



Save the Dates

- **End of Trimester 2:** Fri 3/5
- **Trimester 3 Begins:** Mon 3/8
- **Parent Zoom Lounge:** Wed. 3/10 at 6:00PM. Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89570564468?pwd=cDJMSIRER253ZjhyZmxqY01uenpnUT09>
- **School Closed:** Fri 3/12 for a CARE DAY for Mental/Emotional Health and well-being for students and staff
- **Report Cards Distributed:** Thurs. 3/18
- **Parent-Teacher Zoom Conferences:** Mon 3/22 –Thurs 3/25
- **8th Grade Graduation Pictures:** 3/29 1PM-6PM



PARENT SURVEY

Please take the opportunity to complete this year's Parent Survey which will be distributed last week via email this month! Your candid and constructive feedback will be shared with the Board of Trustees and with our administration and faculty as we reflect on our success and set goals for continued improvement and growth as a school community.

No One Eats Alone by Ms Walker!

Pride Academy Charter School is thrilled to announce its new partnership with WellCare Health Plans NJ. Through this endeavor, Pride Academy will be offering all of its students social and emotional learning opportunities from the *No One Eats Alone* curriculum.

This curriculum is specifically designed to support students in developing healthy socializing skills during times of isolation presented by COVID-19 and cultivates the skills needed for students to have courageous conversations. The program will launch on **Friday, March 5, 2021**, with a video announcement that will be presented in all homerooms. Following the announcement, classes will be visited on Mondays and Fridays during the students' SEL period by our school Social Workers, Ms. Walker and Mr. Charles.

Ms. Walker and Mr. Charles will be covering a variety of topics in order to support the wellbeing of all students during virtual learning and beyond. We are excited about the endless possibilities for student social and emotional growth as a result of this new program. Below is a description of the program goals and objectives from the creators of the program:

"Our 2021 version of No One Eats Alone® has been completely rewritten to be more attuned to teaching virtually and to addressing the needs of students who are struggling with social isolation as never before, struggling with their own mental health challenges, and questioning the uncertainty about their future. To ensure they emerge as healthy young adults, we must all take responsibility for helping them get through this period and see the future as brighter, more compassionate and more enlightened."

With the support of WellCare Health Plans NJ and our talented and dedicated staff, Pride Academy will continue to work tirelessly to meet both the academic needs of our students and their families and the needs of their social and emotional wellness.

If you have further questions about the program please reach out to our School Social Workers:

Ms. Walker (7th and 8th): twalker@prideacs.org and Mr. Charles (5th and 6th): jcharles@prideacs.org

Report Card Conferences

Some tips to help prepare for Report Card distribution on **Thursday, March 18th** and parent-teacher conferences the week of **March 22nd**:

1. **Finding time to meet may be more difficult than usual.** You may have more to juggle these days, between your job, your child's learning, and other family demands. Your child's teacher is probably juggling many of the same things. If none of the proposed conference times work for you, let the teacher know. Share some times that are better for you.
2. **You have essential information to share with your child's teacher.** During this time of at home learning, you may be seeing strengths and struggles the teacher doesn't see. The more you share with your child's teacher the more you can work together to help your child thrive. Your child's teacher may also ask you for specific feedback on their remote learning instruction. Be honest about what's working and what isn't.
3. **All questions are good questions.** You probably have questions about your child's academic progress and also about the new ways of learning this year — from technology to schedules. You might want the teacher to show you how to get into Google Classroom or another tool. It's OK to ask about those things, too.
4. **Building a relationship with your child's teacher is important — even at a distance.** Social distancing can make it feel harder to connect with your child's teacher. This conference might be your only chance to talk one-on-one. Use this meeting as an opportunity to get to know your child's teacher/advisor.
5. **This is all new for your child's teacher, too.** Teachers are still figuring out how best to teach and engage your child in learning during a pandemic. They'll appreciate hearing about any bright spots so far. Please consider thanking them for all they are doing during this unprecedented time.

Keeping You, Your Loved Ones, and Our School Safe!

Here at Pride, we are continuing to take actions to prepare the school building and practice actions that reduce the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 to prepare for our potential April 19th Phase 1 in-person learning program. We know that the virus that causes COVID-19 is mostly spread during close contact by respiratory droplets released when people talk, sing, breathe, cough or sneeze. The virus that causes COVID-19 can sometimes be spread through the air by airborne transmission or through touching contaminated surfaces or objects. There for, personal prevention practices and environmental cleaning and disinfections are important principles that we will implement here at Pride.

In order to keep you and your families safe and reach our goal to begin our Phase 1 in-person program, it is important to adopt and consistently implement actions to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our households, community and school. This means that we all must take actions to protect ourselves and others where we live, work, learn and play.

These practices are **REQUIRED** within the school building at all times:

- ♥ Wearing masks appropriately, covering the nose at all times
- ♥ Staying home when sick with fever and cold/flu-like symptoms
- ♥ Washing and/or sanitizing hands frequently
- ♥ Social distancing – 6 feet apart

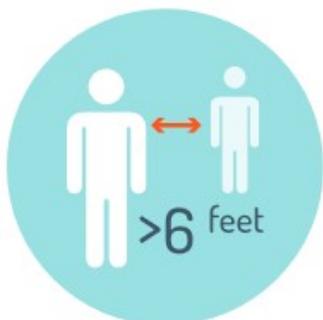


This action is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED**:

- ♥ As soon as you are eligible, get your **COVID-19 Vaccination**

Please read the information below and the CDC COVID-19 brochure attached to this newsletter.

Any questions or concerns: Please reach out to Nurse Evans 973-672-3200 ext. 202 or Mrs. Thomas ext. 201



“Vaccines (shots) are one of the tools we have to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Vaccines are one of the most effective tools to protect your health and prevent disease. Vaccines work with your body’s natural defenses so your body will be ready to fight the virus, if you are exposed (also called immunity). **Studies show that COVID-19 vaccines are very effective at keeping you from getting COVID-19. Experts also think that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19.**

These vaccines cannot give you the disease itself. **The vaccines are safe.** All the COVID-19 vaccines that are being used have gone through the same safety tests and meet the same standards as any other vaccines produced through the years. Different types of COVID-19 vaccines will be available. Most of these vaccines are given in two shots, one at a time and spaced apart. The first shot gets your body ready. The second shot is given at least three weeks later to make sure you have full protection. **If you are told you need two shots, make sure that you get both of them. The vaccines may work in slightly different ways, but all types of the vaccines will help protect you.**

Even after you get your vaccine, **you will need to keep wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth, washing your hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from other people you do not live with.** This gives you and others the best protection from catching the virus. Right now, experts don’t know how long the vaccine will protect you, so it’s a good idea to continue following the guidelines from CDC and your health department. We also know not everyone will be able to get vaccinated right away, so it’s still important to protect yourself and others.”

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/vaccines/facts-covid-vaccines-english-508.pdf> or <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/vaccines/facts-covid-vaccines-spanish-508.pdf>

#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.

