



The Scholars' Academy

An Accelerated College Preparatory School for Grades 6-12
27Q323, A Knowledge Network Teaching and Learning Organization
320 Beach 104 Street, Rockaway Park, NY 11694
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Principal

Brian O'Connell

Assistant Principals

MS: ToniMarie Sorrentino

HS: Michele Smyth (M, W, F)

April Principal's Report

Delivered at PTA Meeting by Assistant Principal, Michele Smyth

April 14, 2010

- Welcome, my name is Michele Smyth standing in for Principal O'Connell who had a previous engagement at Columbia University Cahn Fellows dealing with our Technology Initiative. Mr. O'Connell asked that I express his apologies for not being present tonight. On behalf of Principal O'Connell and the entire staff, thank you for attending this meeting and supporting our school initiative.
- We also want to thank the PTA for its recent and generous contributions to our arts programs, including music and drama. Mr. Leicht was able to order new keyboards for the middle school & 9th grade keyboard classes, as well as sheet music for the band. Ms. Barget is ordering costumes and props for the middle school drama class' production of *Mulan*, and Ms. Trpic was able to order supplies needed to properly prepare high school students for the comprehensive art exam.
- We are still in need of additional supplies, particularly for our media and music department. We anticipate the possibility of budget cuts for the upcoming school year and appreciate any support you can provide during these difficult economic times.
- **PTC Data:** 55% of the parents attended PTC; 62% of Middle School Parents; 41% of HS Parents; 43% of parents who attended did so in the afternoon, and 57% in the evening

Enrollment Projections for 2010-2011 School Year

- We are currently completing the scoring and ranking process for incoming sixth grade students such should be out in early May.
- We have received our list for incoming 9th grade students from the Office of Student Enrollment; we currently have 140 students on our Program Candidate List, We accepted over 40 students from other middle schools out of well over 500 applicants; we do yet not have the final information about students who may choose to attend private or parochial schools; however, these numbers are more promising than previous years, and we are confident that we will fill our seats for the 9th grade

Instruction:

- Our instructional focus for the month of April is rigor, the concept of providing students with challenging and engaging lessons which require higher order thinking skills. We are also focusing on ensuring that teachers are consistently conferring with the students on an individual basis. Parents should feel comfortable asking about their child's

specific learning goal and ways to support him/her at home in every subject. Ask the subject specific teacher directly.

- Teachers are participating in two professional development sessions in which they are examining Bloom's Taxonomy for Learning and analyzing the rigor within their individual lesson plans
- Students received report cards today for term 1, marking period 1; please review the report card with your child along with their individual learning goals for each subject area which is located in their planer.
- MST Fair: Students will be honored by all of area Home Owner Associations and Videos will be posted on line.
- Maura Hennessey, grade 9, received honorable mention through the Ezra Jack Keats bookmaking competition
- Amnolpreet Kandola, grade 7, won the citywide Statistics Poster competition and will be competing at the national level

Technology Today, Smarter Tomorrow:

- Parents were provided with log in information and assistance during the Parent Teacher Conferences on Thursday, March 25th; our current data for parent use of ARIS and EDLINE is:
 - ARIS % - 46%, up from 36% in March
 - EDLINE % - 62%, up from 38% in March
- We are pleased to announce that we received the Innovation Zone grant through the Department of Education; we will be receiving 19 laptop computers, 2 tablets, a cart and two projectors to support our implementation of online AP courses in the high school as part of this pilot program; I attended training on with Mr. O'Connell this past Friday and Monday to prepare us for launching online courses in September in the high school
- Four of our high school students were selected based on overall excellence in the area of mathematics, and each has received a free laptop computer from Google
- We are also working to ensure that all teachers meet a standard expectation of edline.net webpage content delivery. Please communicate directly with a teacher if you have questions about what is or isn't being made available online. If you have other questions please email Ms. Seung at Soh2@schools.nyc.gov or Ms. Brady X188 or jbrady4@schools.nyc.gov for follow up.
- MST Fair videos and numerous videos produced by our students are viewable online via the link off our website.
- We are purchasing School Messenger to augment our communication systems using Title I Translation Funds as this product permits us to translate all school announcements in multiple languages.
- Add that we are attempting to purchase a Technology Consultant, via AUSSIEnow, to assist some of our teachers in improving home-school communication via improved use of video and edline.net feature use using \$2,898 or 1% of Title I ARRA Parent Involvement

Sports:

- Lacrosse is going forward as a club at this time due to an eligible student shortage
- Girls crew has been canceled due to CHAMPs water time access issue
- We are considering starting soccer or fitness program in its place
- Baseball is under consideration for access to local fields and checking on our number of interested and eligible HS students
- Golf Team is 2-1
- Cheerleading just ended

- Girls MS Basketball started practice this week
- Co-ed Tennis for MS is taking place
- Sports Picnic is for 6th grade only which is taking place on May 20th in Bergen Beach. The top 8 student athletes in the HS are going to receive community service to assist with the event
- The boys MS Basketball team won the championship undefeated!

