

# Parent Partnerships

Issue 6 March, 2024



**"Stand Up For Pride" logo designed by  
Tahmari Farrell, 8th grade**

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## Save the Dates!

<b>Monday, March 4th</b>	<b>Trimester 3 begins!</b>
<b>Thursday March 7th</b>	<b>In-Person Parent Council Meeting at 5:30PM</b>
<b>Thursday March 14th</b>	<b>Graduation Pictures for 8th graders 8:30AM-10:45AM</b>
<b>Thursday March 14th</b>	<b>Second Trimester Report Card Parent Conferences from 3:35PM-6:00PM</b>
<b>Tuesday March 19th, 20th, 21st</b>	<b>School Wide Interim Assessment #3 in ELA, Math, and Science</b>
<b>Thursday March 21st</b>	<b>“Girls' Night In” Ubuntu Parent Party at 5:30PM</b>
<b>Tuesday March 26th</b>	<b>Half-Day 12:30 Dismissal for Students/Professional development for Staff</b>
<b>Thursday March 28th</b>	<b>Trimester 2 Awards Assembly</b>
<b>Thursday March 28th</b>	<b>SEPAG/Bingo for Books Parent Meeting at 5:30PM</b>
<b>Friday March 29th</b>	<b>School Closed - First Day of Spring Break</b>

### LOOKING AHEAD

Spring Break: April 1st-5th

School Reopens: April 8thThurs.

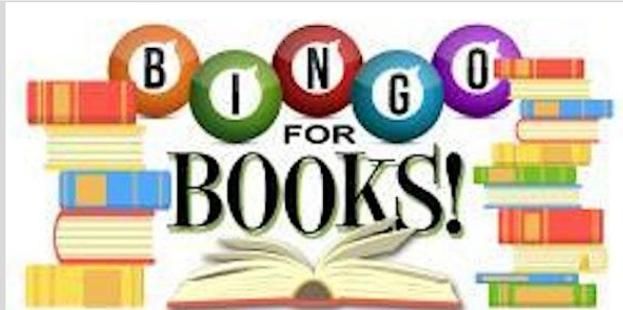
Graduation Re-Takes and Spring Dress Down Pictures-April 18th



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

Report Cards will be distributed during Parent-Teacher Conferences on Thursday 3/14 from 3:35PM-6:00PM. Some tips and suggestion as report card conference nights approaches:

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 the proposed conference time does not 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.



## BINGO FOR BOOKS

On **Wednesday, March 28th at 5:30 pm** Pride Academy's Special Education Department will host its annual **Special Education Parent Advisory Group (SEPAG) meeting, BINGO For Books!** At this meeting they will share some strategies to support parents at home when reading with their children. In addition to learning about reading strategies there will be food and prizes. Although SEPAG focuses on children with special needs, these strategies are helpful for all students. We hope that you will be able to join us for this important workshop. If you have any questions, please reach out to Ms. Dumenigo (ext.210) or our Special Education Director, Mrs. Marash (ext. 206).

# Girls' Night-In Ubuntu Parent Party

## "Girls' Night In"

Ubuntu School Safety Meeting  
Thursday, March 21st at 5:30pm



In honor of Women's History Month, this meeting will focus on promoting a sense of self-worth in our young female scholars so they can make positive choices for their health and well-being.



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

On behalf of the PRIDE Academy Charter School (PRIDE) Administration and staff, we hope that this message finds our students and their families doing well as we rapidly approach the end of the year. Our admiration and respect for the work and dedication of our teachers, the hard work of our students, and the high expectations, caring and partnership shared with our families grows each day. It comes as no surprise that PRIDE enjoys a strong and well-deserved reputation and that many of our families enroll more than one child and recommend our school to their family and friends.

We have enjoyed a positive and strong start to the 2023 - 2024 school year. As we begin the second trimester and 2024, it is good to take time to revisit and review expectations for school. For context and perspective, Pride Academy Charter School has 300 students arriving each day who spend 7+ hours and longer, for those involved in clubs, activities, and sports, here. Overall, our students are found to be polite, thoughtful, respectful and engaged in their studies. Please continue to take pride in your children and the way in which you are raising them.

