



Save the Dates

- **Parent Council Applebee's Breakfast:** Sat. 2/2 at 8-10AM: Newark Applebees
- **ESSA Parent Meetings:** 2/7 at 10AM & 5:30PM
- **School Wide Interim ELA and Math Assessments:** Mon 2/11-2/14
- **Half-Day 12:30 Dismissal:** Fri. 2/15 for Professional Development
- **School Closed:** Mon. 2/18 for President's Day
- **8th Grade Graduation Expectations Program begins;** Tues. 2/19
- **Girls Night In Ubuntu Parent Party:** Thurs. 2/21 at 5:30PM
- **End of 2nd Trimester:** Fri. 2/22

Black History Month!



As we move into the month of February and focus on the learning that surrounds Black History month, I would like to encourage us all to use this time to teach our children about the importance of their unique and developing IDENTITIES and how they can use exemplars of the past and present to guide them in who they are and who they will be in the future. As adolescents, so much of our children's time is spent exploring who they are and what they can control about who they are becoming. There are so many influences in the media and in our communities that compete for our children's attention and impact how they think about themselves and how they present themselves to others. Let's use this month's focus to remind our children to use role models like Imhotep, Queen Nzinga, Martin Luther King Jr., El Hajj Malik El Shabazz (Malcolm X), Harriet Tubman, Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou, Dr. Mae Jemison, Michael Jordan, Michelle Obama, and John L. Lewis to emulate and create important dreams.

As parents, guardians, grandparents, and educators, we all have a responsibility and unique opportunity to shape and impact our children's identities. We must take charge and work together to become strong, involved, and powerful influences in our children's lives; more powerful than friends, social media, cell phones, and some of the more negative allure of popular culture. Let's talk to our children more, read with our children more, get to know our children's friends, watch the TV shows and movies that they watch, supervise their use of social media, how they wear their clothes, the books they read, and the music they listen to. We have every right to say NO if necessary, and teach why it is unacceptable to curse, be unkind to others, wear sagging pants when a tie and belt are more appropriate, use weapons instead of words to solve problems, celebrate thug, gangster, or celebrity culture, post a provocative photograph, play video games instead of doing homework, or read books full of sexual references and violence instead of books that expand academic vocabularies and minds.

Let's all take this opportunity to honor, and teach our children about the people in our history and those in our present who are champions of determination, compassion, courage, and peace. Let's remember, that you are your children's most respected heroes and important teachers. Our unconditional belief in our children and our insistence on hard work, self-regulation, and kindness are the most powerful ways that we can help them become the successful young men and women of their dreams.

School Wide Interim Assessments

Don't Give Up.
Focus On The
Reason To
Continue!



During the week of February 11th-14th your child will be taking their third round of ELA and Math Interim Assessments and they will be administered school wide following this schedule:

Monday 2/11: 5th and 8th grade ELA assessment during periods 1-4
 Tuesday 2/12: 6th and 7th grade ELA assessment during periods 1-4
 Wednesday 2/13: 5th and 8th grade Math assessment during periods 1-4
 Thursday 2/14: 6th and 7th grade Math assessment during periods 1-4

By working together, we can make your child's testing experience positive and successful. Here are some suggestions that you can do at home to help your children do their very best on their testing days:

- Make sure your child gets a good night's rest!
- Have your child eat a healthy breakfast at home or at school!
- Make sure your child arrives at school on time!
- Study with your child at home and check their Agenda and homework on a daily basis!
- Gently encourage your child to do his/her best and to keep going even if the work is hard!

During the testing periods, silent and sustained testing conditions will be expected and cell phones will need to be placed in student lockers or given to the teacher to hold. With support from school and home, your child will have a great testing experience this year! The interim assessment experience and results will help us support your child to become better prepared for the PARCC assessment coming up at the end of April and prime them for the rigor of their next grade level, high school, and beyond! Please reach out Mr Ofstad at 973-672-3200 ext. 246 with any questions.

If you know families who live in Newark and would like to enroll their children in our school for the upcoming school year, please let them know that they need to apply directly to our school through completing a Pride Academy application and entering our lottery. Pride Academy does not participate in the One Newark Enrollment System.

ESSA! Every Student Succeeds Act

At Pride Academy Charter School, ESSA is more than just a law, it's our mission. We eagerly seek opportunities to work together with scholars, teachers, parents, and families to help our students to grow academically and achieve success. The Every Student Succeeds Act creates opportunities for our school to set goals and benchmarks to work towards using test scores and other indicators of student performance to ensure all of our scholars' success.

As always, Pride Academy continues to value our parents and families as partners in education who provide insights, guidance, and support as we work to help their children grow academically. Earlier this year, we had our first "Have Your Say" Meeting, which serves as Pride's ESSA Parent Meeting. During this meeting, we shared our PAARC test results and invited parents to ask questions, make comments, and offer suggestions of ways that we can continue to support them as they strive to provide their children with the best educational opportunities. Those suggestions were taken, and are guiding future meetings. We hope that families will take advantage of the "Have Your Say" meeting opportunities listed below, as we work to provide a voice and support to all members of our Pride Academy Charter School community.

