



Save the Dates

- **Staff Appreciation Week:**
Mon. May 3rd-Fri. May 7th
- **LOL! Cinco de Mayo Friendship Party:** **Wed. May 5th 7:00PM**
- **Change of Schedule: School Closed and No Remote Classes:** **May 14th**. All students and staff are encouraged to use this day as a mental health/wellbeing day of CARE and SELF-CARE.
- **A-Sync Day:** **Fri. May 21st**. More information to follow.
- **School Closed Memorial Day:** **Mon. May 31st**

Pride Academy Read-A-Thon Results!



Our first Read-A-Thon was a great success! Over the course of 16 days, Pride Academy Scholars recorded 17,183 minutes of reading and raised \$4,485 dollars.

Stand-Out Scholars that went above and beyond reading the most minutes and raising the most funds are 5th grader Sydney Brown from the Gandhi Team who raised \$1,085 and Rachel Olarinde who read a "whopping" 10,515 minutes!

Although we did not reach our goal of raising \$20,000, we learned that it is a goal that is absolutely within our reach when we try again next year. The minutes read and the funds donated were achieved with only 86 students registered. This is less than 25% of our school population. Of the 86 scholars registered, only 25 received donations. We hope that when we are altogether and in-person next year, we will be able to really motivate and incentivize our scholars and families to put in the effort to reach our \$20,000 goal!

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Ms. Dumenigo by email at rdumenigo@prideacs.org or text or call her at 862-400-7293.

Student Activities Coming up in May!

POWER HOUR+ with Ms. Brower

- ✓ **LOL! Poetry / Art Contest on "Portraits"** Mon. May 3rd - 14th
- ✓ **LOL! Cinco de Mayo Friendship Party** Wed. May 5th @ 7pm
- ✓ **LOL! Art Contest on "Create Your Own SuperHero"** May 17th - 28th



Ms. Brower is hosting bi-weekly open Zoom meetings on Tuesdays for 5th & 6th Grades, and Thursdays for 7th & 8th Grades, from 6-7:30 p.m. to support students who would benefit from a structured time during which to complete assignments.

Teachers recommend students they would like to participate and contact parents to share their recommendation with you for your agreement and support for your child to attend these evening sessions.

Students who plan to attend, must arrive on time, remain on camera, and attend the full session. During the session, in order to receive credit points for attending, students are expected to work diligently and submit completed work at the end of the session. Please reach out to Ms Brower at rbrower@prideacs.org with any questions.

FREE COVID-19 TESTING
Open to Pride Academy Staff, Students, and their Families!

Where?	When?
Pride Academy Charter School 117 Elmwood Ave., East Orange NJ access on Shepard Ave at the Glass Door Entrance.	Wed. April 28th: 11:30AM- 3:30PM Wed. May 5th: 11:30AM- 3:30PM Wed. May 12th: 11:30AM- 3:30PM Wed. May 19th: 11:30AM- 3:30PM Wed. May 26th: 11:30AM- 3:30PM

Everyone Tested Regardless of Insurance
Nasal Swab Testing & Quality Laboratory Service

Please Pre-Register using the link below: [CLICK HERE](#)

Save Time & Text **Ruffin1** to 34947 to Set Up Your Patient Portal & Receive Your Test Results (3-5 days For Results)



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:

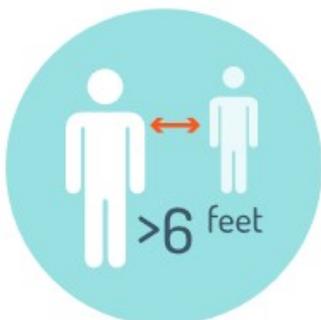
- ♥ Wearing masks appropriately, covering the nose at all times
- ♥ Staying home when sick with fever and cold/flu-like symptoms
- ♥ Washing and/or sanitizing hands frequently
- ♥ Social distancing – 6 feet apart



This action is STRONGLY RECOMMENDED:

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

Please read the information below and reach out to Nurse Evans 973-672-3200 ext. 202 or Mrs. Thomas ext. 201 with any questions or concerns.



“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>



#7 Spotlight on Safety: **The Language of Respect**

What do you do when your child makes a statement that is biased or hateful, or whose language or behavior is otherwise offensive?

There are many factors to consider in this type of situation. Does your child fully comprehend the impact and meaning of his or her words and actions? Is the remark or action directed at an adult or peer? Is it done innocently or purposefully? Is it intended to garner a laugh or power? No matter what the response to the above questions may ultimately be, your response is critical in establishing and reinforcing practice of Pride Academy's core values and expectations for school and classroom climate. Use the following guidelines, adapted from a GLSEN Quick Reference guide on addressing bias and disrespect:

Interrupt: Speak up against biased language and disrespectful behavior *in the moment, every single time you witness it.*

Try saying, "That phrase /behavior is hurtful and offensive to me and others. Could you find another way to say/do that?" This establishes with witnesses who may have overheard the remark or witnessed the behavior and been offended that it is not repeated.

