



Northern Highlands Regional High School

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October 15, 2020

JOSEPH J. OCCHINO
Principal

MICHAEL T. KOTH
Assistant Principal

ROBERT E. WILLIAMS
Director of Athletics

THOMAS BUONO
Director of Special Services

ROBIN KNUTELSKY
Director of Curriculum Instruction & Assessment

KELLY PETERFRIEND
Director of Guidance

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We are delighted to inform you that Northern Highlands Regional High School (NHRHS) has joined JED High School--an initiative of [The Jed Foundation \(JED\)](http://TheJedFoundation.org) designed to empower schools with a comprehensive framework and customized support that enhances their efforts in student mental health and strengthens substance misuse and suicide prevention programming and resources. As part of this program, NHRHS will embark on an approximately 18-month strategic collaboration that assesses and bolsters the work that is already being done and helps to create positive, lasting systemic change in our school community.

At Northern Highlands, we believe mental health promotion, substance misuse, and suicide prevention efforts are a school-wide responsibility. We understand the importance of providing a safe environment where your student can learn and grow, which is why we strive for excellence in making. As a result of JED High School, your student will develop a sense of belonging and connectedness with peers, teachers, coaches, and staff across the school community. Your student will also learn key life skills to manage daily tasks and activities, academic requirements, relationships, life transitions, and physical and mental health. Most of all, your student will be provided with all necessary resources and encouraged to seek assistance when needed.

Interested in getting involved in our joint effort? Find out how below:

- Talk to your student about mental health, the importance of taking care of oneself, and where to go at school for emotional or academic support
- Ask your student about programming, groups, and activities happening at school (in-person or virtual) that focus on physical and emotional well-being, suicide prevention, and substance use reduction.
- Connect with other parents in our school community through HASA and our community groups to gain support and access information.

For more information on JED High School, please contact me at 201-327-8700 ext. 589 or by email at verdicchij@northernhighlands.org

Sincerely,

Dr. Jessica Verdicchio, DSW, LCSW

Cc: Dr. Scot Beckerman, Superintendent

Mr. Joseph Occhino, Principal

Mr. Michael Koth, Assistant Principal

Ms. Kelly Peterfriend, Director of Guidance