

# Parent Partnerships

Issue 3 December, 2022



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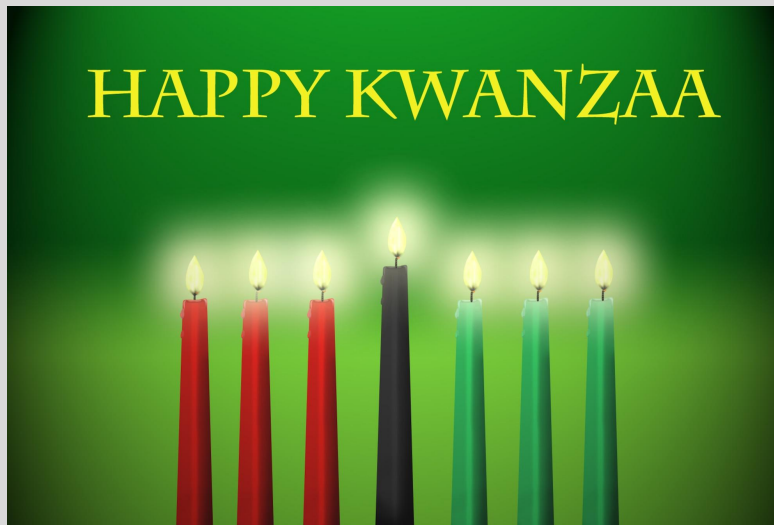
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## Save these December Dates!

Tuesday 13th and Wednesday 14th	School Wide Interim Assessment #2 (please ensure your children get a good night's rest, arrive at school on time, eat a nourishing breakfast and encourage them to be determined to complete each question and do their very best).
Tuesday 13th and Thursday 15th	<p>In-Person Report Card Conferences from 3:35-6:00PM</p> <p>***Parents of students with last names starting with letters between A-I: come on Tuesday 12/13th</p> <p>***Parents of students with last names starting with letters between J-Z: come on Thursday 12/15th</p> <p>Students and parents attending conference nights are required to arrive with and wear masks while in the building.</p>
Friday 16th	Half Day 12:30 Dismissal for Students: Professional Development for teachers
Thursday 22nd	Kwanzaa In-Person Celebration at 5:30pm
Friday 23rd	Half Day 12:30 Dismissal Philanthropy Day / Last Day before Winter Break
Tuesday Jan. 3rd	School Re-opens



## Kwanzaa by Mrs Wilson

Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African cultural holiday, which celebrates family, community and culture. It is celebrated from December 26th to January 1st and its origins are in the first harvest celebrations of Africa from which it takes its name. The name Kwanzaa is derived from the phrase "matunda ya kwanza" which means "first fruits" in Swahili, a Pan-African language which is the most widely spoken African language.

- ❖ Kwanzaa was first created to reaffirm and restore our rootedness in African culture. It is, therefore, an expression of recovery and reconstruction of African culture.
- ❖ Secondly, Kwanzaa was created to serve as a regular communal celebration to reaffirm and reinforce the bonds between us as a people. It was designed to be an ingathering to strengthen community and reaffirm common identity, purpose and direction as a people and a world community.
- ❖ Thirdly, Kwanzaa was created to introduce and reinforce the Nguzo Saba (the Seven Principles.) These seven communitarian African values are: Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba, (Creativity), and Imani (Faith).

On **Thursday, December 23rd at 5:30pm**, Pride Academy will host our annual Kwanzaa Celebration in-person in the Great Room! The theme for Kwanzaa this year will be centered on Strong Roots in Nguzo Saba and our keynote speaker will be Rev. Lee from the Imani Baptist Church. We will be having performances from the Pride African Dance Ensemble, and Dreamality Choir, as well as the traditional lighting of the Kinara. We look forward to sharing the spirit of peace, unity and community as we celebrate each other and appreciate our gifts and talents. as the traditional lighting of the Kinara.