That being understood, as we approach Winter Break and the heightened level of excitement that occurs around this time of year, now is an opportune time to discuss with your children the PRIDE Academy Charter School Student Code of Conduct and continued expectations regarding student behavior choices. PRIDE Academy Charter School students MAY NOT:

- Fight, play fight, hit, hit back, wrestle or roughhouse in any manner. Students must keep their hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- Students may not engage in physical displays of affection, kissing, hugging, handholding, etc. These are inappropriate for school and may result in a complaint of sexual harassment involving one participant against the other or witness complaints against one or both participants.
- Engage in name calling, roasting, or any type of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or any actions, whether verbal, physical, in-person, or online, that are demeaning, harassing, hurtful, embarrassing or hateful. This includes, but is not limited to actions based on religion, gender, body type, gender expression, sexual orientation, real or perceived ability or disability, culture, race or ethnicity. They may not refer to peers as any type of animal or call them anything other than their given name. Pride Academy Charter School has clear policy and procedures in place and they have been well covered with our students. **Please follow this link to the PRIDE Academy Charter School Parent Handbook and Student Code of Conduct**[\[https://prideacs.org/policies-reports/\]](https://prideacs.org/policies-reports/). Please read the Handbook and discuss it with your child.
- Bring drugs, nicotine, prohibited substances or related paraphernalia or packaging to school, use prohibited substances in school, on school grounds or at school events, or attend school under the influence or bearing evidence of exposure to prohibited substances. **Please see our Drugs, Alcohol, Nicotine & Tobacco policy in our [Parent Handbook, Page 33]**
- Bring weapons or other prohibited items to school. **Please refer to our Parent Handbook and Student Code of Coonduct, Pages 19-20 "Not Allowed in School".**

All students must abide by the following:

- All students should have purchased a front dial combination lock and have an assigned school locker by now. Cell phones must be placed in the student's own locker and kept there until dismissal. Students may not carry cell phones on their person during the school day or in backpacks/purses or fanny packs. If cell phones are brought to school, 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. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones. **[Parent Handbook, Page 9]**

- We strongly recommend that your child does not allow other students to use their cell phone and that they do not use another student's cell phone, especially to access their Social Media as this may allow other students access to their accounts. Additionally, students must not share their Social Media account passwords with other students and must immediately change any passwords that have been shared in the past. Students will be held responsible for any negative impact arising from postings/tags etc on or sent from their Social Media account(s).
- Students may not bring lunch or snacks that include nuts or nut products of any kind, shelled edible seeds, candy/chocolate bars, carbonated drinks, and they may not share food items.
- Students may not bring permanent markers for use in school and they may not use them anywhere in school including restrooms to deface school property. **[See Parent Handbook and Student Code of Conduct, Page 17, "Not Allowed in School"]**
- Students must follow school 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 prevent the destruction of property, fixtures and plumbing:
  1. They may only be inside the stalls by themselves and may never be in a stall with other individuals.
  2. They may not stand on the commode or look over into other stalls, look under the stall doors/walls into other stalls, or look through cracks in between the door and stall walls into the stall.
  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 or anything else.
  6. They may not enter the restroom with their cell phones to use their phones and/or to 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 day including before homeroom or during class time, homeroom time, transitions, lunch/recess, and after school activities.

Please help us by adding your voice to these expectations. From time to time, we address poor choices made by our students and a student will say, "But, I didn't mean anything by it," or "I was just playing." Please reinforce that under school, state, and federal anti-bullying, anti-violence and anti-discrimination policies and laws, intent does not matter, only actions do.

Students and family members are encouraged to reach out to Robin Brower, Dean of Students and District Anti-Bullying Coordinator ([rbrower@prideacs.org](mailto:rbrower@prideacs.org)), or Fiona Thomas, Principal ([fthomas@prideacs.org](mailto:fthomas@prideacs.org)) if they need to make a report or have a concern. More information can be found on our school webpage [[www.prideacs.org](http://www.prideacs.org)]. We remain open to helping our families navigate the sometimes rocky waters of childhood.

