

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

April 1, 2015

Dear Scholars' Academy Community:

The School Based Option Calendar Change Time of Year is here again. Each year, in order to maintain our consistent staff professional learning time, extended time for parent teacher conferences, and early dismissal for students on Fridays, we must have our staff and parents vote on continuing our calendar change structures for the forthcoming year.

Essentially, the school is requests the following schedule:

- Friday 1:12pm Student Dismissals
- Non-Attendance for all students during Parent Teacher Conferences: 11/19/15 and 3/10/16
- Half-Day for students on 11/17/15 and 3/17/16
- All student PTC's will take place on 11/19/15 and 3/10/16
- PTC's will not take place on 11/17/15 and 3/17/16
- Non-Attendance for all students 2/1/16 for mid-year staff data analysis and professional development
- 8th graders dismiss early after completing 3 high school Regents exams on June 15, 16, and 20th, 2016.

Parents may vote using this online form.

Parents will also vote at the Parent Association Meeting.

https://docs.google.com/a/scholarsnyc.com/forms/d/12jm8HaCV8Ay_IxMS8tyvEgMegXthSIIBRtu8umGcYEE/viewform

Thank you and please be sure to check our calendars often and read the items below to find out about important happenings at the Scholars' Academy!

Events Calendar:

https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=seawolf@scholarsnyc.com&ctz=America/New_York

Sports Calendar:

<https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=jlunati@scholarsnyc.com>

Sincerely,
Principal O'Connell

Science and Math Team:

- The science and math team would like to thank everyone who participated in our Family STEM Night! We had over 500 people attend! We thank all the students for their hard work on their projects and volunteered on this evening.

STEM Happenings:

- Members of the Biology Club attended a trip to the DNA Harlem Lab in March. The goal of this lab was to identify and classify leaf samples from plants and trees unfamiliar to them. Once at the lab, students used modern scientific equipment to extract DNA from the leaves, amplified the DNA samples using a thermo cycler machine called a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) machine and determined if they extracted the DNA successfully using a technique called gel electrophoresis. The Biology Club continues to meet to complete the final phase of the DNA Barcoding Lab in school using bioinformatics to analyze the DNA sequences and determine the species of the plant/tree samples.

Humanities Team:

- Congratulations to our very own Mrs. Susan DeRuvo on her recognition as a Capitol Hill Challenge Advisor nominated by the SIFMA Foundation for Investor Education!
- The ELA Exam will be administered on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday April 14, 15 & 16 for all middle school students. Please make sure students get a good night sleep the night before and eat a well balanced breakfast each morning. It is imperative that students arrive to school on time on these days. Please note that the Math Exams will be administered on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday April 22, 23 & 24.
- April 2nd is World Autism Awareness Day. As a school we will participate in raising awareness by holding a “Scholars’ Light it Up Blue Autism Awareness Dress Down Day” In humanities classes, students will also read articles and watch videos about autism and engage in group activities and discussions. We also have a Scholars’ Academy group participating in the Autism Speaks Walk on Sunday April 26th
- April 30th is National Poem in your Pocket Day. On this day students and staff are asked to carry their favorite poem in their pocket. In English classes, teachers and students will engage in poetry cafes. Our 12th grade students will also visit middle school classes and facilitate poetry workshops.

Athletics:

- PSAL Girls Softball team is currently 2-0, next game is at Broad Channel 4/1 at 4pm
- PSAL Boys Baseball team has their first game Tuesday March 30th at Fort Tilden at 4pm
- PSAL Coed STUNT team has their first tournament on April 19th at 10am at Port Richmond HS.

- PSAL Girls Tennis team is currently 2-0 and their next match is Tuesday 3/31 at BCHS
- MS Boys Basketball team under the direction of MS Bender are playing in the Championship game on Wednesday 4/1 at 10am at Waterside School.
- The Physical Education team with the help of Mr Pepe has entered the Get Moving NY contest. We entered a 5 minute video that showcases Circuit Training through the use of Technology.

Testing Team

- Please note the upcoming testing dates:
 - April 14-16 - NYS ELA exam for grades 6-8
 - April 22-24 - NYS Math exam for grades 6-7
 - April 22-24 - Practice Regents exams for grade 8
 - April 24 - Practice Geometry & English Regents
 - May 1 - Practice Spanish LOTE exam
 - May 5 - Practice Algebra 2 Regents
 - May 8 - Practice Physics & Earth Science & Practice US History
 - May 13 - Practice Chemistry Regents
 - May 15 - Practice Global History Regents
 - May 4-15 - AP Exams will take place during these two weeks, please see the school calendar or the [Parent Testing Resource Site](#)
- Note that the deadline to register for SATs and SAT subject exams are:
 - April 6, late registration is April 21: the exam will take place on May 2
 - May 8, late registration is May 27: the exam will take place on June 6
 - Please visit <https://sat.collegeboard.org/home> to register for the exams and to find testing sites

Dean's Report

- Broadridge Financial Solutions/Scholars' Academy Partnership
 - The next workshop being offered to our 11th grade students will take place on 4/21
 - Guests from the human resources department will be offering our students a workshop on interview skills. This is a great opportunity for students to learn, from experts in their field, ways to improve and sharpen their interviewing skills.
- We have resumed outdoor recess during the lunch periods. Please remind your child to bring their jackets and hats with them to use during lunch.
 - Basketballs & footballs should be carried in bags with a handle.
- All 8th grade homerooms were visited to remind them of behavioral expectations for the remainder of the school year. Students are expected to consistently act in a respectful manner towards all faculty members and their peers.

- 8th - 12th grade homerooms are receiving weekly Deans visits to ensure that the climate and tone of the building remains the same. These visits are also instrumental in having the students start their days on a positive note.
- Passes have been distributed to all teachers and clubs that meet during 6th period lunch. This has been beneficial in reducing the number of students that are present and unattended in the hallways during 6th period.
- The Dean's Office would like to give a sincere and hearty thanks to the parents for supporting and helping us to enforce our cell phone policy. The new policy was instituted on March 2, 2015 and thus far we have noted a decrease in our cell phone confiscations. Please continue to remind your child that while students are permitted to have cell phones with them, they should always remain turned off and in their school bags.
- Parents, please speak with your children and encourage them to be safe and smart in all of their actions during Spring Break. Remind them that even though it is vacation, they are still Scholars' Academy students and their actions reflect who they are as individuals and, also, who they are as students of our school. Thank you and have a well-deserved break!
- Our Spring Town Hall will be sponsored by the Parent Association who have arranged for a presentation by John Halligan, entitled Ryan's Story for parents on **May 26, 2015**.
 - Ryan's Story relays Mr. Halligan's tragic experience as a Dad whose 13 year old son took his own life in 2003, after incessant bullying by peers since the 5th grade and online. His story is riveting and powerful, and reminds students that there is a face, a person, a heart, on the other end of the computer screen. Please make every effort to attend.
 - Our 7th graders will also have a presentation by Mr. Halligan on **May 28, 2015** during 2nd and 3rd periods. Parents are also invited to attend this presentation with their child.

Guidance Team Report:

College and Career Readiness Office Report by Ms. Villa:

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

- March to College was a huge success last week! All 10th graders researched and prepared for their college trips and participated in a college tour and information session. The week culminated in a Game Show Finale that can be viewed here: <http://thecube.com/event/482841>
- This past Monday, all 10th graders received copies of their official transcripts, a college-ready/college prepared/diploma status letter, a copy of the NYCDOE graduation requirements, and a SAT Subject Test recommendation letter for select students.
- Our Annual College Fair is tonight from 6-8pm. All 9th-11th grade students were invited to attend and over 60 colleges will be represented.

