



# *The Scholars' Academy*

*Mission Statement: To Prepare for College and Careers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*  
*"Technology Today, Smarter Tomorrow: Removing Time and Place from Teaching and Learning"*  
*27Q323 is an Accelerated College Preparatory School for Grades 6-12*  
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## Principal

Brian O'Connell

## Assistant Principals

Math/Arts: Michele Smyth

Humanities/Foreign Language: Toni Marie Viera

Science/Technology/Safety: Scott Milczewski

## **Parent Association Meeting February 12th, 2014**

### **Principal's Statement**

#### **Dear Parents and Caregivers,**

We are in an excellent place as we pass the midway point of our academic year. The school tone is outstanding and we have received recognition of our school's efforts and results in terms of school climate by the Chancellor Farina's Office. Our school has been deemed a model "Respect for All School." This acknowledges the incredible school climate that we have which is reflected through our school's learning environment surveys and tracked incidents. Our guidance team and dean's office collaborate to come up with ways to encourage, educate, and empower students to treat one another equitably and respectfully.

Instructionally, we are ensuring our students are actively learning in class, leveraging technology to enhance and empower their learning, while also preparing them for the expectations (format, length, types of questions) of the myriad of exams that they will be taking this year. Our teachers are working closely with students requiring support as well as those needing slight honing to hit the very top of their targets. We have an extensive academic after school and Saturday budget set aside to support their efforts and we are also having extended conferences as needed to bring their families into the circle of support.

Professional development has also been of a very high quality. Our teachers are getting better and better. Observations that we have conducted affirm their planning for engagement and student independence cultivation efforts. There is terrific teaching taking place I can attest!

We have some really great trips taking place all the time. Students are going to Europe this weekend, we just had students at Madison Square Garden, we have a big Philadelphia trip coming, our high school college visits, and of course Disney for seniors just to mention a few.

We are already purchasing learning materials for next year and setting aside approximately \$50,000 in funding to help us absorb the fiscal shock from the transition from not receiving the Hurricane Sandy grant monies we received this year. Even while setting such funding aside to help us next year, we have been able to purchase more than 100 additional individualized computing tools such as ipads and laptops! We currently have a total of over 1,600 pieces of technology in the school all total. The media studio is also almost finished getting its technology upgrade and lighting adjustment.

We will, however, need your support as we attempt to be considered for the Participatory Budget Process of Councilman Eric Ulrich (We had the fortune of having our band play at his second inauguration two weeks ago.). Our focus will be for our theatre: air conditioning, soundboard, acoustical panels, etc. We will need everyone you know who lives in the councilmatic district to vote for us when the time comes.

Remember that the Rockaway St. Patrick's Day Parade is a big day for our band, cheerleaders, step team, and school community. We hope to put together a huge Scholars' Contingency to march with our band. So feel free to join us on Saturday, March 1, 2014 on B134 Street by 12:45pm the latest. The parade usually kicks off at 1:15pm-1:30pm, but parking can be tricky up there, so get there early. We will be the ones in blue and white with the giant seawolf running around.

Please read up on these other matters that we would like to communicate with you about Parent Teacher Conferences, our second Open Classrooms Opportunity, Parent Surveys, and other school happenings. Have a great month!

Sincerely,  
Mr. O

### **Athletics:**

- Both the Boys and Girls Varsity Basketball teams made the playoffs and games will begin Thursday Feb. 13.
- Congratulations to Jessica G on recording her 1,000 career point at Scholars
- Congratulations to the PSAL Swim team and several of their members making it to the A Division Championship at Flushing Meadow this past weekend

### **College Office:**

- Tonight was our Junior College Night. Parents learned about what colleges look for in applicants. Additionally, students and parents were given the opportunity to speak with seniors and alumni about college applications, financial aid and scholarships, and developing a college list
- Students who are scheduled to take an AP Exam in May were given a registration/payment letter on February 7th. All money and registration forms are due to the College Office on February 28th
- 11th grade College Readiness Groups will begin on February 24th
- 10th grade College Readiness Groups will begin on March 3rd
- Our current seniors so far have been awarded 106 scholarships, totaling: **\$4,320,900!**
- Save the Date for our annual College Fair on March 13th!

