

# School Parent Association and School Leadership Team meeting Schedule

595 Gerard Ave  
Bronx, NY 10451  
718-742-6082  
**December 2010**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>November 29</b> Back to School	<b>November 30</b> Back to School	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Autism Parent Support Group at Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center at 10 am for information call 718-590-1800 x6653	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> School Leadership Team Meeting at BCS 595 Gerard Ave 718-742-6080	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Urban Advantage Parent trip to The Bronx Zoo	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Urban Advantage Parent trip to The New York Botanical Garden	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Parent Support Group At 338 from 9-10 Room 116	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> School Closed Winter Recess	<b>25</b> Christmas Day
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> School Closed Winter Recess	<b>28</b> School Closed Winter Recess	<b>29</b> School Closed Winter Recess	<b>30</b> School Closed Winter Recess		

Urban Advantage Parent Trip to The Bronx Zoo on Dec 10 and New York Botanical Garden on Dec 17  
For more information contact your parent coordinator  
Jose A. Vazquez 347-563-5166

**From the Parent Association and Parent Coordinator**  
We look forward to sharing an exciting year of growth with us. We are here to assist you should you have any concerns or issues you wish to discuss with us. Feel free to contact the school or Parent Coordinator should you require a meeting with your child's teacher or related service provider.

**Parent Comments from 338**  
I'm so impressed and thrilled with the progress Avian has shown me so far. Within a matter of three months he was able to spell his name out loud, sing about five songs, follow two step commands, and surprisingly started to talk a little. Miss Lydia is working so well with Avian and is by far the best teacher I've ever met.  
**Laura Colon Parent Association Secretary for P723X**



## P 7 2 3 X H A W K S N E W S December 2010



Christine Walsh, Principal  
Jose A. Vazquez, Parent Coordinator  
Lisa Colon, P.A. President

Ron Rodkin, Assistant Principal  
Jamie Watkins, Assistant Principal  
Lillian Edwards, Assistant Principal



# Happy Holidays

**P723X Main Site**  
**3540 Bivona Street**  
**Bronx, NY 10475**  
**718-320-1222 Fax # 718-320-2213**



happy Hanukkah

- |   |  |  |   |   |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| Ittleson<br>5050 Iselin Ave.<br>Riverdale, NY 10471<br>Tel # 718-543-2750 | Bronx Children's School<br>595 Gerard Ave<br>Bronx, NY 10451<br>Tel # 718-742-6082     | Astor @Byron<br>4330 Byron Avenue<br>Bronx, NY 10466<br>Tel# 718-994-8286          | Astor @ Tilden<br>750 Tilden Street<br>Bronx, NY 10467<br>Tel# 718-519-7338 | P723X@338<br>1780 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.<br>Bronx, NY 10453<br>718-960-4400                 |
| P723X@218<br>1220 Gerard Ave.<br>Bronx, NY 10452<br>Tel # 718-588-3105    | P723X@49<br>383 East 139 <sup>th</sup> Street<br>Bronx, NY 10454<br>Tel # 718-402-2516 | Bronx Lab School<br>800 East Gun Hill Road<br>Bronx, NY 10467<br>Tel# 718-696-3700 | P723X@189<br>3441 Steenwick Ave.<br>Bronx, NY 10475<br>Tel# 718-409-6808    | Peace and Diversity Academy<br>1180 Rev. James A. Polite Ave<br>Bronx, NY 10459<br>718-794-6016 |

From the Principal's Desk:



Dear Parents/Guardians:

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of school events that occurred this month. Parent/Teacher Conferences were held this month. I would like to thank all of our families that were able to attend the event. We had over 125 families attend Parent/Teacher Conferences. If you were unable to attend but would like an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher, please feel free to contact the school. As you know, parental involvement is directly linked to student success!

On November 16<sup>th</sup> we held the "Ribbon Cutting Ceremony" at our new site located at the Morris Heights Educational Complex (338X). The day included representatives from the Bronx Borough President's office Aurelia Greene, Assemblywoman Vanessa L. Gibson, State Senator Jose M. Serrano, CES President Teddy Garcia, Senior Fellow CEI-PEA John Falco, D75 Network Leader Barbara, Joseph, Superintendent District 9, Dolores Esposito, P.S. 204X chorus and orchestra performances, and our school led the Pledge of Allegiance.

