



# HOUGHTON ELEMENTARY



## April Newsletter



### Houghton Elementary School

Houghton-Portage Township Schools



Houghton Elementary School is a proud 2023 National Blue Ribbon School and a MTSS Silver Recognition school for behavior and reading supports. We provide a safe, supportive, and engaging environment where all students can thrive. Our dedicated staff fosters strong relationships and delivers a rich, well-rounded education that prepares students for success.

## Upcoming Events

### Easter Break

Friday, April 3rd  
No School

### Teacher In-Service

Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>  
No School for Students

### Kindergarten Screening

Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>  
Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>

### Star Lab at HES

Week of April 27th

### Class Pictures

Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>

### Memorial Day

Monday, May 25th  
No School for Students

## M-STEP TESTING: Helping Our Gremlins Shine!

It is officially spring, and that means it is time for our students to show what they know! Starting in April, students in Grades 3–5 will participate in the M-STEP (Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress).

The M-STEP is an online assessment designed to gauge how well students are mastering Michigan's high academic standards. It provides a "snapshot" of student achievement, helping our teachers and the district understand where our students are excelling and where we can provide more support.

Please watch for a more detailed calendar from your child's classroom teacher regarding specific testing days for their section.

### How Can Parents Help?

Standardized testing can sometimes feel a bit stressful for students. Here are a few ways you can help your child feel confident and ready:

- 1. Rest & Fuel:** Ensure your child gets a good night's sleep and eats a healthy, high-protein breakfast on testing days.
- 2. Attendance Matters:** Please try to avoid scheduling doctor appointments or vacations during your child's testing window. Being in their familiar classroom environment helps them do their best!
- 3. Encourage, Don't Pressure:** Remind your child that this is just one way we see their progress. We simply want them to take their time and give their best effort—just like they do every day!

Gizmo's Tip: "The M-STEP is just a chance to show off your hard work. You've got this, Gremlins!"



# A Positive Climate and Culture

“Every Student. Every Day. Whatever it takes.” - Jimmy Casas

At Houghton Elementary, “Every student. Every day.” is more than a motto – it guides everything we do. Through Capturing Kids’ Hearts, The Positivity Project, and our T.E.A.M. behavior system, we build strong relationships and a safe, supportive environment where every student feels valued and ready to succeed.

## The Positivity Project

This month, our students are exploring four key character strengths that help them build stronger relationships and a resilient mindset.

Our April Focus Areas

- **Humor:** Finding the light side of life and using laughter to bring people together.
- **Fairness:** Treating others with respect and ensuring everyone has what they need to succeed.
- **Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence:** Noticing and valuing the "wow" moments in nature, art, and the skills of others.
- **Purpose:** Understanding that we are part of something bigger and that our actions have meaning.

### How to Practice at Home

Want to bring these conversations to the dinner table? Try asking these questions:

- Humor: "What was the funniest thing that happened at school today?"
- Fairness: "When is a time you stood up for someone else?"
- Beauty: "What is one beautiful thing you noticed outside today?"
- Purpose: "What is one way you can help someone else this week?"



## March T.E.A.M. Students

Each month we are recognize a student in each class that exemplifies our schools TEAM goals:

**Take Responsibility**  
**Earn Respect**  
**Act Positively**  
**Make it Safe**

### CONGRATULATIONS TEAM STUDENTS!!!!

**Kindergarten/Y5's:** Matej Tormala, Emilia Hodges, Zahra Forsman, Sonja Sechrest, Hazel Oberloier, Kaison Markham

**1<sup>st</sup> Grade:** Avah Kalcich, Theo Roy, Megan Voght, Mikey Scacco

**2<sup>nd</sup> Grade:** Darlene Christov, Kyler Williams, Yvonne Li, Tempy Kuehn, Asher Bradfish

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade:** Liam Zimmerman, Wes Steelman, Illiana Kauss, Gerard Meyer, Amy Harsh

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Tatiana Kampe, Olivia Capello, Estelle Dawson, James D’Luge, Eliza Manser

**5<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Vincent Behnke, Benjamin Breffle, Sterling Frick, Sophia Pelto, Raegan Riley

HOUGHTON  
*Gremlins*

# Updates and Reminders

“Every Student. Every Day. Whatever it takes.” - Jimmy Casas

## Snow, Rain, or Sunshine... Gizmo is Ready for it All!

April weather in Houghton is famously unpredictable! To keep our students warm, dry, and comfortable during outdoor recess, please help your child prepare for whatever the day may bring.

### Recess Reminders:

- **Dress for the Mud:** Our playground gets very messy this time of year. Boots are highly recommended for wet and muddy days!
- **Pack a Backup:** Please send an extra pair of pants and socks in your child's backpack just in case they get a little too close to a puddle.
- **Don't Retire the Winter Gear:** We aren't in the clear yet! Please continue to send warm coats, hats, and gloves.
- **The Over-Night Dry:** Remember to check for wet gear after school so it can dry out completely before the next morning.

