

# School Profile 2023-2024



## Contact Information

1600 N. Morris St.  
Gastonia, NC 28052  
(704) 810-8816  
(704) 866-6105

CEEB School Code: 341-450  
Accreditation: SACS

Hours: 8:30 am – 3:20 pm  
Calendar: Traditional  
Enrollment: 529  
Seniors: 127  
Juniors: 129  
Sophomores: 130  
Freshmen: 143

**Principal:** James Montgomery / **Assistant Principal:** Jenny Carper / **Counselors:** Mathieu Chapman and Ashleigh Arceo  
**Websites:** (School) <http://highlandtech.us> (Counseling) <http://bit.ly/hstcounseling>

## Our Philosophy

The mission of Highland School of Technology is to prepare students for success in post-secondary education and the workplace by offering a rigorous, relevant, and experiential academic and technical curriculum.

## School Description

Highland School of Technology (HST) is a career and technical magnet high school, grades 9-12, reflecting the 260,000 residents of Gaston County, North Carolina. The school opened in July of 2000 as Gaston County School's first total choice magnet program, and it draws its student body from the other nine public high schools in the district. Highland is a renovated and re-purposed public school with three academies and seven pathway options including Allied Health, Medical Science, Dental Science, Computer Science, Business and Legal Studies, Manufacturing and Engineering Technology, and Graphic Design. Highland opened for the 2000-01 school year with freshman and sophomore students and had its first graduating class in 2003.

## Entrance Criteria

Students apply to attend Highland during their eighth grade year. A lottery is held to select 145 students based on interest in a career pathway and feeder high school area. A percentage of students are accepted from each of the high school feeder areas in Gaston County, according to enrollment, which fairly distributes the Highland experience to all areas of our community.

The entrance criteria are:

- Level III, IV, or V on the 7<sup>th</sup> grade end-of-grade tests in reading and math
- Level III, IV, or V on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade end-of-grade tests in reading and math
- 94% attendance rate in grades 7 and 8
- Overall "C" or 70 minimum average in grades 7 and 8
- Be in good standing regarding conduct
- Be a Gaston County resident

## Integrated Learning

The emphasis at Highland School of Technology is on integrating learning within the community. The faculty is active in planning integration of the curriculum so that students see relationships and therefore a purpose for learning and understand the curriculum's application in a real-world setting. Teachers observe lessons in classrooms of other disciplines, experience industry field trips, share curriculum plans during integration meetings, and communicate with each other as they develop interdisciplinary units of study. Our community provides a means for students to apply their learning in real-world situations through internship, job shadowing, and apprenticeship opportunities.

## School Honors and Recognitions

- ❑ NC School of Distinction 2000-01 – 84.1%
- ❑ NC School of Excellence 2001-02 – 90.6%
- ❑ NC School of Distinction 2002-03 – 88.5%
- ❑ NC School of Distinction 2003-04 – 89.1%
- ❑ NC Honor School of Excellence 2004-05 – 92.1%
- ❑ EOC Proficiency Rate 2005-06 – 91.1%
- ❑ NC School of Distinction 2006-07 – 86.1%
- ❑ NC Honor School of Excellence, High Growth 2007-08 – 91%
- ❑ NC Honor School of Excellence, High Growth 2008-09 – 94.922%



