

# Parent Partnerships

Issue 4 January, 2023



## In this newsletter....

[Save these January Dates!](#)

[Some Staff Updates and Changes](#)

[Enrollment Lottery 2023-2024](#)

[Kwanzaa by Mrs Wilson](#)

[Progress Report Card Parent-Teacher Conferences & Pick-Up](#)

[Keeping Everyone Safe in School and at Home!](#)

[Scholastic Book Fair!](#)

[Nutrition News!](#)

[Breakfast Menu](#)

[Lunch Menu](#)

[Gender Equity Policy and Information](#)

[Affirmative Action Procedures at Pride](#)

[We Need Your Help to Reinforce High Expectations for Learning and Behavior at School](#)

[Questions and Suggestions?](#)



## Save these January Dates!




<b>Tuesday, 1/3</b>	<b>School Re-opens</b>
<b>Thursday, 1/5</b>	<b>Kwanzaa Celebration at 5:30PM in the Great Room</b>
<b>Monday, 1/16</b>	<b>School Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr holiday</b>
<b>Thursday, 1/12-1/19</b>	<b>Scholastic Book Fair (See details below)</b>
<b>Thursday, 1/19</b>	<b>2nd Trimester Progress Report Conferences and Distribution for ALL Parents: 3:35 - 6pm</b>

## Some Staff Updates and Changes

### Best wishes to...

<b>Mr Harris, Director of Technology/Technology Teacher</b>	Mr Harris resigned from his position at Pride in December. We thank Mr Harris for his work and support during his time here at Pride and wish him well in his future endeavors.
<b>Mr Hanna, Math 7th Grade</b>	Mr Hanna will begin his paternity leave starting January 3rd.
<b>Ms Kelling, Academic Support in Science 6th/7th Grade</b>	Ms Kelling will be taking a short leave of absence during the month of January.

### Welcome wishes to...

<b>Ms Shayla Cooper</b>	Ms Cooper will take on the role of teacher of the Technology Co-curricular classes starting January 3rd.
<b>Ms Karen Coy</b> 	Ms Coy will join us in the position of Academic Support teacher starting January 3rd. Ms Coy will support Ms King during Ms Kelling's absence in 6th/7th grade science classes and Keller Team homeroom advisor, and provide substitute coverage in the building when needed.
<b>Ms Gary</b> 	Ms Gary will continue to teach Spanish classes while Ms Charussilapa is on maternity leave.
<b>Mr Dent</b> 	Mr Dent will support Mr Simon during Mr Hanna's paternity leave of absence in 7th Grade Math classes and Mandela team homeroom advisor.



**Pride Academy Zoom Admissions Lottery**  
**JANUARY 11**  
**@ 4 PM**

Free, public middle school serving students in grades 5-8 from East Orange, Orange, and Newark.

**HELPING OUR SCHOLARS FIND THEIR VOICE AND CREATING TOMORROW'S LEADERS**

This is the first lottery for the 2023-2024 academic year and the best opportunity for acceptance.  
*Spots fill up fast!*

**TO APPLY: [www.prideacs.org](http://www.prideacs.org)**  
**OR CALL: 973-672-3200**

 Please note that online applications must be received before 12 noon in order to be included in this lottery. Any application received after that will be included in the next lottery.

Made with PosterMyWall.com



## Enrollment Lottery 2023-2024

Our Enrollment Lottery for the new school year, 2023-2024, will take place on Wednesday, Jan 11th 2023. If you would like to enroll a sibling of a child who is already attending our school, please complete an application and submit it before Jan 11th! Parents interested in applying can:

- ❖ Apply online by going to our website at [www.prideacs.org](http://www.prideacs.org).
- ❖ Come to Pride to fill out an application. The office is open from 8:30am to 3pm Monday - Friday.

If you know of a family who might be interested in their child applying to our school, please share this information with them!



## 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, January 5th 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.



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

Progress Report Cards will be distributed during Parent-Teacher Conferences on **Thursday 1/19 between 3:35-6:00PM**. Some tips and suggestions as progress report card conference night approaches include:

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 after school activities, and other family demands. Your child's teacher is probably juggling many of the same things. If the proposed conference time does not work for you, please let your child's homeroom 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.





## 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

### Keep Yourself and Your Family Healthy Through Winter

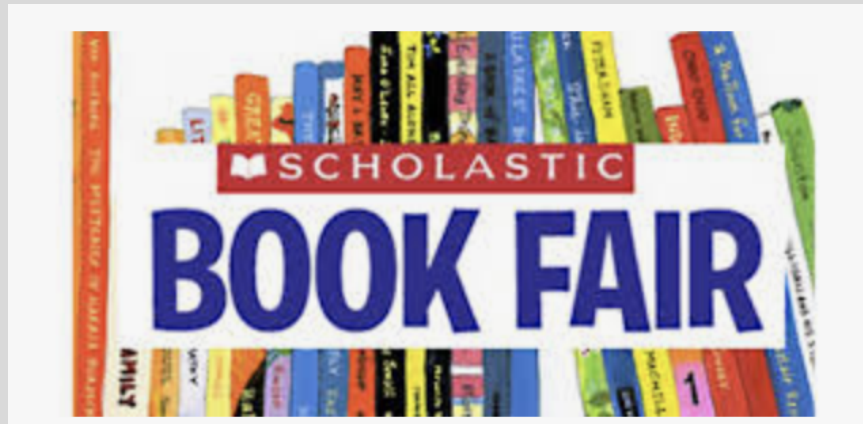
“New Jerseyans are encouraged to take the necessary precautions to keep themselves and their loved ones healthy in advance of upcoming holiday gatherings. Respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, influenza, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) are currently circulating throughout the state. Residents are particularly encouraged to stay up-to-date on COVID-19 and flu vaccinations, including receiving the updated bivalent COVID-19 booster when eligible.

