



SPRING - 2015

*Edward Placke, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Bill Federice, Assistant Superintendent
Jennifer Herrera, District Clerk*

DISTRICT UPDATE - PARENT NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Spring is finally here and my hope is that the snow and ice is a distant memory. Thank you to the Academy administrators and those staff and parents that contributed to successful open houses in each of the four Academies. One of the many highlights of the open houses was at Greenburgh Academy. They had an art exhibit coordinated by Ms. Jessica Fuentes, art teacher that featured the artwork of many of our students. The exhibit demonstrated the remarkable skills of our students as well as the outstanding training that Ms. Fuentes has provided. Please view student artwork on our District Website (<http://gncufsd.org/>). Once on the site, please click the Greenburgh Academy tab.

Another highlight of this spring is the Greenburgh Academy trip to Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. Six students toured Eastern Europe with Mr. Hislop, social worker, Ms. Evans, teaching assistant and Ms. Keenan, social studies teacher. The students in conjunction with the staff fundraised to make this trip a reality. They toured museums, castles and historical landmarks as well as became acquainted with the various traditions of these three countries. Thank you to those family members and staff who contributed to this “life changing” experience.

We are a month away from the beginning of Regents examinations and there are ten testing tips that may be helpful to your child. When you take a test, you are demonstrating your ability to understand course material or perform certain tasks. Successful test taking avoids carelessness. Examples of objective tests are true-false, multiple choice or fill-in-the-blank. Examples of subjective texts are short answer, essay, or oral exams. These tips may help you succeed in having your child’s abilities properly evaluated and efforts rewarded!

- 1. Analyze how you did on a similar test in the past.**
Review your previous tests and sample tests provided by your teacher.
Each test you take prepares you for the next one!
- 2. Arrive early for tests.**
List what you need beforehand to avoid panic. Good preparation prepares you for the task at hand.
- 3. Be comfortable but alert.**
Choose a comfortable location with space enough that you need; Don't slouch; maintain good posture.
- 4. Stay relaxed and confident.**
Keep a good attitude and remind yourself that you are going to do your best.

If you find yourself panicking, take a few deep breaths
Don't talk to other students right before: stress can be contagious.

5. **Read directions carefully!** and avoid careless errors.
6. **If there is time, quickly look through the test for an overview.**
Scan for keywords. If permitted, jot any notes that come to mind.
7. **Answer questions in a strategic order:**
Easy questions first to build confidence.
Then those with the most point value.
On objective tests, eliminate obvious incorrect answers.
On essay tests, broadly outline your answer and sequence of points.
8. **Review! If you have time.**
Resist the urge to leave when you complete the exam--
check if you have answered all the questions, and not made any errors or mismarked any answers.
9. **Change answers to questions if you erred, or misread the question!**
You may also find information in the test that will correct a previous answer.
10. **Decide on and adopt study strategies that work best for you.**
Review where you succeed and where you are challenged.
Check out your academic support center or a trusted teacher for advice.

As we prepare for the 2015-2016 school year the emphasis is to continue digitizing each Academy and further develop Career Development and Occupational Skills (CDOS) options. The focus will be to provide teachers and students with devices that allow them to more efficiently and effectively access online information. Additionally, curriculum that is consistent with the Common Core Standards and New York State Education Department Standard will be purchased. The further development of CDOS options will include occupational courses, internships, job shadowing and enhanced technology. The continuation of further digitizing the District and expanding CDOS options will assist your child in successfully crossing the "Bridge to Adulthood". More details will follow this summer regarding these two District initiatives.

Career Development and Occupational Skills (CDOS)

The Andrus on Hudson Transition Program located at the Andrus Nursing Home in Hastings is now in full operation. Students from Kenneth Clark Academy and Greenburgh Academy are actively enrolled in a number of internships and receive functional academic instruction. The Andrus Nursing Home administration and staff have supported and embraced our students. Additionally, several students from REACH Academy are now also engaged in job sharing and internships at the program. To date, District students have volunteered over 3,000 hours at the Andrus Nursing Home. They are making a difference.