## School Honors and Recognitions – Continued

- ❑ NC Honor School of Excellence, High Growth 2009-10 – 98.79%
- ❑ NC Honor School of Excellence, High Growth 2010-11 – 99.3% – Highest test scores of any public high school in NC.
- ❑ NC Honor School of Excellence, High Growth 2011-12 – 99.8% – Highest test scores of any public high school in NC.
- ❑ NC Honor School of Excellence, Exceeds Expected Growth 2012-13 – 78.9% (State average 46%)
- ❑ NC Honor School of Excellence, Exceeds Expected Growth 2013-14 – 92% (State average 58.5%)
- ❑ NC School Performance Grade – 96 (A) Exceeds Expected Growth 2014-15 – 93.5%
- ❑ NC School Performance Grade – 98 (A+) Exceeds Expected Growth 2015-16 – 97%
- ❑ NC School Performance Grade – 99 (A+NG) Exceeds Expected Growth 2016-17 – 99.8%
- ❑ NC School Performance Grade – 99 (A) Exceeds Expected Growth 2017-18 – 99.8%
- ❑ NC School Performance Grade – 99 (A) Exceeds Expected Growth 2018-19 – 99.6%
- ❑ NC School Performance Grade – 99 (A) Exceeds Expected Growth 2021-22 – 98.9%
- ❑ **NC School Performance Grade – 100 (A) Exceeds Expected Growth 2022-23 – 99.6%**
- ❑ Governor’s Entrepreneurial Award 2001 – *Highland was recognized for bold leadership and responsible risk-taking to advance teaching and improve learning in the State of NC.*
- ❑ Identified as one of the Top 30 Model Schools in the Nation for Bringing Best Practices to Scale by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Council of Chief State School Officers, and International Center for Leadership in Education. 2003
- ❑ Highland School of Technology was featured in the December 9, 2003, issue of Forbes magazine. *The article mentioned Highland when discussing the business of educational innovation in the Charlotte region.*
- ❑ Highland School of Technology was featured in the July 2003 issue of Greater Charlotte Biz, the magazine for the successful business executive. *The article featured the accomplishments of our school and highlighted the skills of our first graduating class.*
- ❑ Highland School of Technology was featured in the June 2004 issue of the Engineering Times by the National Society of Professional Engineers. *The article highlights our Manufacturing/Engineering Pathway and includes interviews from two of our students who plan to pursue a degree in engineering.*
- ❑ Selected as one of 23 model high schools nationwide to share its best practices at the 15th Annual Model Schools Conference in Washington, D.C., on June 30-July 3, 2007. *The Conference, sponsored by the International Center for Leadership in Education, is the nation’s premier event for K-12 education reform.*
- ❑ Highland School of Technology was recognized by the State School Board and the Department of Public Instruction for our 100% graduation rate for the class of 2008, 2010, 2012, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023
- ❑ The Future Business Leaders of America club at Highland School of Technology received the nationally recognized Hollis and Kitty Guy Gold Seal Chapter Award of Merit for nine years.
- ❑ The Technology Students Association club at Highland School of Technology is one of the largest chapters in the state, we have received Chapter of The Year nine consecutive years, and have students qualify for the National Competition every year.
- ❑ The Future Health Professionals (HOSA) club at Highland School of Technology has been recognized as the largest 1A chapter four consecutive years and the "Most Outstanding Chapter" in North Carolina for the past 10 years.
- ❑ Highland School of Technology was recognized by the Charlotte Business Journal in October, 2018, as the top public high school in the Charlotte area for “college and career readiness.”
- ❑ Highland School of Technology was named a Lighthouse School by the NCASCD in February 2018. *This prestigious award is presented to one or more schools leading the way in North Carolina for excellence in student achievement and innovated programs.*
- ❑ U.S. News & World Reports – Ranked #1 in Charlotte Metro Area, #77 in Magnet Rankings, and #424 in the Nation in 2023.
- ❑ On the NC Report Card, Highland School of Technology ranked #1 in the state accountability model among all 2,714 elementary, middle, and high schools with a performance grade of 100.
- ❑ **Recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 2017 and 2023.** A government program created in 1982 by the United States Department of Education to honor schools that have achieved high levels of student achievement or made significant improvements in closing the achievement gap among student subgroups. Only 343 total schools received recognition with 43 public high schools in the nation receiving this distinction in 2023.

## Career Pathways

There are seven career and technical pathways at Highland School of Technology. All students begin their career and technical education during their freshman year. They continue to have specialized instruction during their sophomore, junior, and senior years taking a total of eight required CTE courses. Their advanced studies class during the senior year requires a senior project to demonstrate their skills and knowledge by working with professionals in our community.

### Business, Legal and Information Sciences: Academy Coordinator – Rachel Martin

**Computer Science** - The Computer Science pathway prepares students for careers in the information science industry. Emphasis is placed on learning to code; skills needed to configure, upgrade and build computers; and network infrastructures including switching and routing. Curriculum follows industry standards to prepare students to seek certifications in Python Programming, CompTIA IT Fundamentals, and Cisco Certified Technician.

**Business and Legal Studies** – The Business and Legal Studies pathway introduces students to broad career opportunities in the business and legal industries. Students take industry-related courses emphasizing Principles of Business, Accounting, Financial Planning, Business and Personal Law. The pathway enables students to complete internships at leading business and legal services corporations as well as prepares them for future employment or higher education.