- A total of 240 scholarships have been received by 116 students totalling \$13,128,916 (up from \$5,817,900 this time last year)
- A total of 1483 college applications were submitted (up from 1193 last year) which is 12.7 per student (up from 11.1 last year)
- Our first Overnight Junior College Trip will take place on April 16th and 17th. We will be visiting Rowan University, The University of Delaware, The University of Maryland, and Georgetown University

March 11th, 2015

Top of the Morning Parents and Guardians:

March is Irish Heritage Month and I am grateful that I was selected to represent Scholars' Academy as a Deputy Grand Marshal in the Rockaway St. Patrick's Day Parade. The absolute highlight of my day was when, from the reviewing stand, I saw the sea of Scholars' vibrant blue marching toward me. The band, cheerleaders, and step team looked and sounded great. Mrs. Kostik, Mr. Leicht, and Mrs. Mainhart are a phenomenal team, each bringing their unique talents to help our students shine. Our step team, funded by Millennium Development's after school program was incredible. The middle school step team was led by Scholars' Academy Alumnus Delicia Hall and high school student, Nyree D.. Our school received recognition for having the most "Spirit." It is certainly most deserved.

More good news: Our boys high school basketball team made it to the playoffs for the second year in a row under Coach Tawil. Last month, the middle school step team took 3rd place out of 15 teams in the Daily News Black History Month Step Showcase. We also are proud of Scholars' students who attend the Millennium Program participated in the MoMath Competition. In addition, Millennium funded chess club members, Jonathan R. and Analeah C. took 2nd place in a recent chess tournament. The Millennium dance team that works with high school student, Victoria M. is preparing to be in a "Beyond the Stars" dance tournament in April. The Millennium funded Drama Club will be putting on a production of "Guys and Dolls" in the beginning of June and our middle school basketball team and robotics team will be competing against other Millennium after school SONYC sites. I am also proud to announce that Scholars' Academy has received recognition as a "Respect For All School" for our work to better connect with students, prevent bullying, and provide socio-emotional support for our students in a proactive manner.

As we pass the midway mark of the school year, it is important that students and staff alike remain focused on each task within each lesson. By having a granular focus as we execute our work, we will be in a better position to reap strong results on the often controversial end of the year high stakes exams. To support our staff and students in maximizing their results, we have a robust academic acceleration Saturday program planned for just about every exam and testing grade. It is imperative that students who are invited to these programs attend, so please remain on the look out for notices and pupil path announcements. If you have any questions, you may contact your child's teacher of a respective subject you may be concerned about for more information. Please bring any questions you have to Parent Teacher Conferences tomorrow as well. By reviewing your child's report cards and grades online in advance and by writing down 1 or 2 questions, you may get more from your time with the teachers with whom you meet. You may also want to also prioritize which teachers you meet with based upon which subjects you are most concerned about.

Please read below for additional announcements from other key stakeholders.

Thank you,
Principal O'Connell

STEM Family Night Celebration:

- On Monday March 16th we will be hosting our annual STEM celebration. Students will be visiting various classrooms during the day and presenting their science projects via online Google Presentations. In the evening, from 5:30-7:00pm, all students are invited to present their projects to their families and friends, as well as participate in several math activities related to Super Pi day this year on March 15, 2015! We invite all parents and guardians to attend our evening event on Monday - hope to see you there!

Science Recognition:

- 9th Grade students Andriana L and Nasreen D are participating in the Urban Barcode Project! This competition increases these students' exposure to STEM activities and is a great extension of the content they are learning in their classes. Their goal will be to analyze specific vegetarian brands in order to determine if these so called "meatless" products are truthfully advertised or simply mislabeled. Students will be using equipment and instruments at the Harlem DNA Lab.

This experience will help these students, and all students competing, learn valuable scientific skills needed to be college and career ready.

Parent Teacher Conferences

- Parent Teacher Conferences will take place tomorrow, Thursday, March 12, 2015 from 8:30 am - 11:30 am, 1 pm - 3 pm and 5:30 pm - 8 pm. Parents and caregivers were asked to make appointments using our online appointment system. The GO store will be open during the conference times tomorrow if anyone would like to purchase Scholars' Academy apparel. The GO store takes payments in the form of cash and/or checks. We would like to thank the PA for hosting a staff meal during this event. We would also like to thank all of our students who will be volunteering as time keepers for community service.

Parent Surveys

- Parent Surveys will be distributed tomorrow to all parents during PTC. There will be various survey centers located throughout the building where you can receive your paper survey and/or complete the survey using technology. It is our goal that all of our parents complete the parent survey this school-year.

Middle School Parent Workshops

- There will be two parent workshops tomorrow, March 12, 2015 focusing on how parents can help prepare their students for the **Middle School Common Core ELA & Math Assessments**. These workshops will take place in the theater from 11:00 am - 11:30 am and between 5 pm - 5:30 pm.

Deans Office

- The Scholars' Academy continues its partnership corporate partnership with Broadridge Financial Solutions, through the collaborative efforts of PENCIL. Broadridge's Human Resources division will be offering our 11th grade workshops on resume writing, interviewing skills and personal branding. The next two workshops are on March 20th and April 21st.
- PBIS and Scholar Dollar Redemption Program
 - students have been redeeming many scholar dollars for incentives and prizes. Students receive these dollars from teachers for exhibiting positive, scholarly behavior.
 - Today was scholar dollar redemption day and students redeemed over 200 dollars!! This means that students are exhibiting excellent behavior and teachers and staff are taking notice.
 - There will be a big pizza party next week to celebrate these students for all of their hard work and CHART behavior!!

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 began in February. Contact your child's math or humanities teachers for more information about these programs

MS ELA Updates:

- Students will continue to prepare for the NYS ELA exam by working on ELA test prep materials such as NY Ready, Castle Learning, Newsela, Myonreader, and a variety of resources

MS Math Updates:

- Students will continue to prepare for the NYS Math exam by working on math test prep materials such as NY Ready and a variety of other sources

HS Testing Updates

- AP Exam Registration took place throughout February, information regarding exam dates can be found on the Parent Resource page located on the Scholars' Academy Landing Page
- SAT and SAT Subject Exams Registration is open for the May 2nd exam date, information regarding these exams can be found on College Board
- June Regents will take place on June 2nd and the week of June 16 through the 24th

Advisory Updates:

- The next Student Advisory Session will take place on March 18th during periods 2 and 3
- The theme for the session is to identify stressors and supports
- The feedback from students and advisors continues to be very positive
- The advisory task force would like to thank Counseling in Schools, SLT and the PA for their continued support of this program

Guidance Team Report:

College and Career Readiness Office Report by Ms. Villa:

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

- Individual Junior College Meetings began on Monday, March 2nd. Every Junior is scheduled for an individual meeting with a college counselor.
- March 23rd-March 27th is March to College Week for 10th grade students. The week is filled with preparation and activities that focus on College and Career Readiness.
- Our annual College Fair is scheduled for Wednesday, April 1st from 6:30-8:00pm. All Junior students should attend and Freshman and Sophomore students are invited as well!
- We are hosting our very first overnight Junior College Trip April 16-17th. All Junior students were invited to attend.
- All High School results came in on March 6th and students are in the process of accepting or declining their offers. Students have until March 20th or accept or decline their placement.

This report was closed at 3:00pm on 3/11/15.

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.

