



# Newsletter

## The Floyd Bennett School, P.S. 203 K

**Yocasta Miller,**  
Principal I.A.  
**Brian Sadowski,**  
Asst. Principal

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### School Hours:

- © Breakfast: 7:30 a.m. via the ramp entrance on Avenue M
- © Pre-K: 8:00 a.m.-2:10 p.m.
- © K-5: 8:00 a.m.-2:20 p.m.

**Please arrive on time for drop-off and dismissal!**



## New Year's Resolutions

**APPLY TO  
KINDERGARTEN**  
for the 2016-2017  
School Year from  
December 7 through  
January 15

The New Year is a time for people to reflect on their past year's behavior and promise to make positive lifestyle changes. However, it can be daunting when your list of New Year's Resolutions is as long as your holiday shopping list. Psychologists say that setting small, attainable goals throughout the year, instead of a singular, overwhelming goal on January 1 can help you reach whatever it is you strive for. Here are a few tips, provided by the American Psychological Association, to help you when thinking about a New Year's resolution:

### START SMALL

Make resolutions that you think you can keep. If, for example, your aim is to eat healthier, try replacing dessert with something else you enjoy, such as fruit or yogurt. Try not to view your diet as a form of punishment.

### CHANGE ONE BEHAVIOR AT A TIME

Replacing unhealthy behaviors with healthy ones requires time. Do not get overwhelmed and think that you have to reassess everything in your life. Instead, work toward changing one thing at a time.

### TALK ABOUT IT

Share your experiences with family and friends. Consider joining a support group to reach your goals, such as a group of coworkers quitting

smoking. Having someone to share your struggles and successes with makes your journey to a healthier lifestyle that much easier and less intimidating.

### DON'T BEAT YOURSELF UP

Perfection is unattainable. Remember that minor setbacks when reaching your goals are completely normal. Everyone has ups and downs. Resolve to recover from your mistakes and get back on track!

### ASK FOR SUPPORT

Accepting help from those who care about you and will listen strengthens your resilience and ability to manage stress caused by your resolution.

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## From Principal Miller ...

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Thank you to all who participated in our Thanksgiving food drive. Our Student Government delivered 400 canned and boxed items of donated food that went directly to families in our own neighborhood. Your spirit of giving also helped us raise over \$2,500 for the March of Dimes. All of these generous donations are very much appreciated for these very worthy causes.

We will be offering several opportunities this month to see our children perform. In addition to our Early Childhood Holiday shows, our chorus will entertain classes in our school, and adults at our December 17, 2015 PTA meeting. Please know you are most welcome to attend the events listed on the calendar.

Our school's Annual Holiday Gift Drive has started and will continue until December 22<sup>nd</sup> for children ages 10-18 who will be in Kings County Hospital during the holidays. Please share some holiday joy with them by donating an unwrapped new gift. Please refer to the flyer that will be sent home regarding the items being requested. Donations can be left for Mrs. Stein who will be working with our staff and students to deliver the presents in a few weeks. We also encourage you to take advantage of our PTA Holiday Boutique where our children can purchase items for loved ones. Please look for a flyer about this in the weeks ahead from our PTA.

Parent Involvement in education is critical for a child's success in school. As part of New York City Department of Education's Parent Engagement initiative, all schools must set aside 40 minutes per week to create opportunities for parents to participate in and learn more about their children's activities in our school. Every Tuesday from 2:20-3:00 parents are provided with an opportunity to meet with their child's teacher. In order to provide opportunities for parents with children in multiple grades to take advantage of our offerings, we have developed a schedule by grade. Dates will be provided in our monthly newsletter, a flyer will be sent home and school messenger will send weekly messages to grades scheduled. We look forward to seeing you at all of our events.

We continue to ask that you work with your children to increase their stamina while they read. You can help by having them read for longer periods of time. In Grades K – 2, students should be reading (or read to) for a minimum of 25 minutes a day. In Grades 3 – 5 students, should be reading independently for 60 minutes each evening. All students in Grades K-5 should be accessing Dreambox, an online math program. Please be sure you have received your child's username and password for that site in a letter from his/her teacher. If not, make outreach to your child's teacher. The holiday break would be an ideal time to keep up on math skills on a daily basis. In addition, please set aside time over our

winter recess for your Grade 3-5 child to complete any practice material strengthening reading and mathematics that is sent home.