## **Health Sciences:** Academy Coordinator – Waheebah al-Uqdah McCray

**Allied Health Science** - The Allied Health Science pathway introduces students to support positions in hospitals, clinics and other medical facilities. They focus on becoming multi-skilled health team members and rotate throughout the different hospital areas during their senior year, performing entry-level clinical skills. Students also have the opportunity to obtain a Nurse Aide Level 1 (CNA) certification upon completion of this pathway while still at Highland.

**Medical Science** - The Medical Science pathway prepares students to be healthcare workers in an advanced technical or professional health career. Students in this pathway spend 40+ hours in an internship with a healthcare professional during their senior year. The emphasis in the classroom is placed on research, communication, computer literacy, health team relations, problem solving, and decision making. Students can earn the following credentials or certifications: CPR, First Aid, OSHA, Stop the Bleed, and Vision Screening.

**Dental Science** - In the Dental Science pathway, students prepare for careers in the dental field. Students will learn skills that will prepare them to perform entry level skills through on and off campus experiences. This program is one of a kind, as we are the only high school in North Carolina with a dental program. Students can earn the following credentials: CPR, First Aid, and OSHA. Dental VI students will have the opportunity to complete the certificate for the State Program for Infection Control and Epidemiology (SPICE).

## **Manufacturing, Engineering and Graphics:** Academy Coordinator – Darryl Thompson

**Graphic Design** – The Graphic Design pathway offers students an overview of Graphic Design and Digital Media. Emphasis is placed on principles of graphic design, web communication, and video editing. Students have an opportunity to earn an industry standard credential in the following: Adobe Creative Cloud programs on a Mac platform in Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop and Premiere Pro.

**Manufacturing and Engineering** – The Manufacturing and Engineering pathway offers a series of classes in a special laboratory setting. Students can expect to learn basic design skills, engineering principles, programming logic, manufacturing processes and quality-control concepts through hands-on activities. Communication, teamwork and problem-solving are reinforced throughout all the classes. Students also take a Drafting/CAD class to further develop technical skills. Apprenticeship opportunities are available for those qualifying students during their senior year through the industry sponsored Apprenticeship 2000 program.

### **Graduation Requirements / Class Rank**

<b>Grading Scale</b>	
<b>2015-16 and beyond</b>	
A	90 – 100
B	80 – 89
C	70 – 79
D	60 – 69
F	Below 60

Highland School of Technology provides a class rank for students on the NC standardized transcript. Students have the opportunity to take rigorous academic courses including Advanced Placement and CCP courses; however, they are required to take a fourth math and demanding career and technical education (CTE) courses associated with their career pathway each year. Each pathway has different required courses that students must take and not all pathways have the same number of honors courses or elective options. Thus, students in different pathways may not have the same opportunity to take AP, CCP, foreign language, or fine arts courses. The CTE courses at Highland offer the rigor of college coursework, but most are only weighted at the standard level. A class rank comparison within career pathway is available for college and scholarship competitions upon request.

### **Advanced Placement (AP) / Career and College Promise (CCP)**

Advanced Placement courses taught at Highland (12): Biology, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Chemistry, Computer Science Principles, Environmental Science, English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition, European History, Pre-Calculus, Statistics, and US History. Career and College Promise courses taught on campus at Highland (4): General Psychology, Sociology, Criminal Justice, and Corrections. Students may take online AP/CCP and off campus CCP courses if scheduling allows.

### **Athletics**

Students compete at the varsity level in the Southern Piedmont 1A/2A Conference. The following sports teams are active at Highland: baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country, football, golf, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis, track, and volleyball.

### **Extracurricular Activities and Clubs**

Battle of the Books  
Beta Club  
Bible Club  
Computer Engineering Exploration Club (CEE)  
dRAMa Club  
Earth Club  
Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)  
Future Health Professionals (HOSA)  
Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)  
Investment Club

International Cultures Club (ICC)  
Math Club  
Moot Court  
Photography Club  
Quiz Bowl  
Ram HOST (Highland's Official Service Team)  
Student Council  
Technology Student Association (TSA)  
World Quest

ACT & WorkKeys Testing					
ACT	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
HST 2017-18	22.5	24.9	24.0	23.4	23.8
HST 2018-19	20.9	23.3	24.0	22.5	22.8
HST 2020-21	21.8	23.6	24.1	23.3	23.4
<b>HST 2021-22</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>23.2</b>	<b>22.1</b>
North Carolina	16.4	18.1	19.0	18.6	18.2
United States	19.0	19.3	20.4	19.9	19.8
WorkKeys	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Platinum	Certified
HST 2018-19	2	21	39	58	99.2%
HST 2020-21	1	18	42	64	100%
HST 2021-22	3	18	37	71	98.5%
<b>HST 2022-23</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>99.1%</b>