### **College Office-Related Regents Results from the January Algebra and English Regents Exams:**

- 2 students moved from an Advanced Regents Diploma to an Advanced Regents with Honors Diploma
- 18 students moved from an Advanced Regents Diploma to an Advanced Regents Diploma with a Math Endorsement!
- 5 students moved from a Regents Diploma to an Advanced Regents Diploma
- 3 students became College Ready in English
- 5 students became College Ready in Mathematics
- 99% of students in grades 10-12 are College Ready in English

### **English Regents Results**

- 51% of students scored a 90 or above, increase of 13% from last year (38% scored a 90 or above)
- 77% of the students scored in the mastery range, up 10% from last year
- 10 students scored a 100, 80% increase from last year (2 students scored a 100)
- Mean scale score is 88, up 1% from last year

**Congratulations:**

- Yesterday our very own Kingsley from 10th grade, along with 3 other finalists, will advance to the next round of Shakespeare Recitation on March 4th. He performed the son from Henry VI and Sonnet 130. He competed against 24 young actors!!! We are over the moon excited!!! Go Kingsley!!!!!!
- Christy from 708 is one of the twenty ABENY's Essay Contest Winners. This weekend she read her essay in front of a huge crowd and received a Certificate and a Barnes and Nobles gift card!

**Testing:**

- Middle school students completed a three day practice NYS ELA exam on February 4, 5, & 6; the data from the exam will be used to drive instruction for students leading up to the State exam in April
- Middle school students will complete a three day practice NYS Math exam on March 12, 13, & 14; the data from the exam will be used to drive instruction for students leading up to the State exam in April
- [Parents can log into the Scholars' Academy Parent google site](#) to get specific information for all upcoming State Assessment

**Guidance:**

- *Respect For All Week* is this week; we invite you to go to the Guidance Site to view all Middle and High School Lessons for the week! The Scholars' Academy is now a proud Respect for All Model school designated by the chancellor herself!  
<https://sites.google.com/a/scholarsnyc.com/guidance/>

**Parent Teacher Conferences:**

- Parent Teacher Conferences will take place on Thursday, February 27th from 1-3pm and 5:30-8pm
- A letter will go home tomorrow informing all parents of the conferences
- We will be using an online system again for parents to make appointment times to meet with their child's core teachers
- As always, we suggest carving out approximately 1 hour for you to meet with all of your child's teachers
- Teachers will also be inviting select parents and students to attend a priority conference, if you are invited to a priority conference, you do not attend the PTC on 2/27/14
- Priority conferences will take place on Friday 2/28/14 and 3/7/14 from 1:15pm-3:10pm

**Mid-Winter Recess:**

- The Scholars' Academy will be closed February 17th through the 21st for mid-winter recess
- School will resume on Monday, February 24th

**Black History Month Celebration:**

- During the middle school and high school Outstanding Scholar assemblies in February, student performance groups will highlight and celebrate Black History Month: there will be performances by our guitar elective, step teams, choirs and bands
- Both shows will be streamed and will be made available for you to view from home:
  - High School, Tuesday 2/25/14 at 9:50am
  - Middle School, Friday 2/28/14 at 9:50am

### **Open Classrooms:**

- The Scholars' Academy will be hosting Open Classrooms on Friday, March 7th during 3rd and 4th periods
- Parents are invited to come to school on this day to sit in on their child's classes to view teaching and learning in person

### **AAT Classes:**

- AP after-school / Saturday preparation programs have begun this week and will run until AP exam week - May 5th
- The after-school SAT preparation program has also begun with Mr. Wong and Ms. Grieco and will continue through June to prepare juniors for the March, May and June SAT examinations. SAT Subject preparation courses will also be offered (dates and times TBD)
- Regents preparation programs will be scheduled after February break for all courses that culminate in a regents examination
- Middle School ELA extra help classes will begin the week of February 24th - if your child has been selected to participate in one of these classes you will receive a letter this week
- Middle School Math extra help programs will begin the week of March 17th and 8th grade Regents extra help classes will begin the week of May 5th - letters will be sent home in the coming weeks for these programs

### **Upcoming Events in March:**

- **High School International Trip to London & France**
  - February 13-February 22nd
- **Rockaway St. Patrick's Day**
  - March 1st
- **6th & 7th grade Trip to Shakespeare Classic Stage Company**
  - Various dates in March
- **PA Meeting, SLT & Family Math Night**
  - March 12th
- **Middle School Math Practice Exam**
  - March 12, 13 & 14th
- **College Fair**
  - March 13th 6pm
- **Science Fair**
  - March 18th 5:30pm
- **Interviews for Prospective Students by Invitation Only**
  - March 20th 4pm
- **Middle School Outstanding Scholar Assembly**
  - March 26th 9:50am
- **Medieval Times Trip for Sophomores:**
  - March 27<sup>th</sup>
- **Middle School Once Upon This Island Junior:**
  - March 28th at 6:30pm