

# PASSAGES POST

## *Principal's Message*

Provided by Yvette Baxter-Sweet

### *The Journey*

The school year is like a journey. You start out in the beginning of the year, all bright and full of anticipation as to where you will go. Our journey began with focusing on bringing rigor to our instructional practice. As we traveled along the school year through our first semester, many of us attended professional developments to support our practice in content areas, technology, administrative skills, and social emotional development. As the year journeys on, we are now in our second semester, and we have started our departmental meetings. Thus far, we have completed the ELA and Math departmental professional developments. This was not an easy task. The simple logistics of providing the necessary coverage to make this happen was nothing less short of a miracle. I have to give my Assistant Principals a special acknowledgement for their outstanding level of creativity in making this happen. Departmental professional development provides a great opportunity for staff to not only network with each other, but to learn from each other as well. To bring together knowledge that can be shared with the collective body. To discuss and debate academic ideas, and reflect on practice that will build for the improvement of student outcomes. This is the journey of educating not only students but teachers as well, who are also students. We are on the journey of becoming a community of learners.

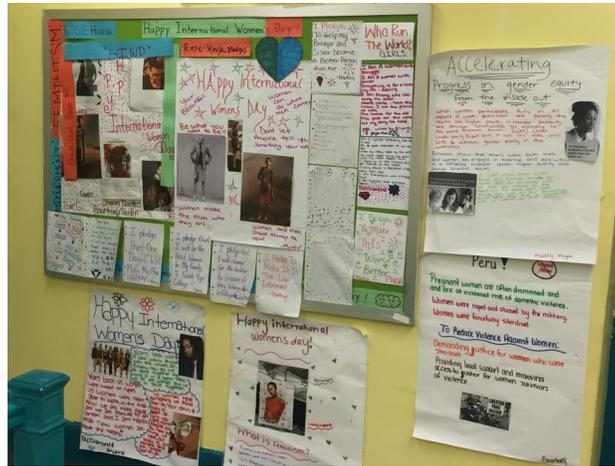
I want to thank everyone for participating in this process. If you provided a coverage, left a lesson plan for your colleague to use, made it into work on those special days even if you didn't feel too well, but you knew the importance of the coverage that you were providing and understood your part in supporting the collective- we thank you. We will be continuing the departmental meetings for the remainder of the school year. The other departments are smaller than ELA and Math so it will have less of an effect on sites, but still will need to be planned for in much the same way.

Our journey continues with the measurement of student outcomes. We begin New York State testing for grades 6, 7 and 8 over the next two weeks in April. After that, we will be working on 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotional portfolios, and finally regents exams in June. We need to continue the journey of preparing our students for positive outcomes and moving into summer school. I would like to thank many of you who have indicated your interest in working summer school. The posting for this will be out very soon. Please ensure that you apply in a timely manner. We will continue the journey of anticipation for a bright and beautiful spring.

## Belmont Highlights

Provided by Patrick Dorfer

At Belmont, Women's Day was celebrated via lesson planning and excellent student work projects coming from the classroom. Specifically, our Rose group completed an ELA project where they researched the reasons behind why Women's Day is celebrated worldwide, the struggles women have faced to gain equality in the first world, and the struggles that still persist both in our society and elsewhere. The students created artistic posters biographing important women in history, wrote what the day means to them, and their future aspirations as women in our society. A special thank you to the entire teaching staff at Belmont for using this initiative to generate positive educational outcomes. A great job done by all!



## Bronx Hope Highlights

Provided by Allison Trevaskis

In Celebration of Women's History Month, the young ladies of Bronx Hope were guests and participants at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual "I AM" Girls Summit. The young ladies participated in an empowering day of seminars coordinated by School Social Worker Ms. Woods, and Reading Specialist Ms. Martin. The day consisted of a panel discussion where Mrs. DeLara, Passages AP, Ms. C., Social Worker, Ms. Cheryl, NSP Liason, and Ms. Peck, 162<sup>nd</sup> St House Morning Supervisor, answered questions posed on various issues of stress for our young ladies. Next, Ms. Martin led a writers workshop which had the ladies deep in thought and reflecting within their recently created Writer's Notebooks. Lastly, before lunch was served, Community Associates Blanca Pineiro and Ms. Robles led the ladies in an art project, creating a bag which read, "I AM", allowing for their own personalization in describing themselves. The ladies enjoyed a luncheon hosted by Mr. Blake and cake provided by Mr. Fronseca.



In celebration of Black History Month, teachers and staff of Bronx Hope performed original poetry and read works by famous African-American poets for the students.

## Bruner Highlights

Provided by Barbara King

Many wonderful things are happening here at Bruner. For Black History Month, the students gave presentations on what Black History means to them. Teachers and staff presented as well. Thank you all! Congratulations to student D.B. for earning a 91.75 average last marking period, and for passing the Common Core Algebra! Way to go!

Bruner had a very successful parent/teacher conference. We had four out of six parents participate in the conferences. We would also like to thank Ms. Angelique Verdejo, the Education Administrator from Sheltering Arms, who also participated in all the conferences. Again, thank you to all the parents, students, and educators. A very special thanks you to our school Social Worker Ms. Yolanda Alexander, who scheduled all the conferences with the parents.

Students will be celebrating Women's History Month with inspirational quotes that relates to a particular woman in their life.

## Crossroads Highlights

Provided by Erica Addy



This month, Crossroads began their first speaker series. To start it off, Jovens Moncoeur of 5Linx met with students in the gym. He talked about his own experience growing up in Brooklyn and his journey to becoming an entrepreneur. He encouraged the students to do what they love and to use their interests to becoming entrepreneurs themselves.



