

Preparing for Renewal!



Save the Dates!

- **Report Card Conferences:** Friday, 12/9 3:15-6:00 pm
- **Parent Party:** Tues. 12/13 at 5:30pm
- **School Wide Interim Assessments:** Wed. 12/14 and Thurs. 12/15
- **Half Day 12:30 Dismissal:** Friday 12/16
- **PJ Student Party:** Fri. 12/16 5:30-8:30pm
- **Board Meeting:** Tues. 12/20 at 6:00 pm
- **12:30 Half Day Dismissal for Winter Break:** Fri. 12/23
- **First Trimester Honors Awards Ceremony:** Fri 12/23
- **School Closed for Winter Break:** Mon. 12/26-Mon. 1/2
- **School Reopens:** Tues. 1/3

**We wish you peace,
happiness, and
health this
holiday season!**
*Greetings from the
Pride Academy
staff and
administration.*



Pride Academy opened its doors in September 2008 after writing a rigorous Charter Application and having it reviewed and approved by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). Every 5 years, charter schools are required to go through a Charter Renewal process in order to continue to operate for the next five year term. The Charter Renewal process involves two major steps. The first step was writing a Charter Renewal application that was completed in October to describe the school's progress in the following areas:

- Achieving our school Mission
- Meeting our academic/ non-academic goals
- Involving the community and parents
- Demonstrating fiscal soundness
- Planning for the next charter term

The second major step involves hosting a site visit from a team of NJDOE officials. The site visit is designed to objectively evaluate the success of our school, our fidelity to our School Mission, and to see the school in

action. Our Site Visit is schedule for **Thursday January 12th, 2012**. At the time of the visit, reviewers will review and document evidence about our school's performance, implementation of the educational, organizational, and fiscal program outlined in our charter and our compliance with laws and regulations. Information will be gathered through observations, review of documents, and interviews with Board of Trustee members, faculty and staff, parents and students.

We are excited about the opportunity to host this visit so that we can showcase the phenomenal work of your children and our faculty and staff as well as receive guidance and feedback that will help us continue to grow and strengthen our program. If you would like to be part of a group of parents/family members to be interviewed by the NJDOE site visit team, please complete the invitation attached to this newsletter.

Report Card Conferences

Please make every effort to come to school on Report Conference afternoon this **Friday, December 9th between 3:15 pm and 6:00 pm** to pick up your child's report card and meet with teachers. Report cards will not be mailed or sent home with your child, so please arrange alternative times to meet with your child's teachers if you are unable to attend this Friday. In order to ensure that your meetings with teachers are productive, please consider these tips:

- Prepare your questions in advance.
- Let the teachers know what your concerns are and what you feel is important for them to know about how your child learns.
- Ask to look at your child's work.
- Be open-minded in working with the teacher to develop an action plan to help address any concerns that you may have.
- Share your expertise about your child to help the teachers understand how best to work with your child.
- Share any situations that may be going on at home that may be impacting your child's academic performance or behavior.
- Be prepared to hear good news as well as perhaps hearing news that may be disappointing or surprising. Your children's teachers may have insights and knowledge about your child's learning that you may not have heard before. Be open to discussing these calmly and professionally.
- After the conference, be sure to take time to sit down with your child to discuss his/her report. Celebrate GREAT accomplishments and action-plan for improvement.

Cultural Exchange with Ghana! by Ms Dailey

This school year, Pride Academy is lucky enough to be involved with Newark's Akoma Ntoso Cultural Center's Oiada International Ambassador Program! *What is it?* This program started in 1997 and aims to guide students to become global citizens through the use of state of the art videoconferencing technology that connects our students with students in Ghana. Through live face to face exchanges, students are able to share interests as well as learn about the cultures of their peers in Africa. *How does it work?* Twice a month, our student ambassadors will be assigned topics of interest such as American styles of music, holidays, and popular sports. Using our school's mobile laptop labs, we are then able to practice research skills in order to put together dynamic, fact-filled presentations for our audience abroad. In turn, our Ghanaian peers will present the same topic to us, but from their perspective! Students will be learning from students in a fun and exciting way, while strengthening writing, speaking, and listening skills.

On Friday, November 18, our student ambassadors experienced interacting with their peers abroad for the first time. Members of the Oiada International Program joined us and helped us to experience a virtual field trip to Ghana. The Ghanaian teachers and students warmly welcomed us with songs and introductions before sharing a bit of their country's rich history and culture. Our students then participated in a question and answer session, during which they exchanged information about topics of their choice. They learned that some things, such as length of school day and style of dress can be quite different for many in Ghana than in East Orange, NJ. However, they also learned that they have a lot in common, such as being fans of NBA player LeBron James, as well as enjoying cartoons and shopping. Our new Ghanaian friends concluded our session by singing and dancing for us before both groups expressed their excitement for our next teleconference. By the end of the period, we all knew why Oiada, which means "linked hearts," is an appropriate name for the program, and that this was just the beginning of a beautiful new relationship.



For more information and photos from the event, see www.oiadaintl.org

"Pride Academy Charter School endeavors to ignite success in middle school students of all abilities through a curriculum rooted in the values of peace, respect, integrity, determination, and empathy. By establishing a community dedicated to academic achievement, mastery of fundamental skills, positive leadership, and active service, Pride Academy Charter School strives to embolden its students to harness their own power to shape their skills, positive leadership, and active service, Pride Academy Charter School strives to embolden its students to harness their own power to shape their futures and the world."

Our School **Mission Statement** encompasses all that we want for your children and it guides our work each and every day. Please read it with your children and talk about how you and your child can work towards ensuring that *academic achievement, positive leadership and active service* can continue to thrive and empower everyone in our school community.