Thursday, February 7th: 10am "Have Your Say" Morning Meeting in order to serve families whose work, school, and life schedules make attending evening meetings difficult. This meeting will have two focuses: 1) Provide families with a "Have Your Say" Meeting opportunity and 2) Provide information for families who are not native English language speakers. We will have staff who can provide information in Spanish and Creole available for the meeting. If you need information in another language, please reach out to Ms. Dumenigo so that we can work to support you.

Thursday, February 7th: 5:30pm "Have Your Say" Parent Meeting will work to provide information for families who are not native English language speakers. We will have staff who can provide information in Spanish and Creole available for the meeting. If you need information in another language, please reach out to Ms. Dumenigo so that we can best support you.

Coming Soon: Date TBD: NEW MATH "Have Your Say" Meeting will respond to parents' request to have a parent tutorial on the "New Math", so that parents can best support their children with math homework.

CANCER AWARENESS DRESS DOWN DAY!

*"The heart of the giver makes the gift dear and precious,"
– Martin Luther*

This quote speaks volumes to the heart of so many of our scholars, but also of one Pride scholar in particular. Last month, seventh grader, Jahmaad Chavis, made a special request that we found compelling! He shared that his birthday was on Friday, February 15th. He said that he would love for that Friday to be a dress down day to honor and celebrate his cousin, and Pride alumni, who is currently battling cancer. Not only were we moved by this demonstration of love, but also impressed by the thoughtful planning that went behind his request. Jahmaad thought of how the color pink represented breast cancer, and then researched what color represented the type of cancer that his cousin had. After the sharing of different ideas, we decided that all scholars would have the opportunity to wear the color that represented a type of cancer that impacted their families.

Scholars will be invited to participate in the special Cancer Awareness Dress Down Day on Friday, February 15th. They will be asked to contribute \$2 to dress down. All proceeds will go to support the Valerie Fund, which is a non-profit that helps children and their families fighting cancer. The Valerie Fund helped Jahmaad's cousin finish his last year at Pride Academy by supporting him with a robot that allowed him to participate in Pride classes with his classmates and teachers when he was well enough to participate. We hope that all of our scholars will be able to celebrate Jahmaad's birthday by supporting Cancer Awareness.



<https://www.thevaleriefund.org/>

Spotlight on Safety from the Desk of Ms Brower....



#3 Spotlight on Safety: Distinguishing Between Conflict and Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB)

The greatest distinction between conflict and bullying lies in the balance of power involved. Conflict is a mutually competitive or opposing action or engagement, including a disagreement, an argument or a fight. There is no significant imbalance of power, merely two or more individuals who are not getting along and who may, unfortunately, allow that disagreement to escalate to a physical level. Conflict is a normal part of human development. Our role is to help students manage conflict in a manner that is peaceful, safe and respectful to all involved. Fighting is never permitted.

Bullying is one-sided, where one or more students are victims of one or more person's aggression, which is intended to physically or emotionally hurt the victim(s). Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people. Bullying behaviors may fall into one or more of the following categories:

1. Verbal – Includes taunting, name calling, inappropriate sexual behavior or comments, embarrassing someone in public, malicious teasing or making threats;
2. Psychological – Includes spreading rumors, purposefully excluding people from activities, breaking up friendships.
3. Physical – Includes hitting, punching, shoving, spitting, tripping, making rude or threatening gestures or taking personal belongings
4. Cyberbullying – Includes using the Internet, mobile phone or other digital technologies to harm others.

If students have a physical conflict and one student has a significant physical advantage over the other is that automatically considered an incident of bullying? No. It could be, but whether an incident is considered HIB or non-HIB bullying, or merely a conflict depends on the circumstances uncovered during the investigation. Please refer any student who may be injured in a physical conflict to the nurse immediately, forward witness statement and a completed referral form to Ms. Brower, Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Lowry or another administrator.

What if the victim starts the conflict? This sometimes occurs. All students involved in physical conflicts or incidents of bullying, both HIB and non-HIB should be referred to Ms. Brower, District Anti-Bullying Coordinator. In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights (ABBR) the students are offered counseling through the school Social Workers. Students also receive anti-bullying education, social skills and conflict management strategies and support.

Clarify and strengthen the standards and procedures for preventing, reporting, investigating and responding to incidents of HIB of students that occur on school grounds and off school grounds under specified circumstances;

- Respond to research on the incidence, prevalence and effects of HIB that has emerged since the adoption of the original HIB laws adopted in 2002 and amended in 2007 and 2008;
- Establish clearer standards for the definition of HIB;
- Use and better manage existing resources to increase school safety;
- Reduce the risk of suicide due to HIB.

Every member of the school community plays a role in making sure our children have a safe environment in which to learn. The ABBR spells out the specific roles and responsibilities of the school staff, administrators, volunteers and contracted service providers in addressing HIB.

It is vital that you are clear about how you should respond. It is the law.

