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March 2017

PARENT NEWSLETTER

March 3 Last Day of Trimester 2!	March 9 School Leadership Team Meeting 7:30 AM	March 14 PTA Meeting  7:00PM	March 16 Parent/Teacher Conferences  Parent School Survey begins! Pick up Green Envelope!	March 28-30 NYS ELA Assessments	March 31 Last day to submit NY School Survey 
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Our instructional focus for 2016-2017 is:

Students will expand their instructional experiences by engaging in discussions which include higher order thinking questions, rigorous academic content, language development, student self-assessment and reflection across disciplines. Teachers will have an opportunity to assess and reflect upon their own practice to integrate enhanced strategies.

PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS

Greetings Russell Sage Community!

We hope everyone had a safe, and restful winter recess filled with happiness, rest, and family time. During the month of March our students, staff, and community will be developing our 100% Respect Values list. A town hall meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 14th to publicly display our 100% Respect Values lists and share the culmination of student and staff collaboration. We will have our 100% Respect Values lists on display outside of our main office. In addition to the public presentation of our 100% Respect Values list our Gold, Silver and Bronze honor roll students will be on display for the 2nd trimester.

We are now in March. With a new month comes the opportunity for reflection followed by the setting of new goals and the revision of action plans. During our March School Leadership Team meeting we will reflect on the progress of our CEP goals. We encourage all parents to attend the March SLT and PTA meetings during which time the progress of the CEP goals will be discussed.

The CEP goals serve both as a school self-assessment and guide for the 2016-2017 academic year. The SLT (School Leadership Team) comprised of parents and staff have authored these goals together. The CEP goals were derived from the framework that all great schools address rigorous instruction, create a supportive environment, foster collaboration among teachers, are driven by effective leadership, and are tireless in their efforts to strengthen family-community ties. For each element of the framework we have listed a CEP goal, an action plan, and the way in which we will measure our achievement of the goal. Working together as one community we are confident we will continue to make progress toward each goal.

Russell Sage 2016-2017 CEP Goals

Rigorous Instruction

By June 2017 all students inclusive of ELLs, Special Education and Lowest 1/3 students will improve the quality of argumentative writing across content areas by 3% as measured by the spring 2017 MOSL.

Supportive Environment

By June 2017, there will be a 5% increase in students who agree with the statement “Most students treat each other with respect in the School Environment section of the 2017 New York City School Survey Report.

Collaborative Teachers

By June 2017, 20% of Grade 8 ELLs and Latino/Hispanic males will improve their science skills as evidenced by the 2017 NYS Science Exam and MOSL assessments by 3% through intense laboratory opportunities and science experiences both in and out of the classroom environment.

Effective School Leadership

By June 2017, school leaders will support the professional learning committee by communicating observational feedback and creating professional learning offerings that support their needs as evidenced by planning and execution of the lessons, thereby increasing 5% of teachers who indicate that school leaders give them regular and helpful feedback about their teaching practice in the systems for improvement section on the 2016 NYC survey report.

Strong Family and Community Ties

By June 2017, School-Wide Communication with all parents of students inclusive of ELLs, Special Education and Lowest 1/3 will increase by 20% as measured by Skedula login.

Sincerely,
John Greggo
Principal, I.A.

SUBJECT FOCUS

ELA

6th Grade students will be working on literary analysis of the theme of Frightful's Mountain. They will continue reading the novel while exploring literary themes and citing evidence from multiple texts to write their argument essay. 7th Grade students are finishing up a unit on child labor in 1840s textile mills using the novel *Lyddie* as their anchor text. Coming soon, a unit featuring the life of Frederick Douglass, former slave, abolitionist, public speaker on women's rights, activist and more. 8th Grade students will be finishing up an in depth literary study of *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee and will complete their culminating project on argument essay writing. Teachers from all grades will continue to incorporate in their lessons a review of strategies and skills of test taking for the upcoming 2017 NYS ELA Exam which takes place on March 28, 29 and 30.

Congratulations to Carolina Tucker of Class 8s1 and Ethan Yen of Class 821 who will be representing the Russell Sage JHS community at the Daily News New York Citywide Spelling Bee Final Competition on March 21 at the New York City Public Library. We wish them the very best of luck!

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

6th Grade Latin classes will be exploring how the Ancient Romans were able to do complex computations with Roman numerals! The 6th Grade Spanish classes will be starting a unit on food where they will learn vocabulary, how to place an order in a Spanish restaurant, and make comparisons of individual cultures to the cuisine of Spanish speaking countries. Students will also be creating their own Spanish dish to share with their classmates. 7th Grade French students will be "visiting" Quebec to explore various seasonal activities. 7th and 8th Grade Spanish students are working on the different tenses of verbs while expanding their vocabulary. The students will be learning about the cultural similarities and differences between the Hispanic countries. 8th Grade French students will be reading authentic French poetry and dramatizing various poems.

ENL

Our 6th, 7th and 8th Grade ENL students continue to be fully immersed in all aspects of the Russell Sage life. Please encourage your child to come to the after school program on Wednesday and Thursday to continue to prepare them for the upcoming NYSESLAT. Testing will start on April 10 and continue through May 19.

