



The Scholars' Academy

Mission Statement: To Prepare for College and Careers of the 21st Century
"Technology Today, Smarter Tomorrow: Removing Time and Place from Teaching and Learning"
27Q323 is an Accelerated College Preparatory School for Grades 6-12
320 Beach 104 Street, Rockaway Park, NY 11694
<http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/27/Q323>
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Principal

Brian O'Connell: *Physical Education/Technology*

Assistant Principals

Michele Smyth: *Math/Arts*

Scott Milczewski: *Science/Safety/Spanish*

Toni Marie Viera: *Humanities/Special Education*

Principal's Monthly Parent Association and School Leadership Team Report 2014-2015

February 11, 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Thank you for your continued patience with regard to the distribution of Term 1, Marking Period 3 report cards. Several technology related issues required remediation. Report Cards will be delivered through students and available online in Pupil Path, Thursday, February 12th, 2015. If there are any questions or errors, students/parents should contact the respective teacher for that class directly via email.

Taking a *Principal's Moment for a Mid-Year Reflection*, I must report that day to day running of the school is very smooth. We are very grateful for the cooperation of our students and the support of our parents, and members of the Parent Association who have afforded us financial support in the following categories:

\$3,000 Advisory Task Force
\$2,000 College Office
\$4,000 Science
\$2,500 Music
\$3,500 Fitness
\$3,500 Art
\$2,500 Drama/Theatre
\$2,000 General Instructional Support
\$5,000 Books, Workbooks, Instructional Materials
\$3,500 Enrichment Programs
\$3,428 Parent Association Appreciation
\$34,928! in Total Support!

Please join me in a big round of applause for our Parent Association Presidents, Executive Board Members, and our G.O. Store Volunteers, and all parent volunteers who help raise these funds that impact the standard of our students' education.

These funds permit our teams and clubs, as well as other enrichment activities to function at a high level. They also help us permit our teachers to feel appreciated and professional.

Comprehensive Education Plan Goal Status

In terms of our School Leadership Team (SLT) CEP Goals, our school is making great progress toward the attainment of our CEP Goal #1 with regard to teacher lesson plan task design to impact student engagement through improved questioning/discussion techniques and assessments that take into account student choice, talents/interests, or ability levels. The SLT reviewed several tasks to see the high level of planning that our teachers are putting into their courses. You may see (via your child's Scholarsnyc.com

credentials) many of these tasks in multiple subjects from our school's web/landing page. The Task CEP Goal will be evaluated again at the end of the year to see the impact on teacher observation data in Danielson Competencies 3B, 3C, and 3D. We also expect to see an impact on the Learning Environment Survey question pertaining to engagement.

Our Advisory Program (CEP Goal #2) is receiving positive feedback. The Advisory Task Force has surveyed students and staff after each session in order to refine and further evolve our work. The Advisory Program is designed to impact the learning environment survey questions that pertain to student trust and connections to staff.

With regard to CEP Goal #3, our Professional Learning Plan schedule has largely remained intact and executed, with minor adjustments due to last minute shifting priorities or new data. In general, our teachers are highly focused on sharing their best practices with one another to impact CEP Goals #1 and 2.

Guidance Team Report:

College and Career Readiness Office Report by Ms. Villa:

For questions, contact Ms. Villa. Mvilla@scholarsnyc.com

- 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 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 yesterday, February 10th. All money and registration forms are due to the College Office on February 27th
- Our Senior Advisory Program Kick-off was today for grade 9 and yesterday for grade 10. All 9th and 10th grade students have been paired with a Senior Advisor, who will work with them on preparing for College and Career Readiness
- Our current seniors so far have been awarded 195 scholarships, totaling: **\$10,660,888, which is a 146% increase from this time last year!**
- Save the Date for our annual College Fair on April 1st!

College Office-Related Regents Results from the January Regents Exams:

- 1 student moved from a Regents Diploma to an Advanced Regents Diploma
- 6 students moved from an Advanced Regents Diploma to an Advanced Regents with Honors Diploma
- 2 students became College Ready in Mathematics
- 4 students became College Ready in English
- 25 scored high enough on the Algebra Regents to be eligible for the Math Mastery Diploma!
- 13 students reached their goal of obtaining a higher score on the Algebra Regents

Mid-Year Student Probation Updates by Mr. Moretta:

Probation impacts students eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities, clubs, and sports. If a student is deemed ineligible, this indicates that they cannot participate in any sports, clubs, or extracurricular activities. Students on probation can enter an appeals process with Guidance Counselor Mr. Moretta. Email: gmoretta@scholarsnyc.com

Probation Reasons: academic, lateness to school, and dress code.

These infractions will be tracked as outlined below.

Students and parents will be receiving several forms of warnings, meetings with deans, letters home, phone calls home, pupil path warnings, etc. as they approach these probation levels.