## Report Card Parent-Teacher Conferences & Pick-Up

Report Cards will be distributed during Parent-Teacher Conferences on Tuesday 12/13 or Thursday 12/15 between 3:35-6:00PM. Parents with last names starting with A-I should try to attend on Tuesday 13th and parents with last names starting with J-Z attend on Thursday. Some tips and suggestions as report card conference nights approach:

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, please let the teacher know so that you can come up with a mutually convenient time to meet.
2. **You have essential information to share with your child's teacher.** 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 instruction. Please share what's working and what isn't.
3. **All questions are good questions.** You may have questions about your child's academic skills and progress and social-emotional well-being. You might want the teacher to show you how to get into PowerSchool, Schoolgy or another online platform. It's OK to ask about those things, too.
4. **Building a relationship with your child's teacher.** Use this meeting as a time to share your needs and also any positives. Teachers will appreciate your acknowledgement of their hard work and care for your children.

## School Laptop Loaners for Home Use

**School Laptop Loaners for Home Use:** Please note the times for distribution of loaner laptops for home use. If students already have their own personal-use laptop at home that they can use to effectively complete school work, parents are not required to sign out a school home use loaner laptop.

**Monday-Friday: 3:30PM-5:00PM** or please email Mrs Thomas at [fthomas@prideacs.org](mailto:fthomas@prideacs.org) to set up a time that fits with your schedule.



## Keeping Everyone Safe in School and at Home!

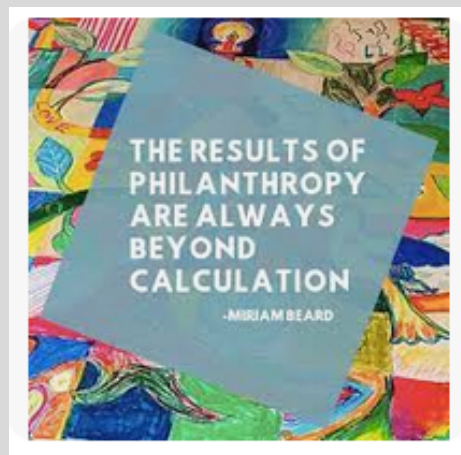
Here at Pride, we are continuing to take actions that reduce the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 so that we can all stay in school every day! We know that the virus that causes COVID-19 is mostly spread during close contact by respiratory droplets released when people talk, sing, breathe, cough or sneeze. In addition to the steps that we are taking as school with regard to increasing ventilation, air purification in classrooms and common areas, and cleaning and disinfection of frequently used surfaces, there are personal prevention practices that all students and staff are still required to follow. These include the following:

- ❖ Wearing medical-grade masks appropriately, covering the nose and mouth at all times. Students must arrive at school with a mask and bring extra masks to keep in their book bags or lockers.
- ❖ Staying home when sick with fever and cold/flu-like symptoms
- ❖ Washing and/or sanitizing hands frequently

These actions are **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED**:

- ❖ As soon as you and your children are eligible, get your COVID-19 Vaccination and up-to-date boosters.

Information about vaccinations can be found [HERE](#).



## Philanthropy Day! by Ms Dumenigo

Active service has always been an integral part of Pride Academy Charter School's mission and vision. We work to empower our scholars to see themselves as leaders and change agents in their communities. They engage in a wide variety of service projects through their participation in school-wide food drives, service-learning classroom activities, and Project Pride. One of the major community service events at Pride Academy is our annual Philanthropy Day. On this day, our students learn about the importance of active service through presentations, lessons, guest speakers, and by actively engaging in a project that serves others.

On Friday, December 23rd, Philanthropy Day will continue the tradition of service to others in need in our community through the following activities.

- ❖ 5th Grade will be making Hot Cocoa Gift Jars for seniors at the East Orange Senior Center.
- ❖ 6th Grade will be preparing notes and gifts for homeless veterans through New Hope Village 4 Veterans in Irvington.
- ❖ 7th Grade will be making Movie Night Treat Bags for residents of the Isaiah House Shelter in East Orange
- ❖ 8th Grade will be wrapping gifts of warm winter items for St. John the Divine, a homeless soup kitchen in Newark.

### **FAMILY PHILANTHROPY!**

Parents and families are the first and most important teachers in every child's life. Please consider encouraging the values of giving and service in your children by implementing some of the strategies below.