MATH

Your child will be learning amazing, new things in mathematics this March. In 6th grade, students will learn to ask "How can you write algebraic expressions and use models to decide if expressions are equivalent? and How can you use the order of operations to evaluate algebraic expressions?" This will meet standards 6.EE.2a and 6.EE.2c. Students will be able to use numbers and variables to evaluate expressions, translate written phrases into algebraic expressions and translate algebraic expressions into written phrases. This will help the sixth graders understand the foundations of Algebra so that they will be able to succeed on the Algebra I regents in a few years. In addition, in order to enrich the students who have already mastered the 6th grade expressions and equations standards, we are introducing them to the Algebra I standards that directly relate to the current content strand! Seventh grade students will start the month asking "How can you use variables to represent quantities in a real-world problem? Students will be able to construct simple equations and inequalities to solve problems by reasoning about the quantities.

The afterschool enrichment geometry class meets every Tuesday. The class has covered the essentials such as definitions and classification of triangles. They have also covered proving triangles congruent and congruence of their parts. We are just entering into Logic and truth tables. The goal is to have the students high school ready to excel in their geometry class as a freshman in high school.

SCIENCE

Science is equally exciting! In 6th grade your child will be able to provide evidence that living things are made up of cells. They will learn the difference between plant and animal cells. The students will be able to describe the functions of a cell as a whole and the primary role of identified parts of the cell, specifically the nucleus, chloroplasts, mitochondria, cell membrane and cell wall. In 7th grade students will learn about cellular respiration and the importance of the mitochondria. This is the most important cell organelle in the body which transforms glucose and oxygen to energy, also known as ATP (adenosine triphosphate). In 8th grade students will learn about weather and climate. Students will be able to know the forces that changes the earth's surface. They will also learn about the instruments used to measure weather elements. Students will be able to identify all the parts of the water cycle. Students will know how the water evaporates from the surface of the earth, rises into the atmosphere, cools and condenses into rain or snow in clouds, and falls again to the surface as precipitation.

SOCIAL STUDIES

In 6th grade students will be looking at the Ancient Civilization of India and China. Students will learn about their religions, review ancient artifacts and discuss the Mongolian period of the silk road. Students will celebrate the Festival of Colors which starts the evening of Sunday March 12th and ends the evening of Monday March 13th. In India, Holi announces the arrival of spring and the passing of winter. In 7th grade student will learn about the New Nation, America Under the Constitution. Their project will entail being a campaign manager during the elections of the 1800's. Students will decide if they want to represent the Federalist Party under John Adams or the Democratic-Republican Party formed by Thomas Jefferson. In 8th grade the students will learn about the Great Depression. They will acquire the knowledge of what led to the Great Depression which was the deepest and longest-lasting downturn in the history of the United States. They will also learn how the stock market crash which led to more than 3.2 million people unemployed. Students will discuss how the government tried to fix these problems with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal Policy. Their project will entail having students create a poem, rap or song about the Great Depression using several important terms learned in class.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Our Special Education department is working together to ensure our students with IEP's are receiving correct testing accommodations for the upcoming State Exams.

Physical Education

Our students are actively engaged in learning skills for the great sport of Volleyball. Currently all grades are participating in this sport are learning the basic rules/routines of the game as well as proper positioning passing and spiking the ball. Students are given the opportunity to self assess and peer assess each other's form and receive direct explicit instruction by the PE teachers as necessary. The volleyball unit will culminate the second week of March with team tournaments. Good luck to all students.

Congratulations to Mr. Bates and his CHAMPS volleyball team for finishing third in their division.

Talent Department

Thanks to the PTA for partnering with us for a fundraiser for a new stand up piano for the chorus room. On February 13th and 14th many Valentine goodies were available for our students to purchase during their lunch periods. On February 14,

2017 at our PTA meeting the remaining funding needed for the piano was voted on and approved! Thanks to all parents who participated.

On February 3, 2017 Ms. Robert our dance teacher arranged for the Martha Graham Dance Company to come for an interactive meeting with their semi professional dance troupe for our 8th grade students. The focus was to introduce the students to the language and history of modern dance. The Martha Graham Dance Company is scheduled to return to Russell Sage for a 6th grade assembly on March 1, 2017. Thank you Ms. Robert!

PARENT CORNER

Upcoming Parent Workshops Schedule:

Parent workshops are held in Library or Auditorium. All parents are encouraged to attend. For more information: Contact Shoko Obata at sobata@schools.nyc.gov or call 718-830-4970 ext.1561.

March 2 at 7:30am – NY State test : Learn how you can assist your child to prepare for this year's state test

March 3 at 9:30am – Parent Book Club : The language of Flowers by by Vanessa Diffenbaugh. ** Book Club is a great opportunity to learn how to lead a book conversation with your child**

March 8th at 9:30am – Applying to High School for 6 and 7 grade parents

April (Date: TBD) – Regents Exam , Science Living Environment & Math Algebra I

April (Date: TBD) – Language Proficiency Exam

Russell Sage Community Outreach

Russell sage has extended outreach efforts to build school partnerships by visiting our feeder schools throughout the year. Last October, Dr. Alban was invited to PS 144 PA meeting to present our talent classes at their middle school fair. In February, Mrs. Obata held an Origami parent workshop at PS 174. Parents of 1st grade to 4th grade learned Art & Mathematical skill by making Origami polyhedron. In May, Mr. Collins and Math team are planning to have the annual visits to P.S. 174 , PS 144 and PS 101. There will be a team presentation and math quizzes which always bring an excitement to our prospective Sage students!

NYC School Survey begins!

Pick up your green survey at Parent Teacher Conference and submit via online or return the envelope to school by March 31st.

There will be raffle and class prizes!!

