Foundation Academy



Update

Volume 1, Issue 6 February 2014

Principal's Message

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Don't forget! PTC March 6 from 5-7 PM February has come to a close and so does another busy month at Foundation Academy. This past month was highlighted by numerous activities around Black History Month, which included a door decorating competition, a presentation from one of the lost boys of Sudan and an amazing Black History Month celebration. This past month we also welcomed some new staff members to East High Foundation Academy, Mrs. Morale (Math Teacher), Mrs. Margaret Stevens (Sr. School Secretary) and Mr. Lu Bonilla (Long-term ESOL substitute teacher). I would also like to congratulate Tony Dominguez (SSO) and Erick Bermudez (SSO) who have been officially hired and are now the newest members of our Safety Officers.

My message for February is in honor of Black History Month and revolves around the words of NBA Basketball Legend Michael Jordan. Michael Jordan stated, "I can accept failure. Everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying." I find his words and message directly connected to the current work we as educators have faced during the past five years. Standards and levels of accountability continue to change and grow exponentially. The barriers and challenges our students bring also continue to match that growth. Despite the changes and challenges we must continue to stay focused on our efforts and on not giving up prior to even knowing our outcomes. I often witness, overhear and encounter staff that become overwhelmed with the challenges of our work and check out mentally or decide to run away because it's "easier" somewhere else. I, and I know many of you, are of the mindset that this work is our calling, that we are creating a generation of successful students at East, and that despite our overall achievement rates we have to give it our best each and everyday. As we head into our longest month of the school year and approach a very critical and important time for us with New York State Assessments, I ask that you please not accept not trying and do your best! Go EAST!!!

-Anibal

Upcoming Professional Development

MTH_Exploring Navigator with TI-84 Plus

MTH_Exploring the Common Core with TI-84 in HS Mathematics

MTH_Exploring Data Collection with TI-84 Plus in HS Mathematics and Science

RTA_Writing and Reading: Flipsides of the Same Coin

RTA_BYO iPad or Tablet: RCSD Teacher's Guide

GEN_Scaffolding the Common Core Curriculum for All Students

ARTS_Rehearsal Techniques

RTA_Bullying Prevention Introductions

RTA_Bullying Prevention Part 2

MTH_OnRamp to Algebra

ARTS_Strings Techniques

ARTS Guitar in General Music

IT_Creating RCSD Classroom Websites

ELA_Designing Coherent Instruction: Grade 8, Module 4

EAST_Self Care Plans (Session 2)

RTA_SMART Notebook Interactive Games and Resources

RTA_Maintaining Your Website Lab

EAST_Rethinking Homework

ELL_Teaching for Biliteracy: Strengthening Bridges Between Languages

AAAS 2013-2014 Approaches to Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching

GRN Loss Matters: An In-Depth Look at How Media Can Be Used to Support the Grief Process

RTA The Whole Package—Creating Differentiated Lessons Using the Multiple Intelligences



An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.
-Benjamin Franklin

Celebrating Black History

Modeling Celebration

Thank you to the following staff members who took the moment to write about and celebrate an African American who has contributed to our history. Check out the blurbs and photos posted outside their classrooms!

B. Crandall	G. Sears
F. Drumgoole	E. Gertin
F. Winter	A. Soler
E. Cotto	R. Holland
D. Seroski	J. Single
C. Multer	H. Hanushevsky
I. DeJesus	D. Ames
D. Daly	E. Vaccaro
J. Manetta	M. Hill
R. Liebhaber	K. Patton-McShane
Ka. Bartnick	B. Duttinger
P. Jonasse	R. Garcia
M. Johnson	A. Cheng
C. Slifka	C. Morrow
S. Dasher	M. Donlon
E. Paco	L. Mason
T. Gillett	J. Rees

Door Decorating

Thank you to Ms. Kristen Bartnick for the initial idea to have students decorate classroom doors as a way of celebrating Black History Month in a special way and to all students and staff who participated! 20 doors and the wall in the gym were adorned to celebrate the many accomplishments of African Americans throughout history and today. Themes ranged from African American athletes and Olympians to key players in the Harlem Renaissance and inventors like Lonnie Johnson who invented the Super Soaker:)

Both students and staff members put much time and effort into these projects, making the selection of a "winning" door almost impossible! Each door was reviewed for its message/theme, creativity, and quality. Winning doors included:

Grade 7: Mr. McManus's Class

Grade 8: Ms. Bartnick's Class

Winning classes will receive a special breakfast next week!

