



St. Joseph School

A newsletter for alumni, parents and friends of St. Joe's



December 2011

St. Joseph Launches New Math Tutoring Program

St. Joseph prides itself on instilling a strong work ethic in our students and preparing them well for high school and beyond. This fall, St. Joseph began a new math tutoring program for 8th grade students. A group of volunteers from King Street Capital Management will meet with students one Saturday each month for the remainder of the year. One King Street employee who holds a Master's degree in Mathematics said, "I'm here to help these students any way I can and make a positive impact on their education."

On November 19th, this pilot program met for the first time. Four tutors and five 8th grade students met at St. Joseph at 10am. They began by introducing themselves and discussing their backgrounds. Guided by Development Director Noah Feder and 8th grade teacher Ayxsa Bonet, the students and volunteers discussed making the transition to high school, eventual college plans, and other hopes for the future.

Soon enough, it was time to hit the books. Splitting into two groups, the tutors carefully went through that week's homework assignments, which covered complex fractions, square roots,

and exponents. While solving the individual problems, the group also made helpful study guides containing the core concepts of the tasks at hand. With an almost one-to-one ratio, the students received individual attention from their tutors.

The two-hour session passed quickly, and soon enough it was time for everyone to head home. The groups reassembled for lunch, and then bid farewell to their new counterparts. The St. Joseph students are already excited for the next tutoring session. "I liked working with the tutors a lot," said one 8th grader. "I learned a lot, and it was really fun." St. Joseph is happy to welcome these volunteers into our school.



St. Joseph School
is going **GREEN!**

If you prefer to receive this
newsletter via email please
send your email address to:

stjosephbronx@gmail.com

Principal's Corner

Dear Friends:

Another exciting school year is well under way here at St. Joseph! I am happy to report that we have 492 students currently enrolled, our highest total ever.

This year, St. Joseph hired two new math coaches from the Cooke Center. They have made great strides in making math more visible throughout the school and introducing new instructional techniques, such as math vocabulary walls and algebra manipulatives.

With increasing enrollment, St. Joseph needs your support now more than ever in order to provide the high level of service our families have come to expect. Our unique open admissions policy enables us to serve the neediest children of the South Bronx.

I'm so glad to have you as a part of the St. Joseph family. On behalf of the entire faculty and student body, I wish you the best this holiday season.

Sincerely,

Janine Hughes
Principal

Help Our School When Our Needs Are Greater Than Ever

We would be grateful for your support.

\$3,650: A full scholarship for one student

\$1,000: Classroom library books for 7th and 8th grade

\$100: A collection of leveled readers for a 4th grade class

You will find a detachable contribution form on the last page of this newsletter.

For more information, contact Noah Feder, Development Director
(718) 583-9432 ext. 3 or stjosephbronx@gmail.com.

St. Joseph Making Strides in Literacy

For the past four years, St. Joseph School has employed a literacy consultant from the Cooke Center for Learning and Development. Working with all teachers from 1st through 8th grades, Vera Kohn has helped St. Joseph make great strides in English and Language Arts.

With only 60% of our students speaking English at home, many struggled with literacy. Now, Ms. Kohn's work has touched every aspect of St. Joseph School. She has introduced literacy bulletin boards, a "Word of the Day" program, and writing notebooks and portfolios. These student writing portfolios contain all of a child's writing and follow him or her from grade to grade, allowing her new teachers to assess her earlier writing.

This year, Principal Hughes and Ms. Kohn launched the Roaring to Read competition.

Every student is given a monthly worksheet to track his or her independent reading. Teachers review their class's daily progress, and the classes compete to read the most books each month. The class totals are prominently displayed by the main entrance to the school.

All of these programs stemmed from Ms. Kohn's consultancy. Fourth Grade teacher Charlene Sanchez said, "Working with Vera has made me a better teacher. I'm more confident in my English and Language Arts instruction." These results can be seen in recent standardized tests. Last spring, the 6th and 8th grades greatly outperformed district public and charter school averages on the New York State English Language Arts exam. St. Joseph is happy to have Ms. Kohn as a part of our family and the school looks forward to working with her for years to come.



Students are eager to participate in the "Roaring to Read" competition



Literacy Coach Vera Kohn

From the Bronx to Queens: 8th Graders Visit Citi Field

On September 28th, St. Joseph Advisory Board member Michael Melnick invited 12 students and two teachers to join him in his company's luxury box at Citi Field for the final New York Mets game of the 2011 season.

The group of 8th grade students and their chaperones were treated to an afternoon at the ballpark, including lunch in the luxury box. They even had a celebrity sighting, with former Mets and Yankees star Darryl Strawberry just one box away! "Our students were thrilled to go to the Mets game with Mr. Melnick," said

teacher Chris Duffy. "This was such a rare opportunity for our children."

One 8th grade student remarked, "I'd never been to a real baseball game before. Citi Field was really awesome, and the Mets won, too!" The entire group was buzzing upon their return to the school and for days afterwards. Thanks to Mr. Melnick's generosity, they gained an amazing new experience that will last a lifetime.

Students Enjoy New Opportunities

By partnering with outside organizations, St. Joseph is able to offer special field trips and programs to our students.

This summer, a generous donor allowed over 20 students to attend Summer Ecology Camp, held annually at the Rye Nature Center. This week-long program brought students to Rye, NY, where they hiked, learned to identify different plants and animals, and experienced a far different environment from their homes in the Bronx.

In November, the two 5th grade classes went on a special tour of the New York Hall of Science, located in Flushing, Queens. With guidance from their teachers and Hall of Science employees, the students enjoyed a fun-filled day learning about the world around them. They explored the laws of physics, rocketry and space flight, biology, and chemistry. Students were counting down the days

until their field trip and were beaming about it long after it was over.

With your continued support, St. Joseph students will be able to enjoy programs like these for years to come.



The New York Hall of Science field trip left everyone smiling.



On a hike at the Rye Nature Center



5th graders envision their future career path at the New York Hall of Science.



Roasting marshmallows during Summer Ecology Camp



The students were excited to learn about science through a hands-on experience.

Superintendent of Schools Visits St. Joseph

On November 29th, Dr. Timothy McNiff, Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of New York, paid a special visit to St. Joseph School. Dr. McNiff met with Principal Hughes and other faculty members, visited several classrooms, and enjoyed a top-notch performance by the St. Joseph band.

While visiting the 3rd grade class, Dr. McNiff inspired the excited students during a question and answer session. In a response to a query about the support of the Archdiocese, Dr. McNiff said, "We have hundreds of people who believe in you, who are rooting for you, and who want you to

succeed. I know that you're going to work hard and achieve your goals."

Dr. McNiff was also impressed by the band's performance, conducted by Music Director Ed Ornowski. The band, which held its first full-band practice only three weeks earlier, wowed their guest. The students invited the Superintendent to their spring benefit performance, to be held on May 16th at St. Jean Baptiste High School. The entire school was proud to welcome Dr. McNiff and to exemplify what makes St. Joseph a special place to learn.



Chief of Staff Mary Kate Blaine, Principal Janine Hughes, and Superintendