

Parent Partnerships

Issue 1 October, 2022



Rooted in PRIDE!

Our Theme and Logo for the 2022-2023 School Year

This year, our school-wide shared and unifying logo and theme is “Rooted in PRIDE”. Our scholars will use this phrase as the header for their work and it is reflected in our Pride Scholar Chart design, our words and actions and the intentional selection of programs and initiatives that will continue to help our scholars and school be successful and safe! Mrs Wilson, co-founder of our school, Dean of Academics, and 7th/8th grade Science teacher designed the logo and describes the symbolism and meaning as follows:

“Since our theme is “Rooted in PRIDE,” I thought about the Boabab tree and the Banyan trees. The boabab tree is called the “tree of life” because it contains most of the resources needed for the community. Often community meetings were held in its shade. Often the thick trunk was hollowed out to store food & water. Fun fact, the tree of life at Disney that represents all animals being interconnected in the Circle of Life, was inspired by it. The banyan tree is found in parts of Africa and India and has a very intricate root system that continues to branch out and run deep. This image reminded me of the power of roots and our core values being just that- essentially all interconnected and the power of influence they have to inspire our scholars, families and us to be better humans and achievers. You’ll notice, too, the trunk in the image above has hands intertwined and branching out into the leaves to represent our bond and spirit of community.”

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Rooted in PRIDE!

Save the Dates!

Tuesday, October 4th	5th & 6th Grade trip to Bronx Zoo
Wednesday, October 5th	7th & 8th Grade trip to Bronx Zoo
Friday, October 7th	Healthy Kids Day / Half Day 12:30PM Dismissal
Monday, October 10th	No School in observance of Indigenous People's Day
Tuesday, October 18th	In-Person Progress Report Parent Conferences 3:30PM to 6PM (For Parents with last names ending with A-I)
Thursday, October 20th	In-Person Progress Report Parent Conferences 3:30PM to 6PM (For Parents with last names ending with J-Z)
Tuesday, October 25th	Class of '22 Project Pride Service Project Chipotle Fundraiser 4:00PM-8:00PM
Friday, October 28th	Haunting Pride with Positivity Dress Down Day (See details in Respect Month article.)



Respect Month!

Pride Academy Charter School joins all other New Jersey public schools during the first week of October to address the issue of bullying and address issues related to violence and vandalism during the third week of October. Because “RESPECT” is a core value and an integral part of our school community, Pride Academy typically spends the entire month focusing on issues connected to respect. This year, the Class of 2023 will be spearheading events as part of the winning Project Pride proposal developed by Kaiden Dunlap at the end of last year. His proposal focused on developing and implementing an anti-smoking, anti-vaping, and anti-marijuana use campaign. To that end, Kaiden worked with other members of the Class of 2023 during one afternoon over the summer to develop a theme and plan events. Together, they came up with the theme **“Smoking Haunts You For Life.”** (See planned events below.)

Throughout the month we will have special lessons, and activities that remind us of how we can combat bullying by living the core value of respect.

- ❖ **Mr. Altamirano, Ms. Farl and Mr. Charles will incorporate lessons during PE/Health classes on a variety of age-appropriate topics. 5th Grade will discuss “Respecting Self” by self-regulating our emotions and communicating our feelings using words instead of anger and violence. 6th grade will focus on “Respecting Others” through Bullying Prevention. 7th Grade will learn about *Healthy Relationships*, and 8th Grade will discuss *Healthy Relationships and Dating Violence*.**
- ❖ **Ms. Brower will also be addressing 5th graders to discuss “What is Violence?” on Wednesday, October 5th.**

Othe Respect Month 2022 Events and Activities:

- ❖ **Friday, October 7:** Healthy Kids Day - Lessons, Activities, Panel Discussion and Health Fair in collaboration with the Essex Health and Wellness Recovery Center at Saint Michael's Medical Center
- ❖ **Tuesday, October 25:** Class of 2022 Project Pride Service Project Chipotle Fundraiser for Integrity House Drug Rehabilitation Center from 4pm to 8pm
- ❖ **Friday, October 28:** “Haunting Pride with Positivity” Theme Dress Down Day. Pride scholars and staff will dress up like the spirits of positive people in history like Rosa Parks, Abraham Lincoln, Malcolm X, Frida Kahlo, Sacagawea, Bruce Lee, and more.

We appreciate and need your support of our Code of Conduct and discipline policies so that we can maintain a safe, peaceful, and civil learning environment. We will be distributing the 2022-2023 Code of Conduct during our First Trimester Progress Report Parent Conference Nights on Tuesday

10/18 and Thursday, 10/20.

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>



Progress Report Parent Conferences!