In the classroom, teachers have found new ways to increase student engagement and incorporate technology. The students shown below are members of Ms. Thrash 9<sup>th</sup> grade class. They are in the process of using computer technology to investigate cell division and how it relates to the formation of cancer. They were given access to three web page sources in which they then used the information to answer question and engage in discussion.



On a more somber note, Crossroads wished Mr. Shingberg of the English department farewell and good luck in his new position. He will be missed!

## Dobbs Ferry Highlights

Provided by Fred Lauf



(a downy woodpecker at a suet feeder)

### Citizen Science at Passages Academy Children's Village



(a red-bellied woodpecker)

Students in both cottages of Passages Academy Children's Village are participating in the Cornell Lab of Ornithology Spring Bird Count. Students are using both seed and suet feeders to attract birds and they are reporting their observations using Cornell's Merlin Bird ID App. Their observations are combined with thousands of observations from around the world. Cornell scientists use this data to track bird migration and population.

Because the feeders are attached to the dining room windows, students are able to observe the birds quite closely, often from less than two feet away. In addition to enjoying being up close to the birds, students report enjoying seeing how their observations are used to create migration maps by Cornell scientists. By comparing current maps with maps of past migrations, students have been able to make hypothesis about how global weather patterns like El Nino have changed the timing for migrations. This year, for example, they observed robins on February 28, while the earliest report of area robins during last year's much colder winter, did not occur until the end of March.

Students have so far identified downy woodpeckers, hairy woodpeckers, robins, juncos, northern mockingbirds, cardinals, blue jays, and red-winged blackbirds.

## Staten Island Highlights

Provided by Adrienne Pritchett-Dames

Please be advised that the Passages Academy-Staten Island School site will be having their very first debate against Susan Wagner High School. Our young ladies are currently preparing our debate by meeting Wednesday and Thursday after school, researching information to support their argument: "Juvenile Delinquents Should be Incarcerated for the Crime They Commit". Both Ms. Piccinonno and Ms. Dames are facilitating. Also, the girls are receiving additional support from the College of Staten Island Mentoring Program. At least 10 mentor students participate in our afterschool to further support our students.

***Please come support our debate!***

**Date:** 04/12/2016

**Time:** 11:00 AM (**SHARP**) to 1:00 PM

Located: 1133 Forest Hill Road

Staten Island, NY 10314 - Gymnasium

**\*\*\*\* AWARD CEREMONY & LUNCH WILL BE SERVED  
FOLLOWING THE GREAT DEBATE \*\*\*\***

## Passages Academy Library News

Provided by Allison Trevaskis

### Passages Academy Library Program Highlights:

On Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, Passages Academy Library team member Claudio Leon hosted Katrina Ortega from the NYPL Hamilton Grange branch at Horizon. The students were provided information about public library services, wiped student fines, and book talked titles for the students.

Students at Horizon celebrated Teen Tech Week at the Horizon Library on March 17<sup>th</sup>, by learning about past technologies and how they evolved over time into the technologies we have today. Students then interacted with a small collection of old technologies including records, 5in and 2.5in floppy disks, a cassette player, an old film camera (non-operational) and a rotary phone.

Passages Academy Art Educators submitted artwork to Allison Trevaskis of Bronx Hope, who installed the works in the YA space of the Bronx Library Center on March 18<sup>th</sup>. The student artwork will be on display until April 18<sup>th</sup> at the BLC, located at 310 E Kingsbridge Rd, Bronx, NY 10458.

Students of the Lutheran House attending Belmont traveled to the New Victory Theater on March 17<sup>th</sup>. More about the field trip can be read on the Passages Academy Library [blog](#).

### Looking Ahead:

April is the 20<sup>th</sup> National Poetry Month! All are invited to participate in CEAAS's Words Unlocked contest. Click [here](#) for more information.



## Upcoming Events

**April 5th-7th:** NY State ELA Exams

**April 13th-15th:** NY State ELA Exams and Math Exams

**April 25th-April 29th:** Spring Recess – Schools Closed

**May 30th:** Memorial Day – Schools Closed

**June 1st:** Regents Exams



*"I am what I am today  
because of the choices  
I made yesterday."*

*Stephen Covey*

## Important Links

Passages Academy Public Website: [www.PassagesAcademy.org](http://www.PassagesAcademy.org)

Passages Academy Staff Website: <https://sites.google.com/a/passagesonline.com/staff/>

Passages Academy Handbook: <https://sites.google.com/a/passagesonline.com/staff/documents>

Passages Academy Library Website: [www.passagesacademylibraries.org](http://www.passagesacademylibraries.org)

Passages Academy Library Blog: [www.whatsgoodinthelibrary.blogspot.com](http://www.whatsgoodinthelibrary.blogspot.com)

Chancellors Regulations: <http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/ChancellorsRegulations/default.htm>

ELA & Math Middle School Testing: <http://engageny.org/content/just-released-2013-test-guides-for-ela-mathematics>

Online Textbook Codes: <https://sites.google.com/a/passagesonline.com/staff/textbook-online-access-code>

ACS Online Policy Library: [http://www.nyc.gov/html/acs/html/home/policy\\_library.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/acs/html/home/policy_library.shtml)

## Facts, Thoughts, and/or Questions for the Week

*"Share your knowledge. It is a way to achieve immortality."*

*-Dalai Lama XIV*