All of our children in Grades 1-5 will be working on strengthening their skills through close reading. As they read non-fiction books at home, please encourage them to tell you new facts they learn by using their own words and going back to the text to find evidence to support their answer. Also let them notice how non-fiction books have many added features to show them information (e.g. photographs, diagrams, headings, etc.). Paying close attention to these things will help them as they write information reports and work on the upcoming tasks. All of us at the school will work very hard along with you to ensure that all of our students on every grade meet and exceed the standards.

During the seasons of light this month, there are many reasons to celebrate. The faces of so many smiling children and wonderful adults remind us of the gifts we have. I celebrate sharing the gift of your children and your support of all we do at P.S. 203. I wish you and your families many peaceful moments together this season, and I hope you will have many reasons to celebrate in the year that is yet to come.

Sincerely,  
Yocasta Miller  
Principal I.A.

## Family Engagement

P.S. 203 strongly values parent engagement. Parent engagement is essential in fostering a positive educational experience for our students. Every Tuesday from 2:20-3:30, teachers are available for scheduled meetings with parents to discuss student progress. In addition, each grade will be hosting Family Engagement presentations once a month during this time. These presentations are another opportunity for teachers to address common concerns among their students and display student work for parents to view.

We strongly encourage your attendance during these sessions. Individual classroom teachers will be sending home flyers with more specific information regarding their presentation date and topic. The December presentation dates are as follows:

**December 8th: Pre-K, Kindergarten, & 1st**  
**December 15th: 2nd & 3rd**  
**December 22nd: 4th & 5th**



# DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Middle School Applications due!	2 Learning Leaders Training (3/3) from 12:00 - 2:00 p.m.	3 Pre-kindergarten Non-Attendance Day	4	5
6 <b>Hanukkah Begins</b> 	7 Kindergarten Application period begins	8 Family Engagement Session @ 2:20 p.m.	9 PTA Holiday Boutique	10 PTA Holiday Boutique	11 PTA Holiday Boutique	12
13	14 <b>Hanukkah Ends</b>	15 Early Childhood Performance @ 9:00 a.m.  Family Engagement Session @ 2:20 p.m.	16	17 Early Childhood Performance @ 9:00 a.m.  PTA Meeting @ 6:45 p.m. with dance and chorus performance	18 Grades Pre-K, K, and 1 Assembly @ 9:00 a.m.	19
20	21 Grades 2 & 3 Assembly @ 9:00 a.m.	22 Grades 4 & 5 Assembly @ 9:00 a.m.  Family Engagement Session @ 2:20 p.m.	23 Chorus performance at King's Plaza @ 10:00 a.m.	24 Winter Recess School Closed  <b>Christmas Eve</b>	25 Winter Recess School Closed <b>Christmas Day</b> 	26 <b>Kwanzaa Begins</b> 
27	28 Winter Recess School Closed	29 Winter Recess School Closed	30 Winter Recess School Closed	31 Winter Recess School Closed  <b>New Year's Eve</b>		

## Next Month ...

Friday, 1/1: New Year's Day; Kwanzaa Ends; School Closed

Monday, 1/4: Winter Recess Ends; Students Return to School

Friday, 1/15: Kindergarten Applications due

Monday, 1/18: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day;  
School Closed

Thursday, 1/28: Pre-kindergarten Non-Attendance Day



## Student Government

Our Student Government has been very busy this season! Collectively, they have contributed to various honorable causes and continue to work on community service projects.

Throughout the months of October and November, the Student Government collected eyeglasses to be recycled through the One-Sight Program at LensCrafters. LensCrafters sells the glasses to a third party recycler, and the proceeds go toward providing free eyeglasses to those in need.

During his visit to our school, Councilman Alan Maisel met with Student Government members to discuss their school-wide service agenda. They hope to coordinate a visit to City Hall during the springtime. Throughout the month of November, Student Government members collected canned goods from the school com-



Student Government members and Ms. Stein deliver canned goods to The Mary Queen of Heaven Food Pantry to be donated to families in need.

munity. On November 25th, all of the food which was donated by P.S. 203 families and staff was delivered to The Mary Queen of Heaven Food Pantry. Thank you to our Crossing Guards, Ms. Theresa and Ms. Melissa, for escorting the students safely.