End of 2/11/15 Report

Principal O’Connell’s Statement:

Dear Scholars’ Community,

Great News! Our most recent Quality Review returned a rating of “Well Developed” in all assessed indicators:

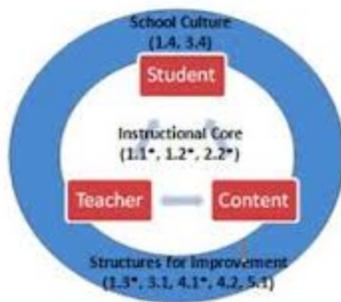
1.1 & 1.2 & 2.2 = Curricula, Teacher Pedagogy, Assessments

1.4 & 3.4 = Positive Learning Environment & High Expectations

1.3 & 3.1 & 4.1 & 4.2 & 5.1 = Leveraging Resources, Goals and Action Plans, Teacher Support and Supervision, Teacher Teams and Leadership Development, Monitoring and Revising Systems

A rating of a “Well Developed” is the highest rating attainable. In short, the Quality Review is an assessment designed to triangulate data to determine if there is sincerity or fidelity within a school’s articulated philosophy and systems for supporting student learning and teacher development.

The diagram below simplifies how the indicators inter-connect.



If you consider our school’s goals and the City-wide Instructional Expectations, then you will see that (based upon various assessed data points), our instructional focus and CEP Goal #1 falls predominantly in the the content realm of the diagram. The Advisory Initiative, or CEP Goal #2, falls within the Student realm of the diagram, and the Professional Learning Plan, CEP Goal #3, associates tightly with the Teacher realm of the QR Diagram above.

The teaching and learning organization's culture must shine through the way it is structured and the way work is executed toward the pursuit of its goals.

Please trust that as we approach the second half of the 2014-2015 academic year, we will have an even more laser focused approach to our work. There are ample events, workshops, trips, games, and exams for which to prepare. We will be under-going construction from our boiler room to our roof (AC) and our ceilings and lights will be replaced. A new sound system and sound management absorption panels will be installed in our theatre and a retractable curtain divider added to the gymnasium. We will be attaining another shipment of technology and we are piloting the use of google chromebooks in the dining room for students. We also will be engaging our Safety Team, Cabinet, and SLT by this meeting's date, to determine a policy that will keep our students safe and focused on their studies while potentially having access to electronic devices, such as cell phones. Of course, our greatest focus will be on instruction and transparency of instruction, so that we may be sincere with our practices and continue to get better each day, so that our students may get smarter and more prepared for their future college experiences and/or careers each day. Thank you for supporting us in this important work, and please, when you see a Scholar staff member, please say thank you to them, I promise you, every member of this team is working very hard for our students.

Please see the more nuanced reports from several Scholars' key staffers below for more information. Let's have a Happy and Industrious New Year together!

Sincerely,
Mr. O

College and Career Readiness Office:

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

- Alumni Day was a huge success! We hosted almost 80 Alumni, ranging from our first graduating class to the Class of 2014. 11th and 12th grade students were offered an opportunity to speak with Alumni from various colleges during an Alumni Fair.
- Today we hosted our annual Local Community/Career Awareness Day, in which over 40 local business owners and career professional came to Scholars' to speak with our students about their careers and professions.
- Save the Date: Junior College Night from 6:00pm-7:30pm Wednesday, February 11th
- 9th grade college readiness groups will begin next week. Groups will be facilitated by a counselor and a senior student who will be serving as a mentor to the 9th grade students.

Guidance:

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

- *Respect For All* Week is next 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 a proud Respect for All Model school designated by the chancellor herself!
 - <https://sites.google.com/a/scholarsnyc.com/guidance/respect-for-all-week-2015>

Dean's Office:

- OORS incidents are down 50% in January compared to the same time period during December.
- There were 3 level 1 incidents this month compared to 4 level 1 incidents in December.
- In December, there were 6 level 3 infractions; so far this month, there have been none.
- In total, there have been 6 incidents since the beginning of the month, compared to 12 during the same period in December.

Science Team:

- Congratulations to the Biology Club and Ms. Pineiro!! Their proposal for conducting an experiment looking into hormones / fillers in meat substitutes titled "*Fooling Vegetarians Is A Missed-Steak*" has been accepted into this year's New York City Urban Barcode Project.
- This year's Scholars' STEM Symposium will be held on March 11, 2015. More information to follow.

Athletics:

- PSAL Boys Basketball team is 6-4 , their next game is home this Thursday at 430pm.
- PSAL Girls Basketball team is 4-4 , their next game is this Thursday at Hillcrest HS at 4:30pm.
- Scholars was granted a Coed STUNT team. STUNT is a spring sport that derives from traditional and competitive cheer. STUNT focuses on the technical and athletic components of competitive cheer. This includes partner stunts, pyramid, basket tosses, jumps and tumbling.
- A special thank you to Mr Kola and Olympic Den, they recently donated softballs, lacrosse equipment and nets. They also donated the new baseball PSAL jerseys.

Testing Team:

- Middle school students will take their midterm exams throughout the month of January
- Middle school students are taking a practice ELA during this week, the data from this exam will drive instruction leading up to the NYS ELA exam
- High school students will follow a modified Regents and final exam schedule during the week of January 26th. A letter to parents will be going home on Friday
- Information regarding testing can be found on the Scholars' Academy Testing Website for parents located on scholarsnyc.com home page

In less than two weeks, the school will be on break for the holidays. **Scholars' Academy is one of the most diverse schools in New York City. In fact, one website (K12.niche.com) depicts us as the second most diverse school in the state and the 18th most diverse school in the country!**

<https://k12.niche.com/rankings/public-high-schools/most-diverse/s/new-york/>
<https://k12.niche.com/rankings/public-high-schools/most-diverse/>

We celebrate a variety of cultures and backgrounds and benefit immensely from sharing our unique perspectives at the table of learning in our school every day. It is a privilege to and honor to work in such a dynamic and respectful learning environment. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their hard work while wishing you and yours a Happy Holidays if you are celebrating a Happy Kwanzaa, a Happy Hanukah, a Merry Christmas, and/or a Happy New Year.

Our students recently demonstrated the spirit of *Showing Thanks and Giving*. A cross section of student clubs raised over 750 toys for homeless children as well as over 750 toys, plus an additional 2,400 teddy bears, named Ben Flyin', from the Happy Hearts Fund and United Airlines, which are being donated to children of the Rockaways impacted by Hurricane Sandy. Many toys and bears were donated at the Lil' North Pole Event, run by Mr. Joseph Mure and a tremendous cast of local supporters, which focuses on raising awareness for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. Our phenomenal band, led by Mr. Leicht, choruses led by Ms. Kostik and Ms. Kohn, and Step Team, led by Scholars' Alumnus, Delicia Hall performed before more than a thousand people at the event this past Sunday. We are very proud of the work toward this end by our students in our student government, key club, and Millennium Development afterschool program. Our Millennium Development students are also conducting a canned food drive.

Our school's School Quality Guides and Snapshot Reports are online. This is essentially the reworked New York City school report card or progress report. Go to the link below for details. We are celebrating the fact that our school earned a ranking of **Exceeding the Target** in every category on the report: **Student Progress, Student Achievement, and Learning Environment.** We are very grateful for everyone's contributions to this success.

<http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/27/Q323/AboutUs/Statistics/default.htm>

Great teaching is a big part of the successful School Quality scores we received. We recently celebrated two very important staff members of our Seawolf Culture. **Ms. Naples, HS Algebra II and Trigonometry teacher, received a Sloan Award for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics and Science.** The award brought \$5,000 to Ms. Naples math classroom as well as \$2,500 to our school's mathematics program. Ms. Naples was honored at the Great Hall on the Cooper Union Campus. This is the same auditorium where Abraham Lincoln delivered a speech on February 27th, 1860. In this speech, Abraham Lincoln defined his views on slavery and his belief and agreement that the Founding Fathers would not want slavery expanded into the western territories. This speech is considered important in the later success Lincoln had becoming the Republican nominee for the presidency.