Question: Ask simple questions to find out why the comment or behavior happened and how you can best address the situation.

Try asking, "What made you say/do that? What do you mean by it? Can you please tell me more?"

Educate: Explain why a term, phrase, or behavior, such as mimicking a speech impediment or making fun of a peer is offensive. Sometimes statements are made out of ignorance or lack of exposure to diverse personalities or perspectives.

Try asking, "Do you know the history of that word or why your actions could be offensive to someone?"

Echo: If someone else speaks up against bias remarks, thank him or her and reiterate the anti-bias, anti-disrespect, anti-core values message. One voice is a powerful start. Many voices together create change.

Try saying, "Thanks for speaking up. I agree that word/behavior is disrespectful and offensive and we shouldn't use/do it."

Bias remarks or disrespect can provide an opportunity for meaningful dialogue and learning that will benefit our children for a lifetime.





Social Media and Middle School Brains!

As we continue to support our children in their use of social media and in making healthy and safe decisions with their use of their devices and access, please take time to read the following article posted in Psychology Today, by Melanie Hempe, RN.

1. **“Social media was not designed for them.** A tween's underdeveloped frontal cortex can't manage the distraction nor the temptations that come with social media use. While you start teaching responsible use of tech now, *know that you will not be able to teach the maturity that social media requires.* Like trying to make clothes fit that are way too big, they *will* use social media inappropriately until they are older and it fits them better.
2. **Social media is an entertainment technology.** It does not make your child smarter or more prepared for real life or a future job; nor is it necessary for healthy social development. It is pure entertainment attached to a [marketing](#) platform extracting bits and pieces of personal information and preferences from your child every time they use it, not to mention hours of their time and attention.
3. **A tween's “more is better” mentality is a dangerous match for social media.** Do they really have 1,456 friends? Do they really need to be on it nine hours a day? Social media allows (and encourages) them to overdo their friend connections like they tend to overdo other things in their lives.
4. **Social media is an addictive form of screen entertainment.** And, like [video game addiction](#), early use can set up future [addiction](#) patterns and habits.
5. **Social media replaces learning the hard social “work” of dealing face-to-face with peers**, a skill that they will need to practice to be successful in real life.
6. **Social media can cause teens to lose connection with family and instead view “friends” as their foundation.** Since the [cognitive](#) brain is still being formed, the need for your teen to be attached to your family is just as important now as when they were younger. Make sure that [attachment](#) is strong. While they need attachments to their friends, they need healthy family attachment more.
7. **Social media use represents lost potential for teens.** While one can argue that there are certain benefits of social media for teens, the costs are very high during the teen years when their brain development is operating at peak performance for learning new things. It is easy for teens to waste too much of their time and too much of their brain in a digital world. We know from many studies that it is nearly impossible for them to balance it all.

How Can Kids Slow Down? First, we need to *slow down* and rethink what we are allowing our kids to do. We need to understand the world of social media and how teens use it differently from adults. Here are a few tips that work well for many parents.

1. **Delay access.** The longer parents delay access, the more time a child will have to mature so that he or she can use technology more wisely as a young adult. Delaying access also places a greater importance on developing personal authentic relationships first.
2. **Follow their accounts.** Social media privacy is a lie: Nothing is private in the digital world, and so it should not be private to parents. Make sure privacy settings are in place but know that those settings can give you a false sense of security. Encourage your teen to have private conversations in person or via a verbal phone call instead if they don't want you to read it on social media.
3. **Create family accounts.** Create family accounts instead of individual teen accounts. This allows kids to keep up with friends in a safer social media [environment](#).
4. **Allow social media only on large screens.** Allow your teens to only use their social media accounts on home computers or laptops in plain view, this way they will use it less. When it is used on a small private phone screen they can put in their pocket there are more potential problems with reckless use. The more secret the access, the more potential for bad choices.
5. **Keep a sharp eye on the clock; they will not.** Do you know how much time your child spends on social media a day? Be aware of this, and reduce the amount of time your child is on social media across all platforms. The average teen spends nine hours a day connected to social media. Instead, set one time each day for three days a week for your child to check their social media. Do they benefit from more time than that?
6. **Plan face-to-face time with their friends.** Remember that they don't need 842 friends; four-to-six close friends are enough for healthy social development. Help them learn how to plan real, in-person, social get-togethers such as a leave-phones-at-the-door party, a home movie night, bowling, board games, cooking pizza, or hosting a bonfire. They crave these social gatherings so encourage them to invite friends over and help them (as needed) to organize the event.” Please visit the following website for more information: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/mental-wealth/201703/why-social-media-is-not-smart-middle-school-kids>