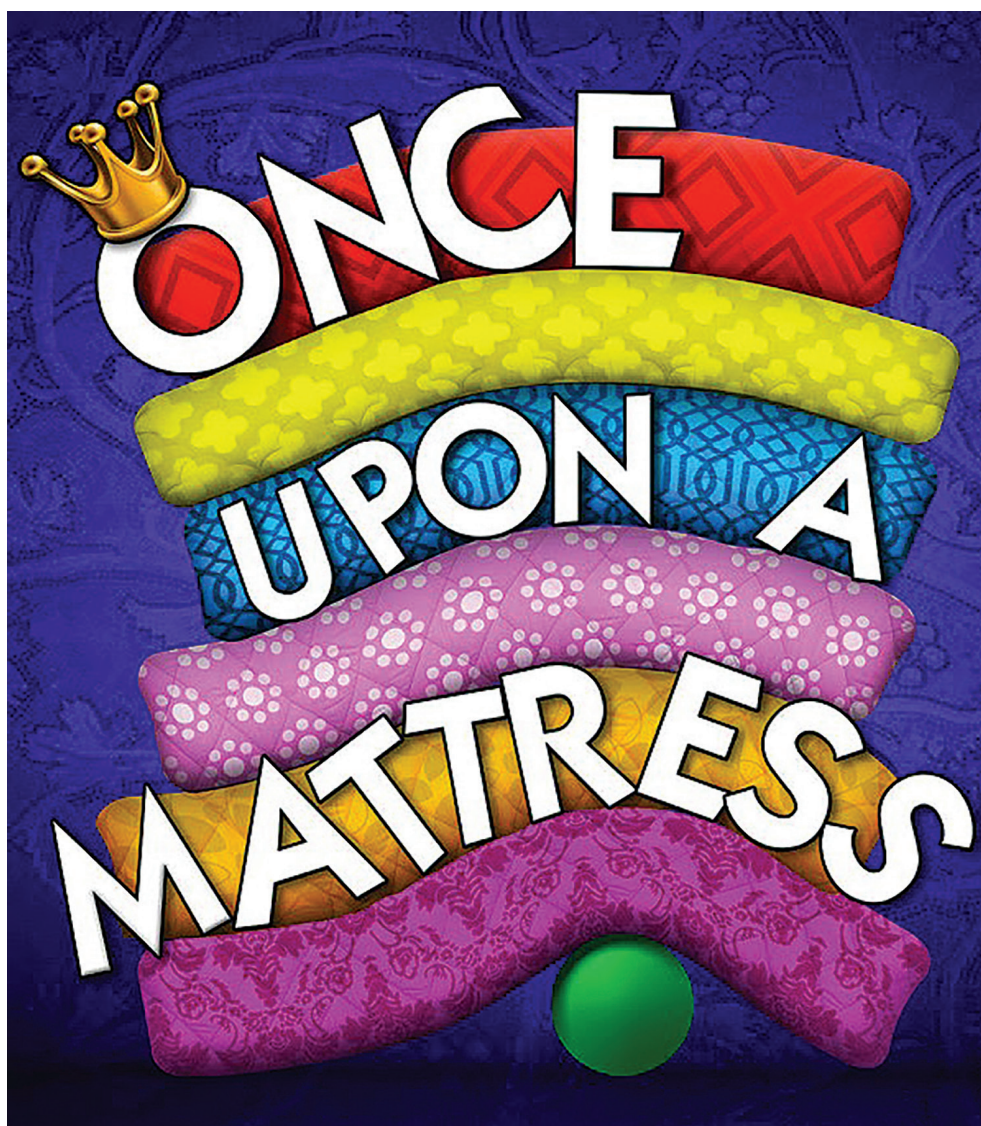
High school students take final exams **May 23, 27, 28 and 29**. Grades will be available online.

PICTURE PERFECT

We'll take photos and rehearse for graduation from 4-5 p.m. **June 5** in the auditorium, gymnasium and cafeteria.

POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE

The Class of 2025 gathers **June 5** for graduation. The ceremony will begin at 6 p.m. at the high school's football field. Every guest must have a ticket.



MONBECK AUDITORIUM

7 PM FRIDAY MAY 2

7 PM SATURDAY MAY 3

2 PM SUNDAY MAY 4

Tickets are \$8 for seniors and students,
\$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 5.

www.highlandtheatrecompany.org

Spring concerts

Join us as we celebrate spring with free performances from our choir and musical ensembles.

MS/HS Orchestra Concert:
7 p.m. **May 12**

MS/HS Spring Choral:
6:30 p.m. **May 16**

MS/HS Band Concert:
6:30 p.m. **May 20**

WHERE: Highland High School
Monbeck Auditorium, 9135 Erie

ADMISSION: Free



Golf fundraiser

Join the Highland Trojans Athletics Department for a swinging good time at its golf outing fundraiser! Enjoy 18 holes of fun along with prizes, a silent auction and delicious food/drinks after the game. All proceeds go to Highland High School Athletics.

WHEN: Friday, **June 27** –
registration is 11 a.m. with a
shotgun start at noon.

WHERE: Wicker Memorial Park,
8554 Indianapolis Blvd.

FEE: \$90 per golfer, \$360 per
foursome (\$390 with all golf
aids). Registration deadline is
Thursday, **June 12**.

INFO: Call Athletic Director
Ryan Harrington (219) 922-
5611 or email rharrington@highland.k12.in.us for more
details or to sponsor event.