Trips:

Upcoming Trips include

Junior trip to Washington DC – April 15 & 16

Sophomore Trip to Medieval Times – April 29th

Freshmen Trip to Six Flags – April 30th

May 5th HS Music of India Trip to Carnegie Hall

May 12th & 13th 7th grade Trip to Philly & Gettysburg

May 20th 6th grade Field Day (24th rain date)

May 25th & May 28th 6th grade trips to Museum of Natural History

June 9th 8th grade trip to NYC

Student Feedback to Principal at Scholar of Month Luncheon:

Scholar of Month Dinner Dance Fundraiser

Reward/Incentive for Combined Grade Cohort Lunch

Dances Per Grade

More Dress Down Days

Smart Board with Projector Arm in Every Class

Raise Money via Solar Panels on Roof

Trips to Senior Centers and Animal Shelters and Service Donating Items to them

School Spirit via Pre-game Pep Rallies

Family Sports Night Fundraiser

Smart Boards in Every Class and Teachers Should Be Trained to Use Them

Different Foreign Language Options, such as Italian

A Support Group for New Students When They Enroll

Fundraiser with Principal in a Dunking Tank! The most popular one! Put forth by Custodial Staff Member: Freddie!

School Leadership Team:

C-30 for HS Assistant Principal will be taking place prior to May

CEP is under revision for 2010-2011

Title I Parent Involvement and Translation Services Funding is being finalized for expenditure based upon Parent and SLT input.

Forthcoming Positives:

Funding anticipated for a Subsidized Kaplan Course for up to 25 selected students during 2010-2011

Funding for Queens Symphony Teaching Artists to support our music team. Teaching artists will work with small ensemble groups with music teachers during school and/or after school.

We thank Councilman Eric Ulrich for his support with these two forthcoming initiatives.

Events/Celebrations/Sports:

April 9th HS Outstanding Scholar Assembly

April 9th MS Boy's Championship B-Ball Home Game

April 12th St. Francis Trip for 10th grade
April 14th Family Math Night, Drug Awareness Parent Workshop 6pm & PTA.
April 17th Band performs at Rockaway Little League Parade Ft. Tilden 9am
April 17th Community Planting Day 10am-12pm Alameda Ave, Far Rockaway
April 18th NYFAC Fundraiser Bowl-A-thon 1pm @ Cozy Bowl
April 20th Student Gov Trip to Albany
April 22nd Earth Day Dress Down Day Fundraiser & Movie Night 6pm
April 27th College Fair 6-8pm
April 29th MS SOM Assembly

May 25th HS Outstanding Scholar Assembly
May 27th SOM Assembly

June 1st **HS Sport's Awards Dinner @ Roma View**
June 8th 8th grade Graduation Dance @ Roma View
June 9th NJHS & NHS Inductions 9am & 1pm
June 24th 8th grade Graduation at BCHS

Construction Updates:

They will be putting an electric vault in on the Freeway side of the building. It is likely to start in the summer. However, we will keep you informed once we know. A new roof will be put in shortly as weather is proper. The individual AC units are almost all installed in the classroom ceilings. Electric power is going to be provided for Internet Café, Teal Room, display case, score board, and we requested additional electric to be installed in room 145 so that we have ability to move piano lab from 3RD floor down to first floor. This will help us in terms of HS space utilization. The abandoned construction across the street will be removed by end of school year according to the DEP. We believe they are adding a storage facility.

Follow up Requested of Parents:

Please consider to write to Queens Department of Transportation Commissioner McCarthy directly about the lack of a crosswalk and traffic safety device at B105 Street and Rockaway Freeway. Please consider calling 311 as well to notify of the concrete sidewalk trip hazard on the corner of B105 Street and Rockaway Freeway. This is the south west corner nearest Key Food. Also be sure to inform DOT that they should have school zone and speed limit signs placed between B102 Street and B106 Street under the train trestle on Rockaway Freeway. We have been too patient with this matter and the status quo must be changed before someone gets hurt on Rockaway Freeway.

Again, I thank you for listening to this comprehensive report.

If you have any questions, please reach out to us via email to a specific staff member or through our Parent Coordinator Ms. Brady.