Check out pics of these wonderful works of celebratory art on the next page!

Student Projects and Performances

Throughout the month of February, students at East Foundation Academy explored various achievements of African American scientists, inventors, mathematicians, historians, artists, doctors, athletes, politicians, authors, poets, designers, educators, and other men and women who have contributed to the world we know today.

On Friday, February 28, students show-cased their findings in an interactive exhibition of projects, presentations, and performances for their peers, teachers, and families. Students and staff from the high school campus also took part in this celebration, handing down some wisdom and offering our young scholars an opportunity to see some of their older peers perform.

This celebration would not have been possible without the collaborative effort that took place to bring it to fruition!

THANK YOU...

to Ms. Williams-Matthews, Mr. Wilson, the Ebony Culture Club, and the high school Choir for their time, effort, and amazing performances!

to Ms. Dasher and Ms. Resseguie, who coached and mentored our Foundation performers and provided the moral support needed for them to put themselves out there in front of their peers!

to Ms. Resseguie, Mr. Banks, and Mr. Single for giving up "their space" and to Mr. Conley and the Martin Street custodial crew for transforming that space into a forum for our assembly!

to DJ Mr. Boehm for the use of his sound equipment and for his time and effort and ensuring that we were technically equipped to showcase our amazing performances!

to Ms. Manetta, Mr. Jonasse, Mr. Holland, and their students, who celebrated Black History instructionally through student-generated projects and contributed these projects for display in order to transform the gymnasium not only into an assembly space, but also into a gallery of African American achievements!

to Ms. Flaherty for her assistance with planning and organization, including creation of the sign-up sheet for student performers!

to Carmen for helping to navigate the field trip process in order to transport our high schoolers to Martin Street and for printing our posters to promote the event!

to Ms. Drumgoole for coordinating the guest speaker!

to Mr. Soler and our spontaneous student performers for their ability to "wing it" in the absence of our guest speaker...

to Ms. Karyn Bartnick for taking in our high school students and giving them a space to use between performances!

to Mr. Baldino, Ms. Hollomon, Mr. DeFazio, Mr. Crandall, Ms. Ocran, Ms. Ewane-Sobe, Mr. Detres, Ms. Donlon, Mr. Kehoe, and our SSOs for their attendance and assistance with seating and crowd control!

to all staff, students, and parents for your willingness, participation, and enthusiasm throughout the experience!



THANK YOU

Thank you to ALL those who contributed ideas and/or participated in the planning, preparation, and implementation of activities for Black History Month! Your willingness to go above and beyond for our school community is MUCH appreciated!

Opening the Door to Black History





































From the 7th Grade Office



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From the 8th Grade Office



Other February Events and Highlights

Culture And Race Embraced (C.A.R.E.)

Some of our students are currently participating in the CARE (Culture and Race Embraced) Program, developed by our counseling team and D'jinga St. Louis, our district's Director of African American Studies, in response to some of the potentially racial conflicts taking place with our middle school students and others across the district. The counselors and Ms. St. Louis strategized about how to be proactive in quelling future conflicts that may stem from cultural misunderstandings, providing our students with leadership training, and opening a dialogue about cultural diversity where students have the opportunity to get to know each other in a safe environment. We have about 25 of our Foundation students participating, and they meet every three weeks and participate in a variety of activities geared around the following themes:

- "Who Am I"
- Expectations of Being a Young Man/Woman: Respecting Self & Others
- African Diaspora: Part IAfrican Diaspora: Part II
- Rites of Passage
- Race: The Social Constructs and the Science
- The re-ignition of the Resect of our Elders
- Planning for the Future as a: Young Man, Young Woman, Successful Student with a Promising Future



The intended outcome of the workshops is that participating students will emerge as young leaders who will be able to navigate the middle school experience, demonstrate confidence in their self, prepare for their future, and model these behaviors and attitudes for their peers. THANK YOU to Ms. St. Louis as well as our counseling team! A special thank you to Mrs. Ocran, who has been very instrumental in organizing, promoting, and ensuring student attendance for the program. The group's next meet-





As we have in previous years, East celebrated National Go Red Day on February 14th. Ms. Flaherty, again, coordinated this Go Red campaign to benefit the American Heart Association to raise awareness and education about heart disease, the #1 killer of women.

Students supported the American Heart Association by donating \$1.00 for a pin and were able to get out of uniform for the day (which resulted in the surfacing of some interesting fashion trends...). As a school, we raised over \$435.00 - more than East ever has! GREAT JOB!