We also celebrated a long overdue celebration of Mr. Joseph Lunati, our school's athletic director at the High School Outstanding Scholar Assembly. Mr. Lunati is a charter member of our Scholars' Staff, who works tirelessly to build a great fitness and sports program at our school. Mr. Lunati has brought us more than 18 teams spanning middle and high school grades. **Go Seawolves!**

You can watch the celebration via this link:

<http://www.highschoolcube.com/event/high-school-outstanding-scholar-marking-period-1-389686>

Please continue reading this month's report, as this report has multiple contributors from across our school's numerous teams.

Thank you for reading and for supporting our school. I wish each and everyone of you and your families a Healthy and Happy New Year!

Happy Holidays,
Principal O'Connell

College and Career Readiness Office:

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

- 35 students were accepted to LIU Brooklyn during their on-site decision day on Monday 12/8 and received \$428,000.00 in scholarship money
- 11th grade students will participate in our annual Broadridge Career Day tomorrow, 12/11

- St. Francis College will be sending two admissions representatives to Scholars' on Friday 12/12 to interview 12th graders. SFC will be giving every 12th grader an admissions decision and scholarship information on the spot at this on-site admissions day
- All 10th and 11th grade students will receive their PSAT score reports, along with a lesson on how to make the most of the score reports in their English classes on Friday 12/12
- Monday, 12/15 is our annual Financial Aid Night. A financial aid representative from the Higher Education Department of NY State will be at Scholars' Academy discussing the FAFSA, TAP and all matters of financial aid for all 12th grade students and parents
- School Report Week for all 12th grade students is 12/15-12/19. This is the week that the College Office sends all required documents to the colleges to which the students are applying

Deans Office:

For Questions, contact Sean Brandeis at Sbrandeis@scholarsnyc.com

- Thursday, December 11th is our yearly Broadridge Career Day event. Six professionals from Broadridge Financial Solutions, our corporate partner, will be visiting Scholars' and offering a Career Day panel for our 11th grade students. This is the second, of multiple events throughout the year, as part of our Broadridge/Scholars'/PENCIL Partnership
- OORS Incident Summary by Location (Since First Day of School to Date Compared to last year during this same time frame)

Note that the typical Level 1 Infraction is a lateness to class or cell phone

LOCATION	2013	2014
Auditorium	4	1 (1 Level 1 and 1 Level 4)
Bathroom	3	1 (2 Level 1's)
Cafeteria	2	5 (3 Level 1's, 1 Level 4, and 1 Level 5)
Classroom	45	27 (19 Level 1's, 2 Level 2's, 5 Level 3's, 1 Level 4)
Gym	6	4 (3 Level 3's and 1 Level 4)
Hall	6	3 (1 Level 1 and 2 Level 3's)
Playground	21	10 (9 Level 1's, 1 Level 3)

- The number of dress code infractions continues to decline as the school year proceeds. Students are taking the dress code policy seriously and are adhering to the rules. We officially started counting dress code infractions on September 15, 2014. From September 15 - October 31, 2014, we had **150** infractions. For the month of November, we had **88** infractions.

Athletics

Contact Mr. Lunati with any questions at jlunati@scholarsnyc.com

- Our 2nd Annual Turkey Bowl MS Soccer Tournament took place at Ft. Tilden on 11/29. Scholars took home 1st place (5 teams competed)
- MS Boys Basketball tryouts begin 12/15 at 3:00pm, coached by Ms Bender.
- MS Volleyball Championship takes place on 12/18 at MS 207 at 10:0am.

- PSAL Boys Basketball team is currently 3-0, next game today at August Martin HS
- PSAL Girls Basketball team is currently 1-1, next game is today at home.
- PSAL Coed Swimming has their next “home” match 12/10 at Richmond Hill HS

Testing:

Contact Ms. Collieran with any questions at dcolleran@scholarsnyc.com

- Middle school students will take a practice ELA Exam January 14, 16, & 17
- Middle school students will take mid-term exams in January, please check pupilpath for specific dates
- Term 1 Finals and January Regents week will take place the week of January 26-30. High school students will be in attendance only for their scheduled exams

Advisory

Contact Ms. Collieran with any questions dcolleran@scholarsnyc.com

- The second session of Advisory took place on November 24th, the student responses for this session was extremely positive
- The next Advisory session is scheduled for January 22nd
- We would like to thank the PA/SLT and the Executive Board for your support with this program. The designated funds will be used to purchase supplies to improve the quality of the Advisory sessions.

December Trips and School Events

Contact Mr. Brandeis with any questions at sbrandeis@scholarsnyc.com

- **12/10** - Operation Santa - Scholars' Academy band students performed holiday songs today at JFK Airport Hanger for students with disabilities today, Key Club hosted a movie afternoon where students watched Home Alone in the Theater and brought canned foods as donations for December's food drive
- **12/12** - 7th grade Humanities Theater Trip Brooklyn College
- **12/22 & 12/23** - 8th Grade STEM trip to Bodies Museum in Manhattan
- **12/17** - Winter Concert 6:30 pm
- **12/19** - Middle School Outstanding Scholar Breakfast 7am and Assembly 10am
- **12/22** - High School Chorus Caroling Trip to Rockaway Nursing Homes
- **12/24** - School closed / School resumes on Monday, January 5th
- **1/14/15** - Next PA Meeting

November 2014

November is a time that we affiliate with Thanksgiving or the concept of gratitude. We are very proud and grateful of the work that our students are doing with the support of several key staff to teach us all a valuable lesson about gratitude. During Hurricane Sandy, 60% of our students were homeless or displaced. Two years later, our students who are attending

Millennium Development's after school program are leading the show "Thanks By Giving Toy Drive for Homeless Children." Toys are being anonymously collected for donation. The students are partnering with several Millennium Development sites, student government, key club, the student government of PS 132K in Williamsburg (They helped us during Hurricane Sandy too!), and Kid-Care NYC to donate toys to homeless children in our immediate area. The drive started on October 29th, 2014 and ends on November 24th, 2014, prior to Thanksgiving.

Scholars' Academy is also grateful for its hard working staff. Today, we are officially celebrating the tenure of several Scholars' Academy staffers:

Teacher Anna Bulatewicz
Teacher Kristin Cangemi
Teacher Susan Deruvo
Teacher Ryan Milano
Teacher Jessica Renna
Assistant Principal Toni Marie Viera

Tenure is earned through a lot of hard work and dedicated talent.

Tenured Staff Members Have:

- Documented Evidence of **Positively Impacting Student Learning** Through Professionalism with regard to Planning and Preparation
- Created a Positive Culture in the Classroom Environment
- Leveraged Engaging and Purposeful Classroom Instructional Practices
- Imparted Professional Contributions to a High Performing School Culture

Our school community should also be grateful for great news concerning our 2014-2015 new NYC School Quality Snapshot Report for:

Middle School:

http://schools.nyc.gov/OA/SchoolReports/2013-14/School_Quality_Guide_2014_EMS_Q323.pdf

High School:

http://schools.nyc.gov/OA/SchoolReports/2013-14/School_Quality_Guide_2014_HS_Q323.pdf

Both reports indicate that **our school exceeded its target for student progress, student achievement, school environment, and college and career readiness categories!**

Additional great news to be thankful for as well:

- Kerri Naples is receiving a Sloan Award for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics on December 3rd, 2014 at Cooper Union!
- Scholars' Academy student Annika, Magic Box CEO, Nelle Stokes, and I were featured on Fox TV. The segment acknowledged the powerful and positive impact that the student created documentary, titled "Dear World, A Letter from the Rockaways..." had upon on our school's morale after Hurricane Sandy.

<http://www.myfoxny.com/Clip/10815867/superstorm-sandy-documentary>

Additional School Information from Key Staff for November, 2014

School Leadership Team CEP Goal Report:

Currently the School Leadership Team is becoming Familiar with the "Capacity Framework" released by the chancellor's office.

