



Bronx Lighthouse Charter School

BLCS Weekly Newsletter

**La Traducción en Español será enviada cada martes.*

Family... a group experience of love and support." Marianne Williamson



March 31, 2014

Greetings BLCS Families,

This week our scholars will be taking their ELA State Exam from Tuesday April 1 through Thursday April 3. I have share a few tips below, that you can use to help your scholar get ready for the exam.

Reminder: March Events

- If you have not received your School Survey, please contact the Main Office. You can also completed the survey online (www.nycschoolssurvey.org) or by hardcopy.
- Testing Week: Grades 3-8 will be taking the NYS ELA Exam Tuesday April 1- Thursday April 8, 2014.
- There will be a Blood Drive April 25, 2014, please come out and support our Scholars!

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR SCHOLAR FOR TEST DAY

Test – the word itself can send chills down the spine of many scholars, taking away their appetite and desire to sleep. There's a scramble to learn as much as possible in the shortest possible time. There's no time to take a bite or get a wink of sleep. But that's not good practice. Scholars need to eat healthily before a test. For example, parents can help by making sure their scholars eat a good dinner and breakfast before the test day and get a good night's sleep. Here below are a few tips parents can use to support their scholar with getting prepare for this week's state exam.



TIPS TO PREPARE YOUR SCHOLAR

1. **Eat it:** During testing week, make sure children are eating hearty meals both at night and in the morning. Meals high in protein will help students feel full through the morning so that they're able to concentrate better on the test. Students should consume protein-rich foods such as eggs, nuts, yogurt and cottage cheese for breakfast. Food such as spicy or fried food should be avoided as these tend to make the stomach heavy and could cause some discomfort. Before and during the exam, drink enough water to keep hydrated, as dehydration may cause you to lose focus or feel tired during the test.
2. **Sleep on it:** Making sure your child gets a good night's rest will help them better focus on materials and think more clearly through test questions
3. **Make it a routine:** A week or so before testing begins, get your children on a routine. Eat dinner at a regular time, get them to bed earlier at a consistent time and then get them to school just a little earlier in the morning. Carry that through test week. With a routine in place, test week will seem less intense for both you and your child.
4. **Talk about it:** Talking to your child about the testing and what it involves can help relieve some of the stress inherent to the process.

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5. **Not a know-it-all:** Reassure your children that they're not expected to know everything that appears on the test. Encourage them to simply to do their best and work hard through the testing.
6. **Show it off:** While they may not know all the answers, tell the kids the standardized test is a great chance for them to show off just what they do know. Help them to see it as a chance to shine rather than a chore to endure.
7. **Practice the process:** Standardized tests are designed to be comprehensive, so cramming the night before won't do much good. However, parents can give their kids test-like practice questions or writing assignments to work through at home. That way they'll be more familiar with the test's format and more confident going into it.
8. **Make it fun:** Surprise your child with something to boost morale or to alleviate stress, like a testing survival kit - a small package of healthy goodies your child can take to school.

CHARTER SCHOOL TALKING POINTS

Personally, I am happy to just focus on things that we are responsible for, and let the political powers that be do their own thing. I have found that in the last 10 years all the "political" work done in education has not really impacted the simple truth that great teaching is less about legislation and more about individual teacher actions. That said, these talking points were released by the charter school center, and can be used if you get questions from families. Also, keep in mind that we do not answer questions to public agencies (like newspapers or other sources) without first touching base with Lisa Clay and me. Lisa is the communications point person at LHA! Also, note that at present we are not a controversial charter since we are not co-located.

Talking Points (from the charter school center)

- Charter schools are the only public schools without public facility funding. That's unfair to students, and it's unhealthy for an educational system.
- Charter school students who chose charter schools aren't worth less than when they went to a district school.
- After 15 years, Governor Cuomo and the State Senate are both trying to do something about this, but they need support from the Assembly.
- The Senate's proposal includes protections for co-located schools and funding for charter schools in private space, but negotiations are just beginning.
- This is not a Democrat vs Republican issue. The co-leaders of the NYS Senate, one a Democrat, one a Republican support funding equity for charters. Karim Camara and other key Democrats in the NYS Assembly are supportive as is President Obama. Most importantly, the effective head of the Democratic Party in New York State, our governor, supports funding equity.
- We need the Assembly conference to join with us in this positive conversation about how to help public schools get the resources they need. If they care about equity and simple justice, they will be on our side.

SHINE on,

Ms. Canton

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