We thank the staff both for your donations as well as for your patience and flexibility in supporting this break in our usual routine. Thank you to Ms. Flaherty, who continues to lead efforts that nurture the empathetic skills of our students and provide opportunities for them to help others. Thank you, as well, to Ms. Dixon, who was a huge help at the 8th grade level with this initiative!





The 7th Grade Math team (Ms. Winter, Ms. Mason, and Mr. Holland) took a group of about 40 of our Foundation scholars to the Math Midway exhibit at the Rochester Museum and Science Center to celebrate the wonders of mathematics! More than 20 interactive, playful exhibits designed for all ages allow visitors to slip naturally into the world of pattern, shape and number, which is exactly what these teachers and students did on their field trip on February 27th!

Math Midway demonstrates the power of hands-on math by encouraging direct physical investigation of the surprising breadth and variety of mathematics that can be experienced at many levels. Students were able to see how mathematics can be an experimental science, how it can be a lens through which to view a situation, and perhaps most importantly, how math can be a fun activity accessible to everyone. The exhibit can enhance students' perception of mathematics as an evolving, creative and aesthetic human endeavor. The teachers reported that our students had a wonderful time and respectfully represented East and were very complimentary to the program, environment, and assistance offered by the RMSC.



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Junior Achievement - It's My Future

Ms. Liebhaber recently brought the Junior Achievement (JA) Program into her classroom, providing her students with practical information designed specifically for middle school students about preparing for the working world through the "It's My Future" Program.

Junior achievement is the world's largest organization dedicated to giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their future, and make smart academic and financial choices. JA programs are delivered by corporate and community volunteers and provide relevant, hands-on experiences that help students from kindergarten through high school develop skills in financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship. In fact, the community volunteer

Student learning is enhanced by a teacher's skillful use of resources; some of these are provided by the school as "official" materials; others are secured by teachers through their own initiative.

- The Framework for Teaching, C. Danielson

who worked with Ms. Liebhaber's students, Kayla Turnipseed, was a former student of Mr. Baldino's who has since earned her degree in Accounting from RIT and is currently employed at Price Waterhouse.

The "It's My Future" Program is specifically designed for middle school students and incorporating practical information about: developing a personal brand, skills, interests, working environment, job outlook considerations when exploring careers and industries, career mapping, job-hunting tools, and soft skills, work ethics, and professionalism. The sessions are designed to increase student interaction and emphasize an experiential approach to learning.

Other available programs that can be brought to our students include:

- America Works Students learn about the history of American entrepreneurship.
- *Economics for Success* Shows how to earn, spend, budget, save, invest, use credit cautiously, and protect personal finances.
- Global Marketplace Students study how goods flow in the world's economy.

Teachers recognize the importance of discretion in the selection of resources, selecting those that align directly with the learning outcomes and which will be of most use to the students.

- The Framework for Teaching, C. Danielson

Beginning these conversations with our Foundation students in these transitional grades is an important step in life and career readiness. THANK YOU, Ms. Liebhaber, for pursuing this resource for your students!



Sebastian Maroundit - Guest Speaker

On Friday, February 14, Mr. McManus welcomed Sebastian Maroundit and Judy Schwartz into his classroom to speak to his students about their experiences in South Sudan and continue to enrich their understanding of the universal refugee experience.

Sebastian is a former Lost Boy of South Sudan and one of the co-founders of an organization based here in Rochester called Building Minds in South Sudan (BMISS), a non-profit, all-volunteer organization dedicated to providing educational opportunities to African villagers in the Republic of South Sudan. In particular, the organization focuses on gender equity by advocating for and enabling access to education for girls. Judy is one of the volunteer ambassadors from this organization.

Sebastian spoke candidly of his experiences in South Sudan and his journey to flee the country, providing our students with a first-hand account of what that looked and felt like. He described what it was like to leave his friends, family, and home and travel thousands of miles on bare feet across the desert and bush country of Sudan up against a variety of problems (violence, extreme temperatures, lack of food and water) before coming to the United States through a UN refugee program in 2001 and facing a host of other challenges. He stressed the importance of education and reinforced for our

students how blessed they are to have what they do. Our students were respectful and listened actively and attentively, asking great questions and taking full advantage of the opportunity.

Connecting Our Students With Resources to Enhance Learning

Expert teachers look beyond the school for resources to bring their subjects to life and to assist students who need help in both their academic and non-academic lives. - The Framework for Teaching, C.