The framework layers concepts in the following sequence:

Trust, Effective School Leadership, Strong Family-Community Ties, Rigorous Instruction, Collaborative Teachers, Supportive Environment, all supporting the apex of Student Achievement.

To this end, trust that our SLT is monitoring our pursuit of CEP Goal #1, by reviewing samples of the complex and engaging task designs across multiple subjects that differentiate for student ability, interest/choice, or talent. These tasks are designed by collaborative teacher teams to ensure that students are supported while engaged in rigorous instruction. SLT is also monitoring CEP Goal #2, which focuses on establishing a structured Student Advisory Program. The Advisory Program creates trust between students and staff, while also ensuring students feel supported. CEP Goal #3 is our Professional Development Plan which was reviewed in a prior meeting.

Athletics:

- **The PSAL Girls Volleyball team finished the regular season with an undefeated record of 12-0. Playoffs begin Friday 11/14 at Scholars at 5pm.**
- **The PSAL Coed Bowling team reached the playoffs for the first time in school history. First playoff match is Thursday 11/13 at 4:00pm at Shell Lanes.**
- **PSAL Coed Swimming team will begin the season Thursday at 5pm at Richmond Hill HS.**
- **M.S. Girls Volleyball is currently 2-1 and play crosstown rival M.S. 105 this Friday at 10:00am at Scholars.**
- **The 2nd Annual M.S. Coed Soccer Turkey Bowl takes place Tuesday November 24th at 10:00am at Fort Tilden. There will be 8 schools from across Queens taking part in the event.**

Parent Information & Involvement:

- Thursday, November 20th is a non-attendance day for all students – students will not report to school on this day.
- Parent Teacher Conferences will take place on Thursday, November 20, 2014 from 8:30-11:30am, 1pm to 3pm and 5:30pm to 8:00pm at The Scholars' Academy.
- The online system for selecting the most convenient time slot is now available.
- Please click on [this link](#) or go to tinyurl.com/PTCFall2014 to indicate the time you wish to attend. Parents and guardians who schedule a time through this system will be seen first. You must create an account in order to select a time slot. If you need assistance with using this system, please contact one of our parent coordinators: Marta Laczynski, mlaczynski@scholarsnyc.com or Felicia Williams, fwilliams@scholarsnyc.com.

- **We will be hosting Open Classrooms on Friday, November 21**
- This will take place from 9:00am – 11:00am (during period 2, 3 and 4 classes)
- Please come visit on this day to watch teaching and learning in person
- You may also stay on this day for small group workshops during period 5 on how to use Pupil Path to stay informed of your child's performance and school events

College and Career Readiness Office

- In order to ensure that this year's Local Community/Career Awareness day is just as successful as our first, we are asking for your help! We welcome participants from diverse occupational backgrounds (including local business owners and entrepreneurs), with varied amounts of experience to speak to our students in a small classroom setting. We hope that you will consider participating in our Local Community/Career Awareness day on January 14th. It is a wonderful event that offers you the opportunity to shape the future of our youth. If you are interested in participating, please contact Mr. Moretta at gmoretta@scholarsnyc.com.
- The College Office hosted a College Standardized Testing Workshop tonight from 6-7pm. All 9th-11th grade students and parents were invited to attend
- The College Office is excited to announce that we have packaged 54 students to apply to college early, an increase from 32 students last year!
- 18 11th grade students will be selected to participate in our yearly Broadridge Financial Solutions Ambassador Program. Students are selected based on an essay application process. These 18 students will have an opportunity to work, firsthand, with professionals in their field, visit the Broadridge headquarters in Edgewood, New York, participate in a college and career day panel, as well as benefit from interview and resume-writing

workshops organized by Broadridge. Lastly, one of our Broadridge finalists will be awarded a \$5000 scholarship, presented by the CEO of Broadridge, Richard Daly.

Science Team:

- There are two upcoming STEM science trips to the Bodies Museum in Times Square. Both the Biology Club and the 8th grade will be attending.
- This year students have been using Vernier software and probes, as well as other hands on lab equipment, which were purchased last year with funds from the PA. We are looking to increase the labs students investigate in the area of nuclear chemistry too with more equipment for the spring. Thank you!

Spanish Team:

- The entire 9th grade is going to see “The Book of Life” this month. This movie is both in English and Spanish and will give students an opportunity to practice the skills they are learning in class!

Humanities Team:

- Every middle school class will partake in a spelling bee and the class finalists will compete in a school-wide spelling bee this month. Our school-wide finalists will participate in the borough and hopefully city-wide spelling bees later in the school year.
- Tonight is Reading Celebration Night until 8 pm throughout the library and select second floor classrooms. Students can play games such as “book bingo” and “are you smarter than a humanities teacher”, as well as blog and talk about favorite books, engage in a book swap, create bookmarks, speak to a published author and watch our 6th grade drama group perform. Assemblyman Goldfeder is also attending to hand out certificates to students who participated in the Summer Reading Challenge.
- Many students are on their way to reaching the goal of reading at least 25 books this year! Have you seen your child reading at home lately? Help support this goal by reading with your child at home!
- The entire 8th grade will travel to Ellis Island this Thursday for a full day field trip. Thank you to all parents who volunteered to assist with this trip.

Media:

- Congratulation to senior Michael Obadina. He is in the running for a scholarship based on a program he completed in which he created an audio segment for Saxelby Radio Scholars. Here is a link to the audio piece, which is blocked by the DOE network, so you'll have to listen at home.

<https://soundcloud.com/scholarsacademy/michael-o-scholars-piece>

Deans Office:

- OORS Data based Goal:
 - After analyzing OORS data, and from observations in and around the building, we will be focusing on the use of cell phones by students in the next marking period. This type of infractions (B05) are up from 15 to 20 during the same time period last year
 - In order to address these items, the safety team will take the following steps:
 - Create two morning messages per week designed to ensure expectations and rules are clear with students, and to dissuade cell phone use
 - Create Pupil Path alerts to parents asking them to speak with their children about proper cell phone use on campus
 - Ensure that each month a reminder of the no cell phone policy is in the PA agenda
 - Have student government and PBIS mentors speak to students and HRs about this
 - Conduct mini commercials during morning lineup for students
- Respect for All Poster Contest:
 - Ms. Worster, working with her middle school students, submitted the top entries in the Respect for All poster contest to our Network Youth Development team
 - The winning posters will be displayed at Tweed, 52 Chambers Street, and recognized at a ceremony during the week of December 8th (information forthcoming from DOE).

Report by Principal Brian O'Connell, October 8th, 2014

Great News:

- Scholars' Academy has earned Reward School Status from the State Education Department for our 2013-2014 data.
- The Queens County St. Patrick's Day Parade & Cultural Committee nominated Principal O'Connell as a Deputy Grand Marshal. There are two events in addition to the parade on March 7th to consider attending. Contact Felicia Williams for more information: fwilliams@scholarsnyc.com.
- Scholars' Academy recently welcomed more than a dozen educators from Shanghai, China, interested in learning how our school manages and integrates technology into the classroom.
- We were visited today by a reporter for being selected as one of the best 63 city schools by U.S. News and World Reports
- PSAL Girls Soccer in their inaugural season is currently 5-0, PSAL Girls volleyball is 5-0
- PSAL Coed Bowling is 3-2, Ryan T. has a 200 average
- The Fitness Team has revamped their units of instruction to include a balance of fitness based activities and sports

Summary of Progress Toward CEP Goals:

The Scholars' Academy is in pursuit of its CEP Goals and Instructional Focus (See September 10th Principal's Report). Thus far, our Professional Learning Calendar (**Comprehensive Education Plan Goal #3**) has been mapped out, complete with Teacher Team Lesson Study Observation Cycles. Teacher team work will center around our **Instructional Focus (Comprehensive Education Plan Goal #1)** of impacting lesson plan task design encompassing differentiated options for students based on ability, learning style, or preference, while also including questioning and discussion techniques, and assessments tailored to such purpose. **Comprehensive Education Plan Goal #2** which

focuses on the implementation of a Structured Student Advisory Program, to better connect students with mentor adult staff members, had a successful launch after much planning was put in place by our Advisory Task Force. Students throughout the school met with staff members in lower student to staff ratios (14-18:1 for HS and 18-20:1 for MS). The Advisory Task Force provided staff with activities and topics with which to engage our students to help them better connect with peers and have an adult point of contact who knows them, but does not necessarily currently teach them in a graded area. These sessions will take place at six strategic times throughout the year to support our students.