A proactive conversation now at home can help avoid uncomfortable situations and accountability consequences for your child at school. Please reinforce our core values of Peace, Respect, Integrity, Determination, and Empathy. Speak with your child about the high expectations that you and we share, which are that all of our students will treat each other and all members of our school community with kindness, respect and dignity because we desire to keep PRIDE a safe, structured and positive school community where teaching and learning can continue to flourish.

As always, we are grateful for your support and we thank you for entrusting us with your children.

Robin Brower  
Dean of Students & Anti-Bullying Coordinator

Fiona Thomas  
Principal



## Late Student Pick-Up Fees

Our regular new school hours are **Monday-Thursday 8AM to 3:20PM** and **Fridays 8AM to 2:10PM**. Our school hours on half days are from 8AM to 12:30PM. Making sure your child arrives at school on time and is picked up on time after school is your responsibility. If you use a transportation service or have another person pick up your child, you must ensure that your child is picked up on time each day. If your child is not picked up immediately after school, late charges will be incurred. The rates for late pick up are as follows:

- Every student is given a **15-minute grace period** to be picked up from school. The grace period for late pickup ends at 3:35PM on Mon.-Thurs., 2:25PM on Fridays, and at 12:45PM on half days.
- Late fees of \$5 for the first minute and \$1 per minute thereafter will be charged for any child not picked-up by 3:35PM Mon-Thurs., 2:25PM on Fridays, and 12:45PM on half days. Fees are payable in cash and due at the time of pickup from school.
- **Late fees will also be charged for siblings/friends of scholars in after school activities who are waiting for pick up. Siblings and friends either need to participate in the after school activity or be picked up on time at the regular end of day pick up time.**

Students will not be allowed to wait outside for parents after 3:35PM Mon-Thurs. 2:25PM. on Fridays, and 12:45PM on half days. Any students still at school after those allotted times will be escorted back into the building to wait for parents. Parents must then come inside to sign students out of the late pick-up room and pay the applicable late fees. Late students will no longer be permitted to take phone calls from parents/guardians requesting that they come outside to meet you. Students who disregard this expectation, may face accountability and late pick up fees will be incurred.



## Keeping Everyone Safe in School and at Home!

Here at Pride, we are continuing to take actions that reduce the spread of illnesses and COVID-19 so that we can all stay in school every day! We know that the virus that causes COVID-19 and flu 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 a 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 scholars, staff and families are strongly recommended to follow. These include the following:

- ❖ Staying up to date with COVID-19 booster vaccinations and this year's Flu shot
- ❖ Staying home when sick with fever and cold/flu-like symptoms, vomiting and diarrhea
- ❖ Washing and/or sanitizing hands frequently
- ❖ Wearing masks is voluntary at this time. However, please be aware that we may move to universal mandatory mask wearing if COVID-19 levels rise in our county or district and/or if we begin to experience an increase in COVID-19 and Flu outbreaks in our school community.

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



# March Nutrition News!

Please visit our [Pride Academy school website](#) for information about our Breakfast and Lunch program and nutrition services. Students can order their 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 reach out to Ms Oates, our Main Office Coordinator.

## Breakfast Menu

March Breakfast				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4 MultiGrain Cheerios Cereal Apple Breakfast Bar Fresh Pear	5 W/G Cinnamon Toasters Cereal W/G Graham Crackers 100% Grape Juice Applesauce Cup Milk	6 Honey Wheat Bagel with Cream Cheese Fresh Pear Milk	7 W/G Honey Graham Toasters Cereal W/G Strawberry Waffle Grahams Fresh Apple Milk	1 W/G Frosted Flakes Mini Wheats W/G Banana Muffin Flat 100% Orange Juice Strawberry Applesauce cup Milk
11 W/G Corn Chex Cereal W/G Graham Crackers Fresh Apple Milk	12 100% Fruit Punch W/G Frosted Flakes w/g Vanilla Bear Grahams Applesauce Cup Milk	13 W/G Blueberry Muffin Flat Fresh Pear Milk	14 100% Apple Juice W/G Superdonut Peach Applesauce Cup Milk	15 MultiGrain Cheerios Cereal Apple Breakfast Bar Fresh Apple Milk
18 W/G Fruit Loops Cereal W/G Graham Crackers Applesauce Cup 100% Grape Juice Milk	19 W/G Frosted Flakes w/g Vanilla Bear Grahams Fresh Apple Milk	20 W/G Croissant with Margarine Fresh Orange Milk	21 W/G Plain Bagel w/ Cream Cheese Fresh Pear Milk	22 W/G Superdonut Fresh Apple Milk
25 W/G Banana Muffin Flat Applesauce Cup 100% Grape Juice Milk	26 W/G Honey Scooters Cereal W/G Chocolate Bear Grahams Fresh Orange Milk	27 W/G Croissant with Margarine Fresh Pear Milk	28 W/G Rice Krispies w/ Banana Muffin Diced Pear Cup 100% Grape Juice Milk	29 Spring Break 