Progress Report Parent-Teacher Conference times have been scheduled for Tuesday 10/18 and Thursday 10/20 October between 3:30pm and 6:00pm to pick up your child's progress report and meet with teachers. If you are unable to make it, please call your child's teacher to set up a Zoom conference time or phone call conversation. For health and safety precautions, in order to control the number of people in the our classroom at any one time, we ask the following:

**Parents whose child's last name starts with A-I attend conference night on Tuesday
10/18**

**Parents whose child's last name starts with J-Z attend conference night on Thursday
10/20**

To prepare for your conference, please consider these tips:

- ❖ Prepare your questions in advance
- ❖ Ask to look at your child's work.
- ❖ Share your expertise about your child that may be impacting your child's academic performance or conduct and help the teacher understand how best to work with your child.
- ❖ Be prepared to hear good news as well as perhaps hearing news that may be disappointing or surprising. Your children's teachers may have insights and knowledge about your child's learning and behavior that you may not have heard before. Be open to discussing these calmly and professionally.
- ❖ After the conference, be sure to take time to sit down with your child to discuss his/her progress report. Celebrate the strengths and address the concerns by coming up with a plan to make improvements.



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](#).



Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month 2022

Hispanic Heritage Month 2022: Celebrated from September 15th-October 15th



<https://ncheteach.org/Hispanic-Heritage-Month-Resources-September-2022>

“The National Council of Hispanic Employment Program Managers (NCHEPM), announced the 2022 Hispanic Heritage Month Observance Theme: “Unidos: Inclusivity for a Stronger Nation.” The theme encourages us to ensure that all voices are represented and welcomed to help build stronger

communities and a stronger nation. The announcement was made during the Council's March meeting. NCHEPM members, associates, and partners from various federal agencies and affinity groups, including the general public, selected the theme through a voting process, which started in February 2022 with 15 theme submissions.

Ms. Ily Soares, Supervisory Accountant at Farm Credit Administration (FCA) submitted the winning theme, stating "Hispanics in the United States are a diverse group who bring a rich combination of language, culture, educational backgrounds, and experience to the great American experiment. This diverse background brings with it a wealth of ideas and perspectives. One unifying factor within our Hispanic community is our desire to be included and represented in all aspects of American society. As has been proven, when different voices are sitting at the metaphorical table and included in key decisions, the entire community benefits from greater solutions that address concerns from all people. Whether it be education, government, business, or the environment, ensuring that all voices are represented provide results in better and more thoughtful decisions. These improved decisions support the greater good and minimize any negative impacts to marginalized communities and people of color. We call on citizens of this nation from all walks of life to look around and welcome new voices to the table. This will help us build stronger communities and in turn, a stronger nation.

Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the contributions and importance of Hispanics and Latinos to the United States and those American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. The NCHEPM supports the federal government's observance activities each year by leading the process to select the annual theme federal agencies will use to conduct their Hispanic Heritage Month observances. The Hispanic Heritage observance began in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period starting on September 15 and ending on October 15. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988, on the approval of Public Law 100- 402:"
<https://nationalcouncilhepm.org/announcements#c48e2216-33b4-408c-bc19-b58d2a149c66>

Over the course of Hispanic Month our teachers are being intentional in their lesson planning to teach about Hispanic Month, culture and history using teacher shared resources and the [NCHE website](#).

Additionally, our Dance Teacher, Ms. Gendreau, is currently teaching our 8th graders about the history of Latin music and dance in preparation for a Latin Dance Party where Ms. Gendreau, with the assistance of some students and parents, will teach us some Latin Dances and our Spanish Teacher, Ms. Charussilapa, continues to infuse Latin American history and culture in her Spanish classes.

If you would like an opportunity to share about your culture or ways that our school can continue to build awareness about Hispanic culture and experiences or other cultures, please reach out to Mrs Thomas (fthomas@prideacs.org) or Ms Dumengio (rdumenigo@prideacs.org).



Nutrition News!

Please visit our [Pride Academy school website](#) for information about our Breakfast and Lunch program and nutrition services.

Students have started to order their breakfast/lunch via an online portal and they will do this 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.

Harvest of the Month:

[October - English](#)

[October - Spanish](#)

October Menus:

 [Lunch Menu \(Alternate\)](#)

 [Lunch Menu \(Hot\)](#)

 [Lunch Menu \(Vegetarian\)](#)



Spotlight on Safety from Ms Brower!

#1: Preventing Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB)

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.

What is the purpose of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights?

The Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act is intended to:

- ❖ 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.

#2: What is HIB? Under the law, HIB is defined as:

1. "any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off grounds as provided for in section 16 of P.L.2010, c122 (C.18A:37-15-3), that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students; and that
2. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property; or
3. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
4. Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

To qualify as HIB, an incident must be based upon a real or perceived characteristic as

identified in paragraph I, AND meet the criteria in paragraphs II, III, or IV.

Is all harassment, intimidation and bullying considered HIB under the law?

No. As broad as the categories are under the ABBR HIB definition, they do not cover all types of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Unless the bullying is based upon one of the real or perceived characteristics outlined in paragraph 1, AND one or more of the criteria in paragraphs 2, 3, or 4 of the definition apply, it is not considered a HIB incident under the law.

Refer all suspected incidents to Ms. Brower, District Anti-Bullying Coordinator, to Mrs. Thomas, Principal or another administrator.

If an incident is not considered HIB under the law, do I still report it?

Absolutely. Pride Academy does not permit harassment, intimidation or bullying of any type.

Source: [NJDOE Guidance for Schools on Implementing the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Rights.](#)



Questions and Suggestions?

Your thoughts, questions and feedback are important to us. Please reach out to Mrs Thomas via email at fthomas@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.