I would like to congratulate Mr. Cappelán, and Tilden students, and Ms. Rizzo, and Bviona students, because their art work was chosen to be a part of the 2011 VSA calendar. Mr. Cappelán's entry "Colors of New York City" was selected as the cover for the calendar and Ms. Rizzo's entry "Enjoying the Many Worlds of New York City" was selected as the November picture. Both murals will be on display at festivals and sites throughout New York City. Congratulations to both sites!

Students at all sites have started service projects as part of "giving back to the community". Thanksgiving celebrations are being planned at each site. Our school wide-theme for November was "Exploring Democracy and Government". Students learned about the voting process, the government and why there is a need for laws. Additional topics included discussions about the meaning of the Thanksgiving holiday. Next month's theme is "Winter Celebrations Around the World".

All sites are involved in an "Inquiry Process" focusing on the writing process. Additionally, alternate assessment sites are involved in a "Choice Making" inquiry. The focus of each inquiry is to improve our students' ability to communicate more effectively.

Our school-wide attendance is currently at 89.60%. The NYC Department of Education requires a minimum of 90% attendance for all students. Please help us reach our goal. The following sites had 90% or better attendance for the month of October 2010: Bronx Lab High School (95.5%), Peace & Diversity High School (94.2%), Astor Tilden (93.4), Astor Byron (91.9%) and Ittleton (91.62%).

As a reminder all students should be wearing uniforms on a daily basis. Please contact Mr. Vazquez, Parent Coordinator, at 347-563-5166, with any questions.

On behalf of the P723X community I would like to wish and your family a Happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,

*Christine Walsh*

Principal



## American Museum of Natural History *Kwanzaa Fest 2010*

**Sunday, December 27**  
Milstein Hall of Ocean Life 12 noon-5pm

Kwanzaa Spirit 2010! is an all-day celebration honoring the seven African-based principles of Kwanzaa (called Nguzo Saba in Swahili) featuring an international marketplace and performances of song, dance, and spoken word.

For more information: [www.amnh.org/kwanzaa](http://www.amnh.org/kwanzaa)



### **Bronx Zoo Hess Clydesdale Carriage Rides** Weekends, **Nov. 6 through Dec. 19 & 26-31**

Beloved Clydesdale horses Ranger, Jesse, and Monty will take guests on festive wagon rides around the zoo, Saturdays & Sundays throughout the holiday season. Special winter activities continue in December.

For more information: [www.bronxzoo.com](http://www.bronxzoo.com)



## **New York Botanical Garden *Holiday Train Show***

**November 20 through January 9**

"All aboard" for one of New York's most beloved holiday traditions. A dash of holiday magic transforms the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory into an enchanting world featuring replicas of more than 140 New York landmarks—from the Statue of Liberty to Yankee Stadium—made entirely from plant parts like berries, leaves, and seeds. Large-scale model trains and trolleys zip through this wondrous landscape, disappearing into tunnels, crossing bridges overhead, and gliding under waterfalls and twinkling lights.

For information: [www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org)

# Web Sites

## Related Games

Science 101 Crossword

<http://www.surfnetkids.com/games/science-cw.htm>

Scientifically Speaking Crossword

<http://www.surfnetkids.com/games/science2-cw.htm>

(Learn how to make [kids games](#) just like these with my [How to Add Games to Your Site](#) step-by-step manual.)

Online games turn ordinary school assignments into interactive fun. Show your kids how to author word searches, jigsaws and crossword puzzles.

<http://www.how2add.com>

## Related Video

Science Experiment Video

[http://www.surfnetkids.com/video/science\\_experiment.htm](http://www.surfnetkids.com/video/science_experiment.htm)

**Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) \*\*Bus Issues\*\***

**Customer Service/Complaint Lines 718-392-8855 or 718-784-3313**

## All Parents Have the Following Responsibilities:

- The responsibility to send their children to school ready to learn.
- The responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time.
- The responsibility to be aware of their children's work, progress, and problems.
- The responsibility to keep in touch with their children's teachers and principal.
- The responsibility to respond to communications from their children's school.
- The responsibility to attend important meetings and conferences.
- The responsibility to treat all school staff members with courtesy and respect.

## We Encourage Parents To:

- Set high expectations for their children.
- Help out at schools by volunteering time, skills, or resources.
- Get involved in Parent Associations or Parent-Teacher Associations.
- Take part in school and community programs.



From the Parent Coordinator Desk:

Dear Families,

It's holiday time....Hopefully you all enjoyed a warm Thanksgiving with your family and/or friends! Now we're moving on to Christmas, Kwanza, or Hanukkah – which for many means decorating, shopping, presents, parties, excitement, and anticipation. For others it holds a spiritual, religious meaning. For yet others, it's a sad, depressing time, for various reasons.