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## Lunch Menu (Hot)

March HOT, ALTERNATE & VEGETARIAN				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4 w/g Chicken and Cheese Quilted Black Bean and Corn cup W/G Chex Cereal Turkey and Prosciutto on a Whole Grain Bun Fresh Apple Milk	5 All Beef Hamburger on a Whole Wheat Bun w/ Red Kidney Beans Veggie Burger on a Whole Wheat Bun Diced Chicken and Cheese on W/G Kaiser Roll Fresh Pear Milk	6 Chicken Tacos with Shredded Cheese on a w/g Soft Taco Shell Bean and Cheese Burrito w/ Mashed Potatoes Black Beans All Beef Italian Sub (Beef Bologna, Beef Salsas, and American Cheese) Fresh Banana Milk	7 Turkey Ham and Swiss Cheese on a W/G Potato Bread Fresh Baby Carrots on a Cup Americano Cheese on a Whole Grain Bun Turkey and Cheese on a W/G Kaiser Roll Diced Peach Cup Milk	1 Domino's Pizza Slice Romana Salad w/ Dressing Milk
11 Chicken Burger on a Whole Wheat Bun, Green Beans, Diced Pear Cup Beef Salsas & Prosciutto On a Whole Grain Bread Veggie Chicken Fry on Whole Wheat Bun Milk	12 Beef Meatball Parmigiana on W/G Sub Roll Veggie Meatball Parmigiana on a W/G Sub Roll Diced Carrots Turkey on a Whole Grain Potato Bun Fresh Apple Milk	13 W/G Popcorn Chicken w/ Sweet and Sour Sauce, Seasoned Diced Potatoes, White Grain Bread Veggie Nuggets w/ Sweet & Sour Sauce, W/G Seasoned Diced Potatoes Turkey Ham and Swiss Cheese on a W/G Potato Bread Fresh Orange Milk	14 Chicken Empanada with Black beans Mini Cheese Quesadilla w/ Mashed Potatoes Beef Bologna and Cheese on a Whole Wheat Kaiser Roll Applesauce Cup Milk	15 Domino's Pizza Slice Romana Salad w/ Dressing Milk
18 Meatball with Sauce on a Sub Roll Diced Carrots Veggie Nuggets on Green Beans W/G Bread Turkey and Cheese on a W/G Potato bun, with a Potato Salad Cup Fresh Pear Milk	19 Beef Nachos w/ Tortilla Scoops w/ Cheddar Cheese Cup & W/G Bread All Beef Italian Sub (Beef Bologna, Beef Salsas, and American Cheese) w/ Strawberry Applesauce Cup Milk	20 BBQ Beef Riblet on Wheat Hamburger Bun Black Bean & Corn Salad Diced Chicken and Swiss Cheese on a Whole Grain Bread Bean and Cheese Burrito w/ Mashed Potatoes Milk	21 French Toast Sticks w/ Turkey Sausage Links & Sprink French Toast Sticks w/ Sprink, Veggie Sausage Patty Beef Bologna & Cheese on Whole Grain Bread Cold Corn Cup Fresh Apple Milk	22 Domino's Pizza Slice Romana Salad w/ Dressing Milk
25 Jamaican Beef Patty w/ Cheese Sauce Veggie Nuggets, corn and whole Diced Carrots on a W/G Bread on a Whole Grain Bread Mashed Fruit Cup Milk	26 W/G Color Chex Half Day W/G Color Chex Sobitfish and Fruit Punch	27 Chicken Meatball with Teriyaki Milk Sauce with Oriental Mixed Veggies Veggie with Teriyaki Sauce, Oriental Mixed Vegetables Turkey and Cheese on a W/G Potato bun, with a Potato Salad Cup Fresh Apple	28 W/G Fiesta Beef & Cheese Wrap, Celery Sticks On Bean and Cheese Burrito, celery stick on Humus Cup, Milk, Blue Peach, and Strawberry Yogurt Fresh Banana Milk	29 Spring Break 

