



## Stay Connected

from the desk of the Principal



### Element # 5 Strong Family- Community Ties

By June 2015, all of our students will learn civic responsibilities by establishing community connections and outreach through correspondence in our efforts to support college and career readiness.

### Learning Opportunities during the Winter Recess

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Schools will be closed December 24, 2014 – January 2, 2015. Snowy days might be ahead of us. Yes, the winter break is right around the corner. So you may watch TV, play video games, or bake cookies. After all of these activities, you might ask, now what?

A break from school doesn't have to be equivalent of a learning-free time for children. For children who might be struggling in school, a school recess can be their opportunity to catch up on key skills and feel more confident when they head back to class. For students who do well, it's an opportunity to keep their enthusiasm high for learning. Parents/Guardians can play a key role in reinforcing learning on an ongoing basis. Here are some tips, suggested to make sure that every holiday is a good balance of free discovery, play, leisure and learning for kids.

- ★ **Read.** Everyone has his or her favorite book, so read them to each other. It's fun for the older kids to read their favorite childhood books to their younger siblings. Act out your favorite scenes for the enjoyment of everyone.
- ★ **Play games as a family and, for some quiet time, as individuals.** Some mind-engaging activities include board games, crossword puzzles, Sudoku, jigsaw puzzles, coloring, finger painting, watercolors, and scrap-booking.
- ★ **Keep up with the lessons your child has learned.** Check those *academic vocabulary* terms and sight words. You can assign your own words too. Practice math facts. Read the next chapter in your social studies textbook.
- ★ **Practice. Practice. Practice.** Workbooks and sites like Study Island and Think-Central can help fill in the gaps and provide the practice needed to excel in school. Try to visit these sites on a daily basis.

Try to provide your child with a variety of exercise books that include fun, age-appropriate games and activities. For example, try to engage students in the following ways: use grade-appropriate vocabulary in original stories, practice basic math facts using flash cards, use educational CDs and games that can equip families with fun, effective and grade-appropriate learning tools during the holidays.

- ★ **Keep writing.** As a family, keep a holiday journal. Have everyone write a few lines each day about important and not so important events. The weather, snowfall, the consecutive cloudy days, and the rainy days are all great ideas. They could write about favorite movies, TV shows, sporting events, people they've visited or people who have visited them as nice ideas too. Families can also write about neighborhood events and news.
- ★ **Help children keep up with normal routines.** It is good to take a break from time to time. But try to keep bedtimes, mealtimes, study times and other important personal routines as close to normal as possible.

### School Programs

#### Study Island

We are committed to making sure we engage students in small group instruction in various situations. We would like to remind families starting January 2015 to utilize **Study Island**. Students in grades 2-5 who are below grade level, on grade level or above grade level will be able to benefit from utilizing this mathematics and English Language Arts online tool.

It is our goal to target intense instruction that is aligned with the CCLS and the NYS assessments. If you are looking for ways to support your child in grades 2-5 at home in ELA and Math, don't forget to **Log on to Study Island**. This online tool will help your child gain valuable practice responding to questions specific to the standards and their grade. Log on with your student's user name and password in order to receive practice on various topics. Visit [www.studyisland.com](http://www.studyisland.com)

#### Drama Theatre Arts After School Program

Students in grades 4 and 5 will have an opportunity to participate in a modified version of our after-school drama program. More information about this program will be sent home later this month.

### Academic Intervention Support Services (AIS)

This program will meet after-school. Children will receive additional support in the academic areas of mathematics and literacy. This program will focus on formative assessments. Students will engage in activities, which will be aligned to grade level Common Core Learning Standards. We are anticipating that we will begin this program in January 2015.

#### CUNY – Creative Arts Team

Thanks to City Council Member Lancman, we will receive the P.S. 117Q CASA grant again this school year. We are anticipating that we will begin this program in February 2015. This program will be a 12-day residency at our school, serving 20-25 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students and 20 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. The sessions will run for 90 minutes and there will be a staff member from P.S. 117Q in attendance at all sessions. Depending on recruiting, the residencies will run either Mondays or Fridays.

#### ESL After School Academy

Our English Language Learners will be able to participate in our Title III ESL Academy after school program. This program will begin in January 2015.