No matter what your religious and/or cultural background, or what traditions or customs you cherish, it is a time for all of us to be moderate in what we spend and eat, to share with those who are less fortunate, and to remember that peace begins with each individual. Reach out to those for whom this is an emotionally challenging time.

May you and your family and friends, experience warmth of sharing during this special holiday season. In addition, may the beauty of the season usher in a more harmonious, peaceful New Year!

Sincerely,

*Jose A. Vazquez 347-563-5166*

## Main Site

Students at Bivona are enjoying a weekly “Club Period” each Friday. Students are able to select clubs based upon their interest. Club choices include cooking, games, video games, photography, graffiti, sports and movies. Students in grades 6-8 are participating in Urban Advantage science related activities and trips. Students have attended educational trips to the Bronx Zoo and the Botanical Gardens. Students are learning how to create a Power Point Presentation during computer class. Students and staff will participate in a Thanksgiving Feast on November 24<sup>th</sup>. The meal will consist of staff and student favorite recipes.

## Ittleson

Students at Ittleson are enjoying “Fun Fridays”. Students are able to participate in games and special snacks to reinforce appropriate school behavior. On October 29<sup>th</sup> students participated in a Halloween Carnival complete with special activities and games. Each participant received special treats following the activity. Students worked on a service project during November. Students created Thanksgiving cards to send to a local Veterans group. Students and staff are anxiously awaiting the completion of a new school building. The foundation for the new building was constructed during September and October. We are hoping to be in our new school building during the 2011-2012 school year. We will keep you posted!

## P723X@ PS 49 Happenings

At our P.S.49X site Class X21 is involved in saving the planet by recycling on a weekly basis. All recyclable materials are collected and sorted. The children collect plastic bottles and cans and the adults gather the glass bottles. As a group the class goes to a local supermarket and uses the appropriate machines to return the bottles. As a class the data is charted. The information on the chart is updated weekly.

All of the children in the three classes are going to regularly scheduled trips to the local Public Library. All of the children have received library cards; participate in lessons conducted by the librarian and take out books. Thanks to Ms. Davis, our Speech and Language provider, for establishing and supporting this activity. Wednesdays has been trip day and all classes go to Riverbank State Park.

Collaboration with the P.S. 49X school and staff has been very positive this school year. Classes X22 and X23 have been included in monthly assemblies. Each teacher is able to publicly recognize the efforts of the children in their class in the same manner as all other classes at P.S.49X. Each class

participates in Physical Education once weekly with their same grade level group in the P.S. 49X gym. Our Thanksgiving celebration is scheduled to take place on Monday, November 21<sup>st</sup>. This date coincides with celebrations to be held in each classroom within the P.S. 49X building. We are looking forward to being part of the building-wide "Spirit Week" and participating in "Pajama Day" (Thursday, December 24<sup>th</sup>) and in all Grade 5 moving up activities.

### **P723X@ Bronx Children's School**

We would like to acknowledge two new teachers to the BCS community: Jenine Fraioli and Brian Crowley. Ms. Fraioli is with the 5/6 class and Mr. Crowley is with the high school class. This year the middle and high school students have been going to Riverbank State Park, once a week, in grade specific groupings. Middle school students, making level, go on Wednesdays and high school students, making level, go Fridays. On these trips DOE and agency staff work collaboratively to ensure all students have a positive and safe physical education experience. Ms. Davis, our Speech and Language provider, established this activity and continues to support it.

Several of our upper middle school and high school students have been involved with the basketball team from BCPC. Again, DOE and agency staff collaborate so that practice and games are supported and safe. We are looking to form our Cheerleading Team.

All the classes have been able to go to the Public Library near Fordham University. These trips are helping to develop and refine independent student research skills as well as reading and grade appropriate writing skills.

Our high school students have been working with Ms. Best from BCPC, in a once a week transition program.

On Tuesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, BCS students on level participated in an assembly at BCPC recognizing service men and women in connection with Veteran's Day.

Our Thanksgiving celebration is scheduled for Tuesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **P723X@ Astor Tilden**

The students at P723X @ Astor Tilden have been working on their academics and behavior. To encourage their progress, we have star students activities which included a pancake breakfast, making Halloween crafts and playing Wii games. Our Thanksgiving celebration was a huge success. We were glad to see so many families and thank them for their donations. Our science teacher, Ms. Gomez has been teaching about trees, fossils and animal life cycles. Social Studies has a new teacher this year, Ms. Harrigan. We learned about rules and laws, The Constitution, Columbus, Italy, maps and family. We celebrated Puerto Rico Discovery Day and Thanksgiving. The second graders visited the Bronx Zoo and are planning a bowling trip for December.