Our goal is to ensure every student can enjoy their time outside without feeling the "April chill." Thank you for your help in keeping our Gremlins cozy!

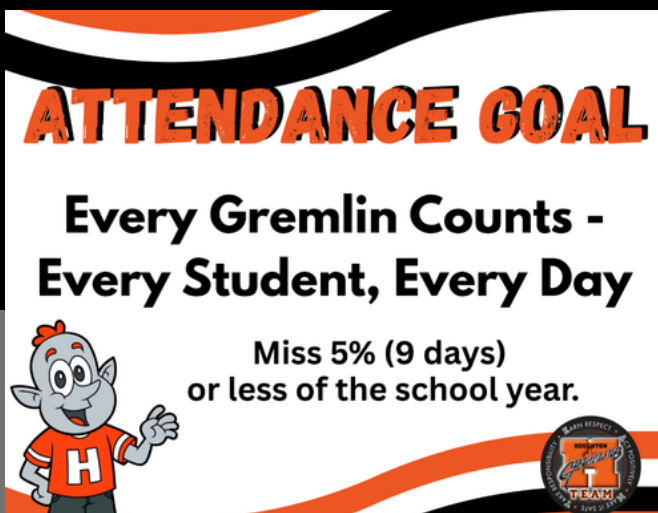
## Missing Gear? Check the Lost & Found!

With the unpredictable April weather, many students are shedding layers at recess and forgetting them on the playground. Our Lost & Found is currently overflowing with coats, hats, gloves, and even the occasional lone boot!

### How You Can Help:

- **Label Everything:** Please write your child's name on the inside tags of their gear. This helps Gizmo and the staff return items directly to their owners.
- **Take a Quick Look:** Next time you are at the school, please stop by the Lost & Found to see if any of your family's belongings have found a temporary home there.



Don't let your favorites get away—check for your missing gear today!



**ATTENDANCE GOAL**

**Every Gremlin Counts -  
Every Student, Every Day**

Miss 5% (9 days)  
or less of the school year.





**Here Today, Ready for Tomorrow!**



©Attendance Works

# Houghton Elementary

## Kindergarten Pre-Registration

Houghton-Portage Township School District is now Pre-Registering Kindergarten-aged children for the upcoming 2026-2027 school year!

### How To Pre-Register

- Complete the form that is linked in the message below!
- Or go to [www.hpts.us](http://www.hpts.us) and click the Registration link on the main page.
- Call 906-482-0456 ext. 3040 with any questions or for help!

### Who Can Register?

- Children who will be five (5) years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026
- Children who will be five (5) years of age by December 1<sup>st</sup> with a waiver signed by a parent.



**Houghton  
Elementary  
School**

Houghton-Portage Township Schools



# Why Choose the Gremlins?

A Premier School District in Michigan

HOUGHTON PORTAGE TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

## US NEWS & WORLD REPORT RANKINGS

### Houghton Elementary School

#86 out of 2601 elementary schools in Michigan - Top 3%

### Houghton Middle School

#38 out of 1979 middle schools in Michigan - Top 2%

### Houghton High School

#45 out of 1136 high schools in Michigan - Top 4%

HOUGHTON



*Congratulations*

## HPTS MiMTSS Recognition

MTSS Implementation and Impact



Your district has earned an MTSS Implementation and Impact award at the **Gold level**.

In addition, the following schools in your district have earned an MTSS Implementation and Impact award:

Houghton Central High School - Behavior Gold  
Houghton Elementary School - Tier 1 Behavior: Silver, Tier 2 Behavior: Silver, Tier 1 Reading: Silver  
Houghton Middle School - Behavior Gold, Tier 1 Reading: Bronze



MTSS Data Utilization



Your district has earned the MTSS Data Utilization award for collecting and using the **District Capacity Assessment** during 2024-2025.

In addition, the following schools in your district have earned the MTSS Data Utilization award for collecting and using MTSS fidelity data:

Houghton Central High School: Behavior  
Houghton Elementary School: Reading & Behavior  
Houghton Middle School: Reading & Behavior

2025

## A Nationally Recognized Elementary School

World-Class Education, Right Here at Home



We are thrilled to share that Houghton Elementary continues to earn top honors. Alongside being named a 2023 National Blue Ribbon School, we have received an overall "A" grade from Niche.com and are ranked as the #1 Elementary School in Houghton County.

These awards—combined with our recognition by U.S. News & World Report—reflect the "Gremlin Pride" we see every day. From our top-tier teachers to our supportive families, our educational community makes our school a leader in Michigan education!

## Top 25 School Districts in Michigan



### A District of Distinction:

Excellence from Start to Finish - Houghton Portage Township Schools is proud to be a top-ranked district in Michigan, offering a world-class education at every grade level. We are rated an "A" District by Niche.com and ranked in the Top 5% of School Districts in the State (#25 out of 500+).