



HIGHLAND PARK
SCHOOL DISTRICT

CONTACT: Lorri Rishar
lorri@edgepartnerships.com

517-853-6787 o

517-449-7435 c

April 14, 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Highland Park School District reaffirms commitment to student safety, quality special education services

The Highland Park School District and Board of Education Chair Cheryl Sanford today issued the following statement:

“The Highland Park School District is aware of a recent article published by The Detroit News regarding a lawsuit filed by a member of the Highland Park School District Board of Education.

“The District takes any allegation involving student safety or well-being seriously. However, the Highland Park School District categorically refutes claims that students — whether receiving special education services or any student at Barber Preparatory Academy — were mistreated or abused. At no time has the District received any report, complaint or finding of mistreatment or abuse of students at Barber Preparatory Academy.

“The day referenced in the lawsuit was a planned, school-approved ‘fun day’ featuring age-appropriate activities and reading opportunities in recognition of March Is Reading Month. These activities were designed to support engagement, learning and a positive school climate for all students.

“The District also notes that a recent walkthrough conducted by Wayne RESA affirmed that appropriate care and supports are being provided to students receiving special education services at Barber Preparatory Academy. This external review reinforces the District’s confidence in the professionalism and dedication of its staff.

The Highland Park School District remains committed to transparency and accountability. If any individual has firsthand knowledge of concerns regarding the treatment of students, the District strongly encourages them to report those concerns immediately

through appropriate school or District channels so they can be promptly reviewed and addressed.

“The safety, dignity and educational well-being of all students remain the District’s highest priority.

###

About Highland Park School District

The Highland Park School District provides a high-quality public education that assures students will receive a comprehensive learning experience which prepares them to compete in a global 21st century society. All students achieve their maximum potential through a rigorous and engaging curriculum with the support of a caring and prepared faculty, and a safe and secure learning environment that cultivates success for life.