Chancellor Fariña's Vision:

The chancellor has provided a capacity framework that stresses six transformative elements which drive school improvement and develop students to compete in the 21st century:

1. **Rigorous instruction** that meets students where they are and customizes inclusive instruction to drive student engagement. This instruction will align in content and practice to the Common Core State standards and strategies across grade levels.
2. A **supportive environment** that encourages students to support one another and provides for their social and emotional growth.
3. **Collaborative teachers** who are committed student success, improving their schools and developing professionally.
4. **Effective school leadership** that supports teachers, works with their school community and builds coherent instructional and social-emotional support to improve student achievement.
5. **Strong family and community ties** that incorporate families and community groups into the school and builds strong partnerships.
6. A school culture based on **trust**; where value and respect exist across the system with teachers, principals, staff, central, and families.

New School Quality Evaluation Methods:

The Department of Education has changed the A, B, C, etc. letter grading of the public schools to a grading system that incorporates student progress, student achievement, school environment (as delineated by results of student, teacher, and parent surveys), and how well schools close the achievement gap for english language learners, students with disabilities, and low performing students, and for high schools: the school's impact on college and career readiness. The school's Quality Review, which is a rubric based audit of how well the school: provides an interesting and challenging curriculum, the quality/effectiveness of teaching and learning, how well the school assesses what the

students are learning, how well the school communicates high expectations, and how well the teachers work with one another.

See a mock sample of this “Snapshot” report below.

KEY:
 Excellent 
 Good 
 Fair 
 Poor 

QUALITY REVIEW

An evaluation of the school by an experienced educator based on a formal school visit where the educator observed classrooms and spoke with parents, students, and school leaders. This tells us about the school’s potential for improvement in the future, in contrast to the rest of the School Quality Snapshot, which focuses on how the school is doing now.

Most Recent Quality Review:
 April 4-5, 2013

Principal at Time of Review:
 Jane Doe

How interesting and challenging is the curriculum?


How effective is the teaching and learning?


How well does the school assess what students are learning?


How clearly are high expectations communicated to students and staff?


How well do teachers work with each other?


STUDENT PROGRESS

How much students at this school are learning each year. It is determined by comparing each student’s test score in 2014 to the test scores of other students with the same test score in 2013 to see how much the student has grown academically.

Improvement on the State English test
 All Students 
 Lowest Performing Students 

Improvement on the State math test
 All Students 
 Lowest Performing Students 

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Student performance on the State tests in English and math; and achievement in high school after leaving this school

32% met State standards on the State English test; the average score at this school was 2.6 out of 4.5

City Average: 27% | District Average: 30%

30% met State standards on the State math test; the average score at this school was 2.5 out of 4.5

City Average: 29% | District Average: 32%

93% is the average pass rate for courses in math, English, social studies, and science

City Average: 89% | District Average: 91%

78% of this school’s former 8th graders earn enough high school credit in 9th grade to be on track for high school graduation

City Average: 85% | District Average: 87%

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

What it is like to be at this school. Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction based on the NYC School Survey.

93% of students feel that their school offers enough variety of programs, classes, and activities to keep them interested in school

City Average: 82% | District Average: 81%

98% of parents are satisfied with the education that their child has received

City Average: 95% | District Average: 95%

88% of students feel safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker rooms, and cafeteria

City Average: 79% | District Average: 77%

92% of teachers would recommend this school to parents

City Average: 81% | District Average: 77%

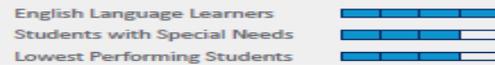
71% of students say that most students at the school treat each other with respect

City Average: 60% | District Average: 62%

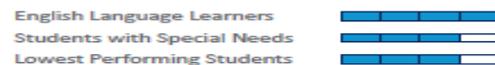
CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

How well schools are serving English Language Learners, students with special needs, and students with low past performance. This is based on progress on the state test: comparing the 2014 test scores for each student to other students with the same test score in 2013 to see how much each student has grown academically.

Improvement by student group on the State English test compared to other students who scored at the same level last year



Improvement by student group on the State math test compared to other students who scored at the same level last year



Movement of students with special needs to less restrictive environments



Which high schools do students from this school most frequently attend?

- 12% Manhattan High School
- 10% High School for Education
- 5% New York City High School
- 5% The High School for Excellence
- 3% Manhattan Vocational and Technical HS

Meeting the Expectations of Special Education Reform

Scholars' Academy has already begun the process of meeting the expectation of increasing our enrollment of students with special needs. This year, we have formed our first Integrated Co-Teaching Class, ICT, in grade six, as well as worked to provide academic programming for several students in grade nine for the first time. We recruited and hired several special education teachers to assist us as we continue to enroll students with special needs in order to meet the enrollment targets set by the Office of Student Enrollment.

This *Shared Pathways for Success* Initiative, also known as Special Education Reform has prompted all screened schools throughout the city to enroll percentages of students, that are comparable with the district percentage of students with disabilities (for middle school) or borough percentages of students with disabilities (for HS), with special needs that meet the criteria of having an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that delineates their services as prompting the support of a self-contained class, an integrated co-teaching class, or receiving services in an integrated co-teaching class for more than 21% of the school day.

Admissions Criteria Adjustments:

To adhere to the special education reform movement and comply with the new state law, the Scholars' Academy formed an Admissions Team and a Special Education Implementation Team (SIT) which was charged with the responsibility to re-examine our admissions policies, rubrics, outreach efforts, and staffing needs. In addition, screened school admissions criteria, due to a recently enacted state law, prohibit schools from using standardized test measures as the majority of screening or admission criteria.

Although Scholars' Academy has never used more than 50% of a student's standardized test scores as an admissions criteria, several changes were recommended by the Admissions Team.

Middle School Students Entering September, 2015 Evaluation Criteria:

Students will be ranked and screened according to application zone in order to receive an interview offer. There is no standardized cut-off score to apply. All students who apply are not guaranteed an interview.

Scholars' Academy Middle School Application Breakdown.

Total Points Possible for Entire Application Ranking: 100.

Testing Data: Maximum 40 Points

- Grade 3 ELA and Math = 5 points each (Total 10 points)
- Grade 4 ELA, Math, and Science = 10 points each (Total 30 points)

Attendance = 5 points

Teacher Recommendation = 10 points

Learning Character Profile = 20 points

Interview Results = 25 points

High School Admissions Criteria and Screening Process For September 2015

NOTE: **DUE TO SPACE CONSTRAINTS, SCHOLAR' ACADEMY DOES NOT CURRENTLY ANTICIPATE RANKING ANY EXTERNAL STUDENTS TO THE 9TH GRADE FOR SEPTEMBER 2015 ENTRY UNLESS CURRENT/CONTINUING ENROLLMENT OF EIGHTH GRADE TRENDS CHANGE.**

SCHOLARS' ACADEMY IS EXPECTED BY THE OFFICE OF STUDENT ENROLLMENT TO RANK STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS INTO GRADE NINE OR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WILL BE PLACED ON THE SCHOOL'S REGISTERS BY THE OFFICE OF STUDENT ENROLLMENT TO MEET THE BOROUGH WIDE GENERATED PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADES.