- ❖ Support Philanthropy Day by donating warm hats, gloves, scarves, and socks for our service projects.
- ❖ Join your child at Pride Academy during Philanthropy. Be part of our special day of service and work side by side with your child as they work on their assigned community service project. Please reach out to Ms Dumenigo at 973-672-3200 ext. 210 for more details.
- ❖ Find a cause that is important to you and your child, and make a small donation to that cause. For example, if your child loves animals, you might want to make a family donation to an animal rescue shelter.
- ❖ Learn about causes that affect your family and loved ones. If your family has someone who struggles with a health issue, find an organization that you can connect with and do something to serve that cause. For example, BJ's Asthma Walk in Elmwood Park scheduled every May, is a great way to help people in your own family and community learn more about asthma awareness.
- ❖ If you have a family member who is a veteran, you can write and/or send a holiday card to:

A Recovering American Soldier

C/O Walter Reed Army Medical Center

6900 Georgia Avenue NW Washington D.C. 20307-5001



# Nutrition News!



Please visit our [Pride Academy school website](#) for information about our Breakfast and Lunch program and nutrition services. Students should continue to order their breakfast/lunch via an online portal on a monthly basis. If you would like to support them in their ordering, please review this [tutorial](#) shared by Ms Oates, our Main Office Coordinator.

## December Menus:

 [Breakfast Menu](#)

 [Lunch Menu](#)

## How To Help Your Child Choose Foods Wisely By: Rosanne Rust, MS, RD, LDN

"By modeling healthy living for a children, adults not only improve their own personal wellness, but help set the stage for the whole family's lifestyle habits," states Mary Kay Sawyer-Morse, PhD, RD, a professional speaker, author and co-owner of a Texas-based company that provides nutrition and health in-services and seminars to diverse industries."

[https://www.schoolnutritionandfitness.com/data/pdf/parent\\_articles/HowToHelpYourChildChooseFoodsWisely.pdf](https://www.schoolnutritionandfitness.com/data/pdf/parent_articles/HowToHelpYourChildChooseFoodsWisely.pdf)



<https://www.schoolnutritionandfitness.com/index.php?sid=1659980115310&page=asknutri>



## Spotlight on Safety from Ms Brower!

### Spotlight on Safety: The Effects of Bullying

Each month, this column will feature information, articles, and links to resources to increase understanding of New Jersey's Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights (ABBR) statute and support practices that promote a safe and positive school climate at Pride. It is our goal to ensure all school staff, administrators, volunteers and contracted service providers develop the expertise required to recognize, prevent and respond appropriately to incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Bullying can result in serious psychological and behavioral effects such as low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, suicide, violence, and criminal behavior. It may also manifest in the form of vague physical ailments such as headaches, dizziness, and stomach aches, or impaired academic performance (Olweus, 1994). Feeling safe in school powerfully promotes student learning and healthy development (Devine and Cohen, 2007). Bullying, which is a serious impediment to school safety, negatively affects the climate of a school, disrupts the learning environment and diminishes student achievement among students who are bullied and among students who engage in bullying. Student absenteeism increases when bullying is a concern. In a national survey, 30% of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) students reported missing at least one day of school in the past month compared to 8.0% for the general student population (GLSEN, 2009).

- ❖ Students who witness bullying can become fearful and develop the belief that the adults are not in control or are uncaring. It is essential that you respond immediately if you suspect bullying or if you become aware of a situation that involves repeated conflict or may escalate into a physical altercation or bullying.
- ❖ Our teachers pay close attention to the language and social dynamics in our classrooms. They model our core values and talk about them daily with our students. They take advantage of "teachable moments" such as the beginning of group activities, during class meetings, and before playing games or changing seats to remind students of the importance of treating everyone with respect and making every member of the Pride family feel welcome.
- ❖ 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 our children 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.

**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 are 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.

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 we are clear about how we should respond. It is the law.

Please reach out to Ms Brower or Mrs. Thomas if you have questions or concerns about any incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Other useful NJDOE web resources for parents addressing a range of related topics include the following: The Keeping Our Kids Safe, Healthy, and in School website <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/sandp/> and The Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) web page <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib>



## Questions and Suggestions?

Your thoughts, questions and feedback are important to us. Please reach out to Mrs Thomas via email at [ftomas@prideacs.org](mailto:ftomas@prideacs.org) or call at 973-672-3200 ext. 201 if you would like to set up a time to meet or share about your experience at Pride so far this year.