Danielson



Instructional Insights

Teaching Persistence: How to Build Student Stamina

The most common observation that instructional teams made regarding mid-term assessment results was that:

our students lack academic stamina.

Check out this blog post for ideas on what to do about it.

January 14, 2014 Posted on *The Science of Learning* blog by Norene Wiesen

Teaching persistence in the classroom is an important part of setting up learners to succeed. Students who have mastered persistence are able to work through challenges, deal constructively with failures and adversity, and achieve the goals they have set for themselves.

It's a lot like running a marathon. The runners who make it to the finish line are the ones who persist in showing up for practices and trainings, learn to anticipate slumps and pace themselves, engage in positive self-talk during tough times, take steps to effectively prevent and treat injuries, and adjust expectations to fit reality – even if "finishing" means having to crawl the last mile.

Like a runner who has not trained to run longer distances, learners can't persist in their learning if they haven't developed the stamina they need to keep going when things get tough. Teaching persistence depends on first developing student stamina as a way of conditioning learners to handle sustained effort.

To help learners build stamina and persistence, it's important to create the right learning environment:

Help Learners Develop a Growth Mindset

Learners need to know that they have the ability to grow and change, and that effort is the key. Praise them when they focus their efforts toward specific, clearly defined goals. When you say things like, "Those extra 10 minutes of reading each day are paying off – you are decoding unfamiliar words much more easily now," you help learners make the connection between effort and achievement. The goal is for learners to become intrinsically motivated to engage in effortful learning now and in the future.

Push a Little Bit – and Know When Enough is Enough

Sometimes learners just need a little bit of encouragement to get past a hurdle. A few supportive words, like, "Think of how good you will feel when you finish those last two addition problems and you know you did the whole worksheet all by yourself!" can make all the difference. On the other hand, a learner may need to know that it's okay to take a break and come back to a particular task when he's feeling less frustrated. In that case, it's important that the learner really does come back and complete the work to get the experience that he truly can "do more" when he persists.

Model Persistence

Most learners love to hear personal stories from their teachers. Telling your learners about your weekend plumbing project that didn't go as planned – and how you got through it and completed it – is a great way to help learners see that everyone feels like giving up sometimes. It also models for them how to overcome those feelings and reach a goal – without coming off as preachy.

Teach Positive Self-Talk

Some learners need a lot of help knowing what to say to themselves to stay motivated. If a learner's typical internal dialogue consists of statements like, "This is too hard," or "I don't know how to do this," it may come as a revelation to discover that there are other options. Giving learners specific wording, like, "I know I can do this if I keep at it," or, "If I'm really stuck I can ask a friend or my teacher for help," can begin to change the way they think and act when faced with a challenge.

Expect More

Let learners know that you have high expectations and that you have confidence that each and every one of them can meet those expectations. Be sure they have access to the tools they need to be successful, and that they know how to use them.

Make the Most of Technology

Online tools and games can help learners make the connection between effort and achievement. There are programs that gradually builds learner stamina for enduring increasing degrees of cognitive load. There are exercises that can develop reading, language, and math skills at the same time as they boost memory, attention, processing, and sequencing ability. Technology often gives learners immediate feedback on their performance and automatically adjusts the difficulty level for just the right degree of challenge.

Call Out the Brain

It's never too early – or too late – to teach your students about how the brain learns. Introduce the concept of brain plasticity – the idea that the brain changes in response to how it's used – as a way of reinforcing the idea that learning is achieved through focused, sustained effort. Help them understand that every brain is capable of making dramatic changes and leaps in learning.

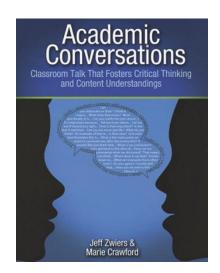
Repeat, Repeat, Repeat

Students learn persistence in the same way that they learn sight words or multiplication tables – through repetition. Strategies like modeling persistence, connecting effort to achievement, and pushing students to do a little more than they think they can aren't a one-time deal. But when repeated over time, the cumulative effect will likely be increased stamina, improved persistence, and intrinsic motivation for ever greater learning.

