



Black History Month!

Save the Dates

- **Football with the Fellas Parent Party: Wed. 2/1 5:30pm**
- **School Wide Interim ELA and Math Assessments: Mon 2/6-2/9**
- **Parent Council Meeting: Thurs 2/9 at 5:30pm**
- **Half Day Dismissal: Fri. 2/10 for Professional Development**
- **Board Meeting: Wed. 2/15 at 6:00PM**
- **End of Trimester 2: Fri. 2/17**
- **School Closed: Mon. 2/20 for President's Day**

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, inspire, and create BIG and 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, facebook, 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; and supervise their use of social media and choices in the words they speak, 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 us all take this opportunity to remember, 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.

Spotlight on Parenting!



Mr. Chike Akua is a leading authority on increasing the achievement of today's students and as a recognized master teacher, he has been an invited keynote presenter at regional and national conferences, school systems, colleges and universities. With a culturally relevant approach toward closing the achievement gap, he is known for his motivational presentations and compelling messages to our youth. Mr. Akua is also the author of a book called Parent Power! : The Keys To Your Child's Academic & Social Success. The book is designed to assist parents in ensuring that their children develop a positive, empowering and authentic identity rooted in the values of honesty, respect and responsibility, and equipping them with the skills, knowledge and mindsets to navigate peer relationships, the influences of media, and relationships with their elders. The following are ParentPower activities that Mr. Akua suggests at the end of the Chapter 1 on Identity: *Helping Your Children Understand Who They Are* and Chapter 2 on History: *The Power of Your Personal and Collective Story*:





1. "If you don't already know, find out what your first and last name means and also the names of your children.
2. What character traits do you want your children to display?
3. Create a Family Mission Statement.
4. Research your family history with your children.
5. Build a family library by purchasing a book to read or DVD to view at least once a month.
6. Research the history of Black people in the city or town you live in. Schedule time to visit important sites or museums that share this information." (ParentPower 2012, pp. 20 and 32)



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.

Growing Tree Fundraising Campaign by Ms Dumenigo!



-  BRONZE LEAF - \$100
-  SILVER LEAF - \$250
-  GOLD LEAF - \$500
-  FOUNDATION STONE - \$1,000

Additional brochures are available upon request!

This month, Pride Academy will be launching a new fundraising campaign. As you know, we have been long awaiting the completion of our new wing. The goal of the project was to provide additional classrooms, offices, and an additional meeting place for our community events. The goal has always been not to grow in number, but to better serve our children. This work has become possible through the efforts of Shining Schools, Inc, which is a non-profit organization that was created to support the needs of Pride Academy Charter School.

In order to keep the PRIDE growing, Pride Academy will be working with Shining Schools, Inc. on a "Growing Tree Project". Shining Schools is reaching out to individuals, families, businesses, corporations, and community leaders to make a contribution that will "KEEP PRIDE GROWING" and leave a lasting impression on the future of Pride Academy Charter School. Donations will be recognized with a donor name engraved on the tree's leaves and stones. The Growing Tree will be displayed prominently in the main entrance of our school's new wing.

All of our families will shortly be receiving a Giving Tree brochure in the mail. This will give you the opportunity to consider becoming a donor. More importantly, we hope that this campaign will give you an opportunity to introduce family, friends, and your community connections to the service that Pride Academy is providing for our children and the community as a whole.

Please join us in the work of seeking donors. If any families know of any potential donors or business sponsors, please reach out to Ms. Dumenigo at 973-672-3200 ext. 210 or by email at rdumenigo@prideacs.org so that we can include your contacts in our mailing list.

School Wide Interim Assessments by Mr. Ofstad!

During the week of February 6th-9th, 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 2/6: 5th and 8th grade ELA assessment during periods 1-4
- Tuesday 2/7: 6th and 7th grade ELA assessment during periods 1-4
- Wednesday 2/8: 5th and 8th grade Math assessment during periods 1-4
- Thursday 2/9: 6th and 7th grade Math assessment during periods 1-4

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



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 be collected by the teacher and kept in a safe place in the classroom. 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.

#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.