Everyone six months of age and older is now eligible for the bivalent COVID-19 vaccinations that target recently circulating Omicron subvariants. COVID-19 vaccines are free to everyone. Find locations offering COVID-19 vaccines and boosters on the [COVID-19 Vaccine Finder](#) and [Community Calendar](#).

Flu vaccines, which are often covered by insurers at little to no cost to individuals, can be found at pharmacies, health care provider offices, [Federally Qualified Health Centers](#) (FQHCs), and local health departments. FQHCs and health departments may also offer the flu vaccine at little to no cost for eligible uninsured or underinsured individuals.

Everyone is encouraged to take common sense measures to protect themselves and the people around them. This includes coughing or sneezing into your sleeve, washing your hands, staying home when you're sick, and wearing a mask if you or someone you're spending time with is at high risk of severe illness. If symptoms appear, [get tested for COVID-19](#). Free at-home test kits [are available from the federal government](#) and testing is offered for free at [certain sites around New Jersey](#). Keep children home from school and child care centers if they are feeling unwell. Flu and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) are impacting schools and child care settings in New Jersey right now.”

[https://covid19.nj.gov/?utm\\_campaign=20221230\\_nwsltr&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://covid19.nj.gov/?utm_campaign=20221230_nwsltr&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)



## Scholastic Book Fair!

Get Ready! The Scholastic Book Fair is coming our way! YAY! Choosing their own books empowers children and inspires them to become bolder, prouder, and stronger readers. AND... as always, every book they buy earns rewards for our school.

Here's what you need to know about the Fair, which will take place from **Thursday, January 12 to Thursday, January 19th**. It will be located in our Great Room, and families will also have an opportunity to attend the Book Fair during our Scholastic Family Night, which will take place during our second trimester Progress Report Conference Night on **Thursday, January 19th** when the Book Fair will be open to Pride families from 3:30 to 6pm.

**PLEASE NOTE THIS NEW CHANGE!** This year, say goodbye to cash and hello to eWallet—your child's digital payment account. Before the Fair, please set up eWallet for worry-free, cash-free purchases. Anyone can contribute! Share each child's eWallet so friends and family can add funds and give your kids more books to enjoy.

Visit our Book Fair homepage to learn more and get started with eWallet  
<https://www.scholastic.com/bf/prideacademycharter>



# 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.

## January Menus:

 [Breakfast Menu](#)

 [Lunch Menu](#)

## [Healthy Recipe Ideas: Spotlight on Breakfast!](#)

### Quick & Easy Recipes!



[Healthy Breakfast Recipes](#) - Jump Start Your Day!

Breakfast is the important meal of the day, make it a top priority! Breakfast fuels our body with nutrients and energy and is shown to help us maintain a healthy weight. Did you also know that kids who eat breakfast are more alert and typically do better at school? Enjoy these healthy habit recipes to start your day off right!



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



## Gender Equity Policy and Information

At Pride Academy, we are committed to maintaining a supportive and inclusive community where all students, families, community members and staff from a range of races, ethnicities, genders, cultures, abilities, and family structures are welcomed and nurtured. Our core values of Peace, Respect, Integrity, Determination and Empathy embrace a level of regard for diversity that allows us to expand our minds, learn from each other, and support one another in a variety of ways. The unique personhood and experiences of every individual promote the building of a strong and forward-thinking community.

A few years ago, schools across the country received information and guidance to build our capacity to better support students who express their gender in a variety of ways. Gender-variant youth include young people whose identities, appearances, behaviors or interests are different from the expectations associated with their gender assigned at birth. As a school, we have taken and will continue to take in order to support the implementation of procedures that will accommodate every student's gender expression and follow the "N.J.S.A. 18A:35-4.35-36 legislation that requires boards of education to include instruction on the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ) people in appropriate places in the middle school and high school curriculum. The law also requires boards of education to adopt inclusive instructional materials that portray the cultural and economic diversity of society including the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and LGBTQ people, where appropriate."

