



Save the Dates:

- School Wide Fundraiser begins: **11/2**
- Board Meeting: **11/10 at 6pm**
- School-Wide Math Assessment: **11/4**
- 12:30pm Dismissal: **11/5**
- School Closed: **Friday, 11/6**
- Increasing the Peace Week: **11/9-11/13**
- School Pictures: **11/20**
- Fundraiser deadline for orders/money: **11/23**
- First Trimester Ends: **Wednesday 11/25**
- 12:30pm Half-day dismissal: **Wednesday 11/25**
- School Closed: **11/27-11/28 for Thanksgiving Recess**

Giving Thanks!

As we prepare for the season of Thanksgiving, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our staff and parents who have worked diligently to support our mission over the course of the past 3 months. Your faith, support, and trust have allowed us to establish and maintain rigorous expectations for academic performance and conduct.

The snapshot view below lists just a few of the accomplishments that we have collectively achieved this year and are cause for us all to give thanks. Here at Pride they also inspire and motivate us to continue to raise the bar and plan for excellence in our programming, instruction, school culture, and parent involvement.

The November-December season is a perfect time to spend with our children showing them and helping them to show their caring and gratitude for those people in their lives who provide for them emotionally, spiritually, and physically.

“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”—John F. Kennedy.

As parents/guardians we can model caring and appreciation to our children by doing some of the following:

- **Making** and dedicating time in our busy schedules to take an interest in our children’s day at school and in their homework and grades.
- **Setting aside special time** just to spend one-on-one with each of our children – reading, cooking, watching a movie, and making, not always purchasing, a special gift for someone.
- **Modeling to your children** that the greatest gifts of gratitude that they can give to others are acts of kindness, caring, and respect: lending a helping hand; keeping a positive attitude about things that are different, new, or unfamiliar; sharing a smile, handshake, or hug; returning a greeting of “*Good Morning*” or “*How are you?*” or simply saying - “*Thank you!*” and “*I love you!*”

We Are Grateful for our Successes!

Through our Pride Families’ support, we have accomplished many milestones in a few short months. Here is just a snapshot of some of our successes. Together, we have:

- Hosted over 50% of our families at Back to School Night, 97% of our 8th grade families at High School Night, and 45% of our families at our First Trimester Progress Report Conference Night.
- Provided Project Use Experiential Education and Leadership trips for all our 7th & 8th graders.
- Established a breakfast program and ensured a 97% return of the Lunch Program Applications.
- Launched our PEP (Pride Enrichment Program) that will focus on building math and literacy skills.
- Engaged students in hands-on, active PACS learning cycle opportunities in all our classrooms.
- Infused even more rigor into our math and Language Arts curriculum in alignment to the NJCCCS.
- Administered our data driven instruction and assessment in math, language arts, and science.
- Begun an advisory program in our homerooms to provide student support and guidance.
- Started a Mentoring program that all our 7th and 8th graders will participate in this year.
- Created partnerships with community organizations and foundations such as the Cotchery Foundation and LINKS Inc. to spread the news about our school in the wider community, attract grant-funding dollars, and provide positive lifestyle programs for our students.
- Developed a broad array of extra-curricular club opportunities for our students including Cheerleading, Origami, Photography, Fantasy Sports, Yearbook, Yarning, Drama, Earth Club, Art, Spanish Club, Speed Stacking, Math Counts Team, and Chess.
- Set up SMART boards in every classroom and purchased mobile laptop labs and computer stations for use in math and language arts classrooms.
- Installed an eye-catching School Building sign above our entrance doors.
- Assembled more cafeteria benches/tables to provide more seating for our students.
- Developed an H1N1 action plan to keep us as healthy as possible this coming flu season.
- Completed our first school fundraiser – the Scholastic Book Fair – to raise money to purchase classroom libraries for our students.

With your trust, involvement, and partnership, we will continue to grow even stronger as a community in our mission to provide an exceptional education for your children!