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## Spotlight on Safety!

Advances in technology and social media have changed the face of interpersonal relationships. Individuals from anywhere in the world can meet online to play games, chat, and share the lives of others by viewing profiles, photographs and videos. These advances have also changed the face of interpersonal conflict, making it possible for individuals to harass, embarrass, threaten and disrespect others from any mobile device or from home, and to do so with a huge audience of onlookers. Tension arising from online conflict can negatively affect school climate, teaching and learning when it finds its way into our school. Please review the various forms of cyber bullying listed below.

**Threats** – Stating or implying that you or someone else will harm someone, or that something hurtful will happen to someone.

**Offensive or insulting messages** – This includes harassing, racist, or homophobic messages, personal insults, and offensive status postings and comments, whether they overtly or covertly refer to the target. These may be sent anonymously, or they may be posted very briefly, just long enough to get views, likes or comments.

**Rumors/Denigration** – Using social media, text, instant messaging, or other means to put down or spread hurtful rumors about others.

**Impersonation** – Pretending to be someone else online while sending hurtful messages to others. This may occur when passwords are shared, students are posting with friends present and the friend takes the liberty to post under an account that is not his or her own, a screen name is imitated, or a false account is created using someone else's identity. It may involve posting embarrassing information or photos of the alleged account owner, or sending their personal information to hate groups or sites and venues likely to contain predators. Students should be reminded that they are responsible for anything posted online using their password and must keep passwords secure. No one should ever post comments under someone else's user name.

**Photos and video** – Taking embarrassing photos or video, uploading photos or video that is embarrassing to the subject or without the subject's consent, taking screenshots or downloading photos to forward to unintended recipients, altering photos to cause embarrassment, or creating videos to make fun of others.

**Sexting** – Typically does not begin as bullying, but becomes so when explicit images are forwarded to unintended recipients. Students should be reminded that once posted online or sent via cell phone, they no longer have control over where an image is posted or to whom it is sent in the future.

**Betrayal of Confidential Information** – Betrayal may be careless, deliberate, or unintentional. A former friend may no longer feel obligated to maintain a confidence or a friendship may be faked for the purpose of gathering and ultimately disseminating confidential information. It is important that

students respect and protect their confidential information and that of their friends and peers.

**Griefing** – Harassing another player within an interactive game, possibly using avatars. If the game involves headphones or microphones, the harassment may also be verbal. Parents should monitor the tone and language used toward others during online and video game play.

**Warning/Warning Wars** – Falsely reporting others for misbehavior. This may occur on social media or online gaming sites, causing the host to suspend the user account of the individual reported.

Please make opportunities to find out what activities your children engage in online. Frequently check activity and to friend and follow their children online. Who are our children's friends or followers? Whom do they follow or play games with online? Why do they choose to friend and follow certain individuals? What makes someone a friend? The arena of online and electronic communication provides endless opportunities for caring adults to create and take advantage of "teachable moments."

Parents are advised to look at the profiles of their children's friends and followers, as well. Are all interactions positive and safe? Looking at the friend or followers photos and comments, determine if this individual is appropriate, age and otherwise, as a friend to your child. Notify school administration of any conflict that could spill over into the school so we can proactively work with students to resolve issues.

Please refer student concerns regarding bullying to Robin S. Brower, District Anti-Bullying Coordinator, at extension 203, Fiona Thomas, Principal at extension 201 immediately

## 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 2023-2024 Student Handbook and Code of Conduct and HIB reporting processes 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 [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.