A great deal of progress has been made in the development of the Career Development and Occupational Skills (CDOS) curriculum sequence. Mr. Pizzutello, principal at REACH Academy, is leading this effort. This key activity, which will feature five classes, should be completed by the end of summer school and will be implemented in the fall.

Academics – Many of our students are reading and have math skills below grade level expectations. As a result, one of our primary objectives has been to purchase an online remedial reading and math program that includes an assessment tool to identify student reading strengths and needs. We have decided to purchase I-Ready. This remedial reading and math program will be implemented as of September 2015 in each of the four Academies.

Athletics

The winter athletic season concluded on a high note with the “Knights”, the District’s basketball varsity team, winning their second consecutive Section One championship and recorded a school record of 14 wins. This remarkably successful season was the result of our student athletes committing to specific goals on and off the floor that were achieved under the guidance of head coach Mr. Gaines and assistant coaches Mr. Marcellus and Mr. Federice. The future is bright for the returning student athletes.

The District fielded a junior varsity basketball team for the first time. This group of student athletes made incredible progress under the guidance of coaches Mr. Fava and Mr. Camaj. Overall, it was a wonderful season in that the team demonstrated outstanding progress. Many of these student athletes will contribute to the varsity team next season.

As we begin the Spring, the District has entered a varsity track and field team to Section One competition. The team is led by head coach Mr. Gomes and assisted by Mr. Marcellus. The team will compete in six track meets with the hope of several student athletes qualifying for the Section One Championship.

Facilities – As was reported in the Winter edition of the Parent Newsletter, Greenburgh North Castle Union Free School District has been awarded \$1.3 million to renovate Kenneth B. Clark Academy. The evaluation process has concluded and the repairs and upgrades will begin this summer. I will keep you current regarding this project.

Communication – In addition to parent newsletters, the District website is the primary mode we use to communicate to the Greenburgh North Castle UFSD community. Please check the website regularly for updates and events: <http://gncufsd.org/>

The District launched an official District Facebook page that will also provide you with updated information concerning our four Academies. Please friend us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

You will continue to receive all school notifications, cancellations, delays and particular events by phone. If your phone number has changed, please contact your child’s academy main office to update your contact information.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) – I am pleased to announce the District’s first PTO is up and running at REACH Academy. Ms. Baker, a parent of a student enrolled at REACH Academy, is the president of the PTO and can be reached at 718-252-1867. PTO information is available on the parent page of the District website. The goal is that the other

three Academies will develop a PTO in the future. If you are interested in the PTO please contact me at 914-357-1334.

Important Dates

I have attached the Regents test schedule for your review. If you are unsure of the tests your child will take in June please contact the Academy guidance counselor; the contact information per Academy is as follows:

Kenneth Clark Academy, Ms. Vanessa Clay-Williams, 914-798-7200
Greenburgh Academy, Mr. Timothy Capers, 914-476-1938
REACH Academy, Ms. Owens, 914-686-8159
Kaplan Career Academy, Ms. Sheree Johnson, 845-522-8460

Administrative Contacts

Edward Placke, Superintendent of Schools (914) 693-4309
Bill Federice, Asst. Superintendent (914) 231-8624
Robin Levine, Director of Pupil Services (914) 693-3030 ext.2232
Jennifer Herrera, Secretary to Supt./District Clerk (914) 231-8627
Veronica Howell, Greenburgh Academy Principal (914) 476-1938
David Gualtiere, Greenburgh Academy Assistant Principal (914) 476-1938
Jay Posephney, Clark Academy Principal (914) 798-7200
Anthony Anderson, Clark Academy Dean of Students (914) 798-7200
Paul Pizzutello, REACH Academy Principal (914) 686-8159
Anthony DiMarco, Kaplan Career Academy Principal (845) 522-8460
John Marino, Kaplan Career Academy Assistant Principal (845) 522-8460