**All students' dress code infractions and lateness data were reset to 0 at the start of term 2, February 3, 2015.*

Levels of Probation:

Level I Probation:

- One or more Report Card grades below a 75; no grades of 69 or below; OR
- 3 latenesses in a Term; OR
- 3 dress code infractions in a Term

Level II Probation (INELIGIBLE):

- One or more Report Card grades of 69 or below; OR
- 5 latenesses in a Term; OR
- 5 dress code infractions in a Term

Level III Probation (INELIGIBLE):

- One or more Report Card grades below a 65 (FAILING); OR
- 10 lateness in a Term; OR
- 10 dress code violations in a Term

****Latenesses and Dress Code violations will reset every TERM, academic standing is based on most recent report card****

Athletic Report by Mr. Lunati:

Athletics:

- Congratulations to Emma Michaels for reaching the 1000 career points mark. Emma will be presented a trophy during the first round of playoffs February 11th.
- Congratulations to both the PSAL Boys and Girls Basketball teams for making the playoffs. Playoffs begin Wednesday February 11th.
- All PSAL Spring sports will begin on Monday March 2nd. Spring sports include Baseball, Softball, STUNT, Golf, Tennis
- A special thank you to the PTA for their generous assistance, the funding will help us purchase much needed fitness and sports equipment.

Advisory Task Force Report by Ms. Colleran:

- The Advisory Task Force would like to thank the Parent's Association for their donation to the Advisory Program
- The donation allowed us to purchase checkers, Jenga, playing cards, markers, and colored pencils
- The feedback from the teachers and the students for the January 22nd session was extremely positive
- The remaining Advisory sessions are March 13th, May 22nd and June 8th

Testing Report by Ms. Colleran:

NYS ELA and Math Exams

- The NYS ELA exam will take place on April 14, 15, & 16
- Grades 6 & 7 will take the NYS Math exam on April 22, 23 & 24
- Extra help and support classes for these exams will begin the week of February 23rd when students return from break. Students that have been identified for these classes will receive notification letters and permission slips this week. Classes will be held after school or on Saturdays for 6 weeks.

ELA Updates:

- Students in grades 6-8 took a full length benchmark exam that resembled the NYS ELA exam in January
- The data collected from this exam will drive instruction leading up to the NYS ELA exam
- Students will continue to prepare for the NYS ELA by working on ELA test prep materials such as NY Ready, Castle Learning, Newsela, Myonreader, and a variety of resources

Math Updates:

- NY Ready books for grades 6 and 7 are in the process of being distributed to prepare for the upcoming NYS Mathematics Assessment on April 22nd, 23rd, and 24th.
- Students in grades 6 and 7 will take a practice state exam on March 4th, 5th, and 6th.
- Family Math Night is coming on Monday, March 16th! Look for more information as the date approaches.

Dean's Office Report by Mr. Brandeis:

New Cell Phone Policy

The School Safety Team, Student Government, Parent Association, School Leadership Team, and the Cabinet Team, created the policy outlined below. Given our school's portable technology, the introduction of cell phones in classrooms, etc. was potentially redundant, disruptive, and unnecessary. This new policy is very similar to our current policy, laid out in the Parent Handbook, with only minor adjustments.

To take effect on March 2, 2015:

- Phones should not be seen or heard in school. This includes timers, alarms and any other noises. **If a student's device is seen or heard it will be confiscated.**
- If a device is confiscated, the school will return the device to a parent on the 1st and 16th of the month. If these dates fall on a weekend or holiday, they will be available the next school day.
- Use of electronic devices outside of school on the immediate perimeter will be allowed with the exception of crossing streets due to safety reasons.
- Field trip use will be based on chaperone / administration discretion and will be added to permission slip.
- Scholars' Academy and the DOE are not responsible for lost or damaged electronic devices. You bring these items to school at your own risk.
- Students will not be permitted to use electronic devices during lunch, recess, or any other free period.
- Electronic devices may not be turned on or used during fire drills or other emergency preparedness exercises.
- Use of an electronic device during an exam or other assessment, even just to check the time, is considered academic dishonesty and will be handled as outlined in the Parent Handbook.
- Electronic devices **may not be used in locker rooms or bathrooms.**
- Students must be mindful of visibility to safeguard devices in all potential surroundings where such may be stolen

Middle School Interview for Prospective Students

Over 800 students applied for grade six alone for 231 seats. We are decreasing the number of homerooms to 7 from 8, starting with 2015-2016 grade six. We are also admitting more students with Individual Education Plans as part of the City-wide Shared Path to Success/Special Education Reform Initiative.

In total, approximately 450 students will be interviewed. Given this intense competition, not every student is guaranteed an interview, or seat offer.

- Will take place on Wednesday, March 18th from 4 pm - 7:30 pm
- Select students will interview on Wednesday March 25th as well during the regular school-day
- Letters will be mailed home over February break

Sincerely,



Brian O'Connell, Principal