In December, Student Government will be selling seasonal school supplies. The proceeds of these sales will be going toward the purchase of gifts for hospitalized teens at Kings County Hospital. The gifts are expected to be delivered on Wednesday, December 23rd.

In January, the Student Government has planned a visit to The Midwood Senior Center to spread New Year's cheer to their residents. Students will be presenting the seniors with gifts and entertaining them with song and dance.

Thank you to all of the families who donated to these causes and continue to support our Student Government. Everyone at P.S. 203 would also like to thank Ms. Stein for overseeing the Student Government and coordinating their wonderful service projects.

## Early Childhood Performances

December is a time for holiday cheer, and what better way to spread holiday cheer than through song! Our music teacher, Ms. Fratello, has been working to teach our students a variety of songs for the season. Throughout December, there will be multiple opportunities for parents to visit the school and enjoy chorus performances. The chorus will be singing at each grade assembly, during the evening PTA meeting, and at Kings Plaza. Please refer to the monthly calendar for those specific dates and times. In addition, grades Pre-K, Kindergarten and First will be having Early Childhood Performances. These performances will take place Tuesday, December 15 and Thursday, December 17 at 9:00 a.m.

### Tuesday, Dec. 15

Pre-K 202, Pre-K 205, Pre-K 206, Pre-K 107, Pre-K 108, Pre-K 109, Pre-K 213, K203, K212, K210

### Thursday, Dec. 17

K207, K211, 1-106, 1-101, 309, 1-103, 1-104



# The Floyd Bennett School, P.S. 203 K

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## SOAR!



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### Parent-Teacher Conferences 2015-2016

**MAR. 3** Afternoon & Evening  
Conference  
**MAY 12** Evening Conference

### LOST & FOUND

Don't forget to look through our lost and found collection, located outside the auditorium. Any items that are not claimed will be donated before the holiday break. Please contact Ms. Moriarty, the Parent Coordinator, for assistance.

## Winter and Holiday Fire Safety

The winter season brings about many changes in your home. The heating system kicks on and you prepare for the holidays by decorating and cooking holiday feasts. The winter and holiday season is also the fire season. More than one-third of home fires occur during the months of December, January and February. Most fires and injuries are preventable by taking precautions that can make the difference between a happy and safe holiday or a holiday tragedy.



### TIPS FOR HEATING YOUR HOME

- ◆ Have a qualified technician install new equipment.
- ◆ Have a qualified professional inspect your equipment annually.
- ◆ Schedule regular cleaning of your boiler, furnace and hot water heater, including the chimney and chimney connectors.
- ◆ Before going to sleep, be sure your fireplace fire is out!
- ◆ When purchasing an electric space heater, look for heaters with automatic shut-off features.
- ◆ Space heaters should be placed at least three feet away from any combustible material, such as bedding and furniture.
- ◆ Only use electric blankets that have the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Mark.
- ◆ Replace all electric blankets that are more than 10 years old.

### CHRISTMAS TREE SAFETY TIPS

- ◆ When choosing an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled as fire-retardant. When choosing a real tree, select the freshest-looking tree available.
- ◆ Select a tree that is an appropriate size for the room. Keep in mind that trees look smaller when they are outside and tree toppers and stands will add to the final height of the tree.

### FIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR CHILDREN

**Install Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors.** Test them often to make sure they work. Replace the batteries at least twice a year.

**Have a Home Fire Escape Plan.** Develop and practice a home escape plan with your family in case of fire. Have a pre-arranged meeting place somewhere outside.

**Conduct a Safety Inspection.** Conduct a safety inspection of potential fire hazards in the home, and eliminate them.

**Teach Appropriate Uses for Matches.** Older children should be taught how to use matches and lighters safely. A child's curiosity may be satisfied if he or she is entrusted to use matches in appropriate situations.

**Provide Supervision.** Never leave a child unattended in a room with a lit candle. Smokers should be conscious of children in the home and keep their smoking materials out of sight and reach of children.