### **P723X@ Byron**

We have been very busy at Byron so far this school year. The school took a trip to Green Meadows Farm in Queens, had a great time on the hayride, and students and staff were able to pick out their very own pumpkin. Anna was busy with the students making book marks, magnets, wooden frames and wooden necklaces to be sold at a fundraiser in Rhinebeck.

We had a two day bake sale where staff and students brought in goodies for all to enjoy. Yum!! We also sponsored an "around the block" walkathon which will help out with any future trips and graduation expenses. And last but not least, we are still collecting pennies for the Penny Harvest and gathering canned goods to contribute to St Francis of Rome's pantry.

### **189X, 218X, 338X – Alternate Assessment Sites:**

Whether beginning at our newest elementary site, P723X @ 338X, returning back to P723X @ 218X to be in a different class, or entering middle school at P723X @ 189X can be a big transition for both our children and parents alike. There may be new teachers, new routines, new faces, and new

expectations. Our focus for our alternate assessment sites is the successful journey into adulthood by looking at many aspects of the child's education including their communication skills, readiness to learn, social-emotional capabilities, and essential life skills in addition to academics.

Each day our students begin their day with a movement based program called Get Ready To Learn (GRTL). GRTL was developed by Anne Buckley-Reen, an Occupational Therapist, who combines gentle stretching movements and breathing techniques to help organize, calm, and balance our students so that they are prepared to begin the routines of their day. Already our data has shown increased time on tasks/lessons and an overall sense of focus. Some parents have begun to notice results at home too, including better sleeping habits, eating /nutritional habits, and independence in daily living skills. Let us know if you see anything at home and we will share your success stories about your child in our next newsletter! Stayed tuned for more information for parents about GRTL and feel free to ask your site coordinator for more information.

Communication for our students with language disabilities is happening all the time, however many of our non-verbal students have learned to communicate using different behaviors to tell us what they need or want. To better help our students communicate their wants and needs --- all of our alternate assessment sites take daily data collection to track each student's level of communication using PECS – Picture Exchange Communication System. There are six phases to PECS: 1) The physical exchange 2) Expanding spontaneity 3) Picture discrimination 4) Sentence structure 5) Responding to "What do you want?" 6) Responsive and spontaneous commenting. Our speech therapists work closely with all staff members to insure consistency across the school environment. We are pleased at the students' growth in communication. We encourage you to schedule time with your child's teacher to learn the different phases of PECS so that your child's communication can be reinforced at home too.

Another important part of your child's growth and development is his/her ability to recognize their feelings/emotions and regulate them. Emotions and feelings are abstract in nature and giving our children the tools necessary to understand and communicate them can reduce many challenging behaviors and equip our students with a better sense of well-being. 189X is part of a social-emotional pilot program developed by Dr. Mark Brackett, a research scientist at Yale University. Students are exploring what different emotions look like; how they want to feel; recognizing emotions in other people; regulating their response to emotional feelings/ situations; and expressing their emotions. Whether our students are verbal or use eye gaze, helping students understand their emotions is a great life skill. Our students at 218X and 338X learn through social skills stories and behavioral modeling by their teachers.

All three of our sites are also partnered with Cook-Shop, the core nutritional program of the Food Bank for New York City. Students will be exploring different fruits and vegetables and prepare simple recipes. Many of our students can be picky eaters and this is a great way to learn about making healthy food choices. They also learn real-world skills of how to wash veggies and fruits as well as the value of eating healthy foods.

We welcome any of your questions about autism or multiple disabilities and will answer them in next months' newsletter. We also encourage you to share any success stories about your child's educational experience at P723X. You can email or send in questions or stories to our Parent Coordinator, Jose Vazquez, at [JVazquez2@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:JVazquez2@schools.nyc.gov) or to your child's school site.

### **Bronx Lab High School**

Students are all participating in Advisory Periods and College Prep Classes. Ninth grade students attended Explorer Week in September. Our students are on track to successfully completing the 2<sup>nd</sup> marking period and are diligently working on completing their Gateway assignments.

### **Peace & Diversity Academy**

Staff and Students are adjusting well to our new high school partnership with Peace & Diversity Academy. Mr. Andrew Turay, Principal, and Ms. Michelle Noonan, Assistant Principal, have been very supportive of our school.