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind you about our Anti-Bullying policy. Pride Academy does not tolerate any form of harassment, abuse, or discrimination. We encourage you to review and discuss this policy with your children which you can find in your Parent Handbook and Code of Conduct. Please encourage your children to talk to you, Ms Brower, Mrs. Thomas, one of our social workers, or a teacher if they encounter name-calling or any other form of inappropriate behavior including in-person or online bullying. We value our partnership with you and believe that through a process of understanding, building awareness and learning from our differences we will more effectively equip our students with the needed skills of respect and appreciation of diversity. We are excited to continue to deepen our commitment to inclusiveness through our focus on Gender Equity. Please don't hesitate to reach out to Mrs. Thomas if you have questions or concerns on 973-672-3200 ext. 201

### Parent Resources:

- [LGBTQIA 101](#)
- [Transgender Students and Family Acceptance](#)
- [Transgender Students in Elementary School](#)
- [Transgender Students in Middle and High School](#)
- <https://www.gardenstateequality.org/our-work/resources/#parents>
- <https://welcomingschools.org/resources/parents-caregivers>

# Affirmative Action Procedures at Pride

## Grievance Procedures

Under Title IX, each school district must have a written, publicized grievance procedure for handling complaints alleging sex discrimination. Students, parents, and employees must be fully informed of the steps in the grievance process. It is strongly recommended that discrimination grievance procedures allow for complaints on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, affectional or sexual orientation, ancestry, socioeconomic status, as well as sex.

Title IX does not specify a particular structure for the grievance procedure; it does require that the procedure provide for the "prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints." Therefore, all procedures must include reasonable timelines for the initiation and resolution of a grievance.

Any person who believes that he/she has been discriminated against may also file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights or the Department of Education at the same time a grievance is filed during or after the grievance process, or without using the school district process at all. A person may also file a grievance with the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights. Please reach out to Ms Brower at 973-672-3200 ext. 203 for more information, support or guidance.

## Notice of Statement of Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

**PRIDE Academy Charter School adheres to the laws and regulations set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:7-1.8; Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972; N.J.S.A. 10:5, and Equal Pay Act 1973, and is committed to ensuring equality in Educational, Employment, and Contract Practices for all persons, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender, religion, disability, or socioeconomic status.**

The following staff member is our Affirmative Action Officer and designated to handle inquiries regarding our non-discrimination policies or grievance procedures:

**Ms Robin Brower**

**117 Elmwood Ave,**

**East Orange, NJ 07108**

**973-672-3200 ext. 203**

**Please review our 2022-2023 Student Handbook and Code of Conduct available on our school website: <https://prideacs.org/policies-reports/>**



## We Need Your Help to Reinforce High Expectations for Learning and Behavior at School

- ❖ Attendance matters and students should arrive on time for school BEFORE 8:00AM each day. If they plan to eat school breakfast, students should arrive at least by 7:45AM so that they have time to eat their breakfast before the start of their school day at 8:00AM.
- ❖ Students should wear a Pride Dress Uniform or Gym Uniform each day to school. Non-Pride uniform sweaters or hoodies may not be worn during the school day.
- ❖ Students should bring to school: their own face mask and extras in case they need replacements during the day, their School Agenda, pens, pencils, paper, & headphones for use with their school laptop when required. They must also bring a backpack to school so that they are prepared to carry their school laptop in their backpack from class to class and also to lunch/recess. PLEASE NOTE: Students may not carry their cell phones on their person during the school day or in their backpacks/purses or fannypacks.
- ❖ Students may not bring lunch or snacks that include nuts of any kind, sunflower seeds, candy/chocolate bars, carbonated drinks, and they MAY NOT share food items from home or school breakfast/lunch with others.
- ❖ If cell phones are brought to school, please know that they may not be used in school at any time (including before school and after school activities and during classes, transitions in hallways, restroom visits, lunch and recess) and must remain locked up in lockers. Cell phones will be confiscated due to lack of compliance with our expectations, and the school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones.
- ❖ Students must demonstrate the core values of Peace, Respect and Empathy in their words, actions, and interactions with each other and all members of our Pride family. Students may not play fight or hit, touch, slap, kick etc. and must follow the practice of keeping their hands, feet, and belongings to themselves.
- ❖ Students should respect and take care of our school property including their school laptop learner, supplies, furniture and restrooms.
- ❖ Students must follow these practices with regard to their use of our school restrooms to respect the privacy of others, maintain a high level of cleanliness and sanitary conditions, and protect the destruction of property, fixtures and plumbing:
  1. They may only use the stalls by themselves and never be in a stall with other individuals.
  2. They may not stand on the commode or look over or under the stall doors/walls into other stalls.
  3. They may not place items of food or other objects in the commodes or urinals.
  4. They may not urinate or defecate on the floor instead of in the commode or the urinal.
  5. They may not vandalize the walls, doors and other areas of the restroom with graffiti.
  6. They may not go to the restroom with their cell phones to use their phones and/or video record themselves or others.
  7. They may not arrange with others to meet up or congregate in the restrooms at any time during the school day including class time, homeroom time, transitions, and lunch/recess, and after school activities.

**For more detailed information about all of our expectations and code of conduct, please review our 2022-2023 Student Handbook and Code of Conduct available on our school website:**

<https://prideacs.org/policies-reports/>



## Questions and Suggestions?

Your thoughts, questions and feedback are important to us. Please reach out to Mrs Thomas via email at [fthomas@prideacs.org](mailto: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.