Scholars' Academy High School Admissions Rubric Submitted Draft 9/30/14

Category		Points
Report Card Grades 50%	Report Card: Math	15
	Report Card: ELA	15
	Report Card: Social Studies	10
	Report Card: Science	10
Most Recent Relevant State Test Scores 40%	State Test: Math	20
	State Test: ELA	20
Attendance & Punctuality 10%	Absences	5
	Lateness	5
	TOTAL	100

Admissions Priority goes to Scholars' Academy continuing 8th graders.

- **Initial Screen / Filter:** Applicants will be filtered by report card grades and any applicants with grades below 75 in any of the four subjects will be eliminated (Missing scores will not be penalized, see below)

- **Missing Data:** Scores on alternative standardized assessments scaled out of 100 points are included in the state test conversion and will be counted as such. For all other instances of missing data, the score will be calculated out of the total points available for scoring and an equivalent % will be used (e.g. a student missing a science report card grade will have his/her total calculated out of 85 points and will be converted to a percent, which accommodates any missing data).
 - In the absence of any specific report card grade, or standardized achievement test score, the total amount of percentage points that a student may earn for ranking purposes, will be calculated out of the appropriate proportional reduced potential percentage points.

- Our September 2014 Curriculum Overview was attended by 442 parents and caregivers
 - Middle School - 360
 - Grade 6 - 166
 - Grade 7 - 111
 - Grade 8 - 83
 - High School - 82
 - Grade 9 - 41
 - Grade 10 - 24
 - Grade 11 - 8
 - Grade 12 - 9

- Please keep November 20th marked on your calendars for Parent Teacher Conferences
 - Students do not attend school on this day
 - Teachers will schedule PTC for parents and caregivers based on your schedule
 - We will have morning, midday, afternoon and evening conferences

Additional School Information from Key Staff for October 2014

- All 10th and 11th grade students will be taking the PSAT on Wednesday, 10/15. All students were given a preparation book to bring home and review.

- The next College Office Parent Workshop on Standardized Testing will be held on Wednesday, November 12th from 6:00pm-7:00pm. This workshop is for all 9th-11th grade students and parents to gain a better understanding of the following exams: SAT / SAT Subject Tests / PSAT / AP / ACT

- Science Department

- 7th Grade students will be going on a STEM trip with Rockaway Alliance between on October 29 and October 30th
- We are organizing STEM trips through Queens College and Brookhaven National Lab to promote hands on activities for all students in MS and HS
- We applied to be part of a National Science Competition (The Science Bowl) on January 11, 2014

- In Humanities class, students are currently working on revising and finalizing their Response to Literature essays involving their summer reading novels. Many students have been utilizing google docs for their essay writing and peers and teachers add comments and suggestions into the shared google document as forms of feedback and assessment. Teachers have been uploading many writing resources, as well as their units/lessons/screencasts on their websites which you can find at www.scholarsnyc.com. Every Scholars' Academy student is challenged to work toward reading at least 25 novels this school-year. This is a combination of class novels, book club books and independent reading books. Please help us push this initiative along at home as well. Lastly, there will be many humanities focused trips during this school year. During the month of October grade 6 will visit The American Museum of Natural History on October 23rd, 29th and 30th. The 7th grade has the opportunity to attend a set of plays hosted by the Chamber Theatre Productions Company at Brooklyn College on December 12th. and our eighth graders will travel to Ellis Island on 13th as well.

Report by Principal Brian O'Connell, September 10th, 2014

Welcome to all Scholars' Parents Former and New!

Vision Statement:

To engage the entire Scholars' Academy Community in cultivating and celebrating well rounded scholars and citizens equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to pursue success and happiness in the 21st Century

Mission Statement:

To prepare for college and careers of the 21st Century

Theory of Action:

To leverage technology to enhance student learning through increased efficiency and communication

INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS

2014-2015

STUDENT PERFORMANCE WILL INCREASE THROUGH STRATEGIC TEACHER-DESIGNED LEARNING TASKS THAT ENCOMPASS QUESTIONING & DISCUSSION TECHNIQUES AND ASSESSMENTS WHICH ARE DIFFERENTIATED FOR STUDENT ABILITY LEVEL, LEARNING STYLE, PREFERENCE, OR INTEREST.

Instructional Focus Comprehensive Education Plan Goal

Goal 1: To apply a school-wide focus on Differentiated Instruction, in order to improve in the following Danielson Competencies: 3b, 3c and 3d (Questioning and Discussion Techniques, Engagement, and Assessment), while ensuring that tiered tasks and access points are central to lesson plan task design.

Knowledge of Students CEP Goal

Goal 2: To implement a school-wide Comprehensive Advisory Program to support the social, emotional and academic well-being of students as individuals, learners and members of the community.

Collaborative Professional Learning CEP Goal

Goal 3: To implement a professional development plan that supports our work to have an increased knowledge of our students and instructional focus.

Technology

We have grappled with several technology speed bumps.

The landing page and email system is fixed and up and running.

The Tech Team has rolled out most if not all of the iPads and other equipment to the classrooms.

Every class has sufficient technology for instructional use.

We plan on upgrading the computers in the dining room.

New Activities for Students

We have partnered with Millennium Development this year who will be providing afterschool activities to approximately 80 selected applicants Monday through Friday this year. Monday – Thursday 3-6pm and Friday 1:15-4:15pm.

Sign Up Soon While Openings Last.

Parents must make arrangements for students to get home from the program.

There are two banners posted at the entrances or Call James Miah at 718-986-0627.

Construction/Building Upgrades:

We have had to have some repair work done on our AC system and fine tuning is on-going since we are still on the temporary trailer unit.

We will be on the temporary boiler for a while until that construction job moves forward.

We finally received approval and a green light to have our first and second floor ceilings and light fixtures on all three floors replaced! This was long overdue and work will start in October.

I have met numerous times with the Borough President Melinda Katz, Assemblyman Phillip Goldfeder, the commissioner of Queens DOT, as well as representatives from Senator Addabbo's and Councilman Ulrich's offices to get some action to make Rockaway Freeway safer.

DOT is prepared sometime this Fall to install fiberglass pylons and markings on the sidewalk to create a pedestrian zone that straddles each side of the pillars. Crosswalks will delineate where pedestrians should walk.

I asked them to consider creating such pedestrian zones on each side of the Freeway, effectively shifting the lane into the center and to use jersey barriers along the sidewalk side to prevent the plowing and blocking of the sidewalks after snow storms which forces pedestrians into the roadway. I also asked them to put a traffic safety device at B105 Street. I also asked the DOT to remove the concrete trip hazard at B105 and the Freeway that I have been talking about since 2005.

I believe they are going forward with their design, however. The current plan they proposed did not include a traffic safety device.

Staffing/Tenure:

We on-boarded many new hires to our Scholars' Academy Team.

We are also announcing the granting of tenure protections to several teachers and our most senior assistant!

Join us now in congratulating: Mr. Milano, Ms. Deruvo, Ms. Renna, Ms. Bulatewicz, Ms. Cangemi, and Ms. Viera (Sorrentino) have earned tenure!