Jericho and Mercedes Cotchery listen to PRIDE Scholar, Lance Pope, as he addresses an audience of celebrities, athletes, and sports fans at their fundraiser gala event held at the ESPN Zone in NYC last month. Pride Academy was honored to attend and to be chosen as a beneficiary for the event.

Help Us Keep Your Family Healthy this Flu Season

As soon as the H1N1 flu vaccine becomes available, make arrangements to get all your children in your household vaccinated.

Teach your children to wash their hands thoroughly and frequently with soap and water or a hand sanitizer, cover their noses/mouths when coughing or sneezing, and dispose of used tissues appropriately.

Keep your child home if he/she is sick or has flu like symptoms or any sign of fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or more) and keep your child home until he/she is fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medicines.

If your child is absent from school because of flu like symptoms, please call the Main Office to let us know that your child will be absent and tell us the symptoms that he/she has so that we can monitor our overall absenteeism rate and tailor our school wide response accordingly.

Reinforce with your children appropriate use of the soap/paper towels provided in our restrooms.

Please consider donating boxes of tissues and alcohol-based hand sanitizers to your child's homeroom teacher so that we can always have these materials available for your children on a regular basis in every classroom.

Cyber Bullying

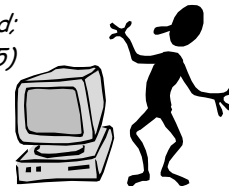
In September, your children were given a Computer Use Policy to take home for you to read with them and sign. The most important reason for this policy step is to ensure the appropriate, ethical, and legal use of computers in our building, and protect your children from access to inappropriate information and a dangerous form of bullying called cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is sending or posting harmful, demeaning, or cruel text or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices. It can involve:

- *"Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images;*
- *Posting sensitive, private information about another person;*
- *Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad;*
- *Intentionally excluding someone from an online group (Willard, 2005)*

Children and youth can cyberbully each other through:

- *E-mails and Instant messaging,*
- *Text or digital imaging messages sent on cell phones,*
- *Web pages and Web logs (blogs),*
- *Chat rooms or discussion groups such as myspace.com, hi5.com, tagged.com, blackplanet.com and migente.com"* (adapted from the following site:

<http://123elearning.wikispaces.com/cyberbullying+presentation#+toc+cyberbullying%20presentati+on7>



Parents and teachers can be proactive in preventing this kind of misuse and abuse of technology by ensuring active supervision of the use of computers and cell phones, and becoming informed about the harm that cyberbullying can create. We need to be aware that our children's often innocent involvement in chat rooms and internet activities puts them at risk of predators and individuals who may use their personal information/pictures in harmful ways, including but not limited to identity theft, stalking, and harassment.

Please consider reviewing these online safety rules with your children to help foster safe and ethical internet and digital communication practices:

1. *"I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parents' work address/telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parents' permission..*
2. *I will tell my parents or my teacher right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.*
3. *I will never agree to get together with someone I "meet" online without first checking with my parents. If my parents agree to the meeting, I will be sure that it is in a public place and bring my mother or father along.*
4. *I will never send a person my picture or anything else without first checking with my parents.*
5. *I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable.*
6. *I will talk with my parents so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide upon the time of day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online and appropriate areas for me to visit. I will not access other areas or break these rules without their permission..*
7. *I will not give out my Internet password to anyone (even to my best friends) other than my parents.*
8. *I will check with my parents before downloading or installing software or doing anything that could possibly hurt our computer or jeopardize my family's privacy.*
9. *I will be a good online citizen and not do anything that hurts other people or is against the law.*
10. *I will help my parents understand how to have fun and learn things online and teach them things about the Internet, computers and other technology."* (adapted from Kids Online Safety Rules)

Technology is an essential tool that we use in our work and leisure worlds and we all need to be educated in how to best utilize it for learning and improving our quality of life. Let's all work together to educate our children about the best, fairest, and safest ways to use digital devices and cyberspace privileges both in and out of school. For more information, or if you have questions, concerns, or suggestions about how to strengthen our safe use of technology, please contact Ms Becker, our Technology Coordinator.

Suggestions, comments, questions: please contact us at
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