SAT – Mean Test Score	ERW	Math	Total	Percent Tested
HST 2018-2019	610	606	1216	85%
HST 2019-2020	594	583	1177	81%
HST 2020-2021	615	603	1218	45%
<b>HST 2021-2022</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>1189</b>	<b>45%</b>
Gaston County	562	557	1119	20%
North Carolina	569	561	1130	25%
United States	521	507	1028	

**Scholarships and Awards**

The Class of 2023 received over 10.5 million dollars in scholarship money last year. Scholarships received by past graduates include full scholarships to Princeton, Yale, Duke, the Morehead-Cain, Park, Robertson Scholars, EC Scholars, National Merit Scholarships, Military Academy appointments, Quest Bridge Scholars, and Alumni, Chancellor, Dean, and Presidential scholarships to many colleges and universities.

Post Graduate Plans	2020	2021	2022	2023
Class Size	128	131	131	<b>116</b>
Total Continuing Education	93%	95%	93%	<b>94%</b>
Four Year College	76%	73%	70%	<b>72%</b>
Community College, Junior College, Nursing School	17%	22%	23%	<b>22%</b>
Trade/Business School	1%	0%	0%	<b>2%</b>
Military	3%	2%	0%	<b>0%</b>
Employment	3%	2%	7%	<b>4%</b>

Colleges and Universities Accepting Highland School of Technology Graduates				
Air Force Academy	Eastern Kentucky University	Kettering University	Old Dominion University	UNC Pembroke
Anderson College	East Carolina University	King College	Oglethorpe University	UNC Wilmington
Appalachian State University	East Tennessee State University	Lander University	Oregon State University	University of Alabama Huntsville
Art Institute	Elizabeth City State University	Lee University	Pace University	University of Alabama
Auburn University	Elon University	Lees-McRae College	Penn State University	University of Georgia
Belmont Abbey College	Embry Riddle Aeronautical	Lenoir-Rhyne University	Pfeiffer College	University of Florida
Beloit College	Emmanuel College	Liberty University	Princeton University	University of Kentucky
Bennett College	Emory and Henry College	Limestone College	Presbyterian College	University of Nevada Las Vegas
Bluefield College	Emory University	Livingston College	Presbyterian Nursing	University of South Carolina
Boston University	Erskine College	Loyola Marymount University	Purdue University	University of Pittsburg
Boston College University	Fayetteville State University	Lynchburg College	Queens University	University of Tennessee
Brevard College	Ferrum College	Marquette University	Randolph-Macon College	University of Utah
Brown University	Florida A & M University	Mars Hill College	Rensselaer	University of Virginia
Campbell University	Full Sail University	Mary Baldwin College	Rice University	University of Wyoming
Carnegie Mellon University	Furman University	Massachusetts College of Art	Roanoke College	Vanderbilt University
Catawba College	Gardner-Webb University	Mercer University	Rochester Institute of Tech	Virginia Military Institute
Central Piedmont CC	Gaston College	Meredith College	Salem College	Virginia Tech University
Charleston Southern University	George Mason University	Methodist University	SCAD	Virginia State University
Chowan University	Georgetown University	Montreat College	Siena College	Wake Forest University
The Citadel	Georgia Tech	Mount Olive College	Southern Wesleyan	Washington and Lee University
Clark Atlanta University	Georgia Southern University	Michigan State University	Spelman College	Washington University
Clemson University	Guilford College	Morehouse College	St. Andrews College	Wellesley College
Coastal Carolina University	Hampden Sydney	Mt. Holyoke University	Sweet Briar	West Point Academy
College of Charleston	Hampton University	NC A&T University	Syracuse University	Western Carolina University
Columbia University	High Point University	NC Central University	Temple University	William Peace University
Cooper Union	Howard College	NC State University	Texas Southern University	Wingate University
Cornell University	Indiana University	NC Wesleyan College	Tusculum College	Winston Salem State University
Davidson College	Johns Hopkins University	Newberry College	UNC Asheville	Winthrop University
DeVry University	Johnson and Wales University	New York University	UNC Chapel Hill	Wofford College
Drexel University	Johnson C. Smith University	North Greenville University	UNC Charlotte	Yale University
Duke University	Kent State University	Ohio State University	UNC Greensboro	Young Harris College