New Staff Members:

1. Ms. Rochelle Brown, High School Dean
2. Ms. Kayla Montalvo, Grade 6 Humanities
3. Ms. Alyssa Agnitti, Grade 6 Mathematics
4. Ms. Susan Sesock, Grade 6 Mathematics
5. Ms. Kaitlyn Doyle, Grade 8 Humanities
6. Ms. Jennifer Bender, Grade 8 Mathematics
7. Ms. Davina Baboolall, Grade 9 ICT/Special Education
8. Ms. Carmen Foschino, Grade 10 Chemistry
9. Ms. Molly Tubridy, Grade 10/11 Global and AP World History
10. Ms. Allison McKeon, Fitness/Physical Education
11. Ms. Christine Chioffe, Grades 8/9 Guidance Counselor

Upcoming School Events:

9/18 Curriculum Overview Night 5:30pm

9/22 Senior College Night 6:00pm

**9/30 Middle School Outstanding Scholar Assembly at 7:00AM
Breakfast/9:50AM Assembly**

****IMPORTANT SCHOLARS' ACADEMY CALENDAR CHANGES to
REMEMBER****

1. Continued 1:12pm Friday Dismissal for all students.
2. Non Attendance Day for all students to expand time for Parent Teacher Conferences on 11/20/14 and 3/12/15.
3. Non Attendance Day for Middle School Students on 1/30/15 to enable all day teacher data analysis sessions of Term I student work and grades on 1/30/15.
4. Early Dismissal for 8th graders with HS who will be completing Regents Exams on 6/16/15, 6/17/15, and 6/22/15.

Under Appeal/To Be Determined:

Early Dismissal (mid-day) for grades 10-12 after completing the PSAT Exam on 10/15/14.

Note: Arrangements will be made for parents that may have child care issues and who still wish to have their children attend school according to the typical schedule/day. Information will be forthcoming.

Celebration of Success

To see more specific information, a comprehensive data report will be made available on our websites, however, several highlights are:

2014 Test Results were very strong overall.

There were only slight declines on very few exams. We improved in just about every exam that was administered from prior years, maintaining and upward trend across just about every subject area.

2014 Grades 6-8 ELA State Highlights

Grade 6-8 NYS CCLS ELA Exams, we ranked 13th, 8th, and 9th in the state respectively!

Grade 6-7 NYS CCLS Math Exams, we ranked 18th and 14th in the state respectively and 2nd and 6th in our peer group respectively.

Grade 8 students did not take the NYS CCLS Math Exam instead they took the High School CCLS Algebra Regents.

Grade 8 CCLS Algebra: 99.9% of the students passed. Mean Scale Score 79%.

In order to achieve mastery for this exam, students had to get less than 14 questions incorrect.

This is the most stringent and narrow conversion chart of all the Regents Exams.

83% of the students scored between a 65-84.

17% of the students scored above 84.

7% of the students scored a 90 or above.

1 student scored a 99!

HS Regents Exams

We improved scores on every Regents Exam, but one, which had a significant increase the prior year.

<i>Exam</i>	Mean Scale Score	=/- Mean scale score	% 0-64	% 65-84	% 85-100	+/- Mastery Rate	Total Tested
<i>English</i>	88	+1	2	21	77	+10	123
<i>US Hist & Govt</i>	92	+5	0	18	82	-1	125
<i>Global History</i>	90	+2.1	0	22	78	+15	116
<i>Alg 2 /Trig Total</i>	87	+5	6	27	68	+22	118
<i>Alg 2 /Trig Grade 10</i>	88	+4.1	4	25	71	+17	114
<i>Alg. 2/Trig Grade 11/12</i>	69	-6.4	25	75	0	-	4
<i>Geometry</i>	90	+4	0	22	78	+16	128
<i>Integrated Algebra</i>	88	+2	0	38	63	+2	8
<i>CC Algebra</i>	79	-	>1	83	17	-	262

<i>Living Environment</i>	89.3	0	0	16	84	0	278
<i>Earth Science</i>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<i>Chemistry</i>	80	+3.3	10	53	38	+18	116
<i>Physics</i>	78	-1.8	14	56	30	-9	126
<i>Visual Arts</i>	85	+8.6	0	47	53	28	17
<i>Spanish LOTE</i>	85	+2.4	5	40	55	+9	121
<i>8th Grade Spanish Prof.</i>	85	+5.8	4	39	57	+21	274

OVERALL ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **80% of students earned a 3 or higher, this is a 3% increase from 2013 and a 15% increase from 2010**
- **Scholars' passing rate is 19% higher than the global average and 13% higher than New York's average**

AP English Language:

- **27% increase in mean scale score over the past two years**

AP English Literature:

- **17% increase in mean scale score over the past two years**

AP Calculus AB:

- **22% increase in students receiving a score of 5**

AP Statistics

- **Three-year average of Scholars' Academy performance exceeded the global mean scale score over the same time period**

AP United States Government and Politics

- **16% increase in mean scale score**
- **Scholars' Academy outperformed the New York State mean scale score by 32%!**

AP US History

- **100% of students received a 5**

AP World History

- **100% of students taking the exam scored a 4 or better**
 - **AP Chemistry**

- Mean scale score increased by 32% over 2 years!

AP Biology

- Scholars' Academy students outperformed both the New York State *and* global mean scale scores
- 46% increase in mean scale score over a two-year period

AP Art History

- Number of students scoring proficient *doubled* from 2012 to 2013

AP Spanish

- 100% of students scored proficient
- 80% of students scored a 4 or better
- Scholars' Academy students outperformed the New York State scale score by 22%

ADVANCED PLACEMENT SCHOLARS

Almost 50% of students!	2014
AP Scholar (Score of 3 or higher on 3 Exams)	22
AP Scholar with Honors (Score 3.24 on All Exams and Score of 3 or higher on 4 Exams)	17
Scholar with Distinction (Score 3.5 on All Exams and score of 3 or higher on 5 Exams)	8
Total	47

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA STATUS DATA 2011-2014

	Class of 2014	Class of 2013	Class of 2012	Class of 2011
Regents Diploma (Pass: 1 Math, 1 Science, ELA, U.S. History and Global)	100%	100%	98.9%	100%

<p style="text-align: center;">Advanced Regents Diploma (Pass: 3 Math, 2 Science, ELA, LOTE, U.S. History and Global)</p>	98%	96.9%	88.6%	99%
<p style="text-align: center;">Advanced Regents Diploma with Honors (Pass: 3 Math, 2 Science, ELA, LOTE, U.S. History and Global) With an Overall Average of 90 or Above</p>	24%	21.6%	16.1%	16.2%

Graduation Statistics 2014

- **100% of grade 12 students graduated**
- **100% of the students earned college prepared status:** 65 Alg II or Chem or Physics, or 3 or above on any AP Exam, or C or better on college course, or diploma with Arts Endorsement
- **98% of students earned college readiness status:** 75 or above on ELA Regents or 480 on SAT Reading or 20 above on English/Reading ACT or 80 on Regents or 480 on SAT Math, or 20 or above on Math ACT.
- **100% of students earned a Regents endorsed diploma**
- **98% of students earned an Advanced Regents Diploma, a 1.2% increase from last year!**
- **24% of students earned an Advanced Regents Diploma with Honors, a 2.4% increase from last year!**
- **The class of 2014 earned a combined GPA average of 90.449**
- **Students earned an average of 12-15 college credits and completed an average of 4 Advanced Placement courses**
- **12 students earned the designation of an AP Scholars, this is a 1% increase from last year!**
- **3 students earned the designation of AP Scholars with Honors, this is a 33% increase from last year!**
- **21 students earned the mastery in math designation (a 66% increase from last year) and 20 graduated earned mastery in science designation!**
- **Students submitted a total of 3,045 applications, with an amazing 74% acceptance rate!**

- **100% were accepted to a four year college and among those are many of the top colleges in the nation – Babson College, Cornell University, CUNY Macaulay Honors College, New York University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, The Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education, United States Merchant Marine Academy, United States Naval Academy, and Yale University!**
- **The graduates collectively earned more than \$9 million in scholarships! That averages to more than \$80,000 per student!**

These statistics are incredible and we are so proud of them. Please join us in celebrating their success and wishing them well on their journey to college and careers!