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Academic Conversations

From Academic Conversations: Classroom Talk that Fosters Critical Thinking and Content Understandings by Jeff Zwiers & Marie Crawford

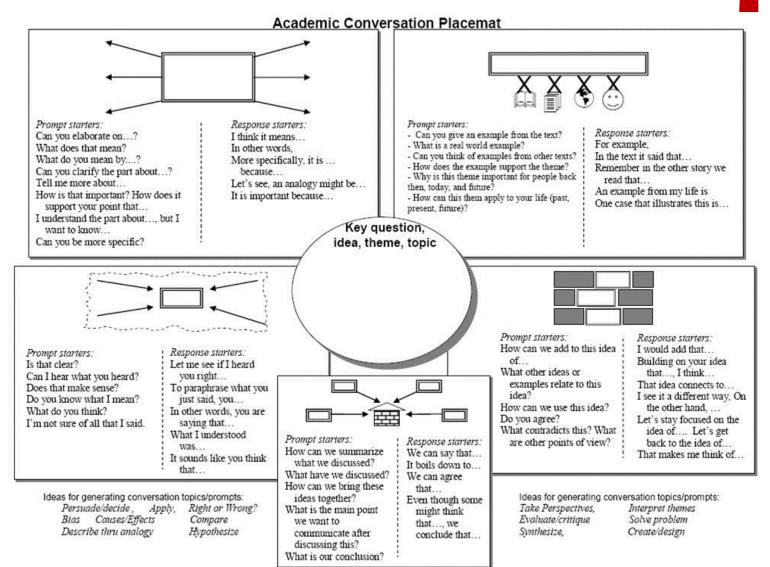


We must "build students' academic communication skills, which are the skills that tend not to be practiced in social situations outside of school, particularly in low-income homes and communities that do not speak mainstream dialects of English. These highly valued oral skills are not emphasized in most state tests, curriculum programs, or intervention efforts, yet academic and professional success depends on them. They are major gate-keeper skills, and too many students who lack them are being stopped and turned away at this gate."

In the first days of integrating academic conversation into your classroom, the authors suggest:

- Discussing the purpose of conversation skills
- Going over what conversation is and is not
- Modeling good and bad conversation behaviors in a drama or fishbowl setting
- Emphasizing the ongoing habit of sticking to the destination, purpose, main topic
 - Establishing shared conversation norms

The Academic Conversation Placemat below provides prompt and response starters for the 5 Core Academic Conversation Skills identified in the text: elaborating and clarifying, supporting with ideas and examples, building on ideas, paraphrasing, and synthesizing conversation points.





Sh♥wing S♥ me L♥ ve!

Kudos from Ms. Daly to Ms. DeJesus, who was patient and kind in her work with Victor Cunico to get him to come around to be more present and productive in her class.



Ms. Kristen Bartnick would like to give a shout out to Librarian Karyn Bartnick, indicating that she is not only a HUGE help in a pinch (copying, testing, a really great sister!





The following teachers have PERFECT ATTENDANCE so far this school year... wow, nice job!

David Ames

Brett Crandall

JoEllen Manetta



Kudos to Mr. Gregory Walker, whose daily commitment to excellence and high standards has contributed to a very safe and responsive environment for our students and staff. Mr. Soler would like to show love to the entire Foundation Academy staff for dealing with a new environment and the growing pains that often come with a change in a professional and student-centered manner. He also wants to thank them for a great first semester and is looking forward to an even better second semester loaded with lots of LOVE and positivity. Go EAST!!!



Mrs. Bullard!

Mrs. Bullard understands the executive functioning needs of her students and tirelessly works to provide them with the organizational, time management, and transitional tools they benefit from. By establishing positive relationships in the classroom, students feel comfortable and safe seeking assistance from Mrs. Bullard.

- From Mr. Holland



Kudos from Ms. Custodio to Ms. DeFranco (Attendance Assistant) and Ms. Drumgoole (Home School Assistant) for stepping in and covering the first floor Main Office window whenever she needed to step away. "I truly appreciate these ladies!" ~ Aimee

Kudos from Ms. Daly to Mr. Single who is working to help a shy, introverted student (Vinnie Keppen) feel more comfortable during PE class by working to get him access to the fitness center.



Staff Highlights

Kudos to Mr. Randy Rudolph who has recently become a part of a growing effort within the City of Rochester, known as the Black Male Achievement Coalition (BMAC). He participated in an attendance outreach focused on Black male students at East and is also looking to mentor and support black male students at East Foundation Academy.



Kudos to Ms. Fayne Winter for participating and being a teacher leader in the very important work as a Noyce Fellow at the University of Rochester's Warner School of Education.



Thank you to our amazing cafeteria crew for their hard work, organization, flexibility, and positive nature!

> Lynore D'Agostino Latashia Sinkler Lexxi Allen Naty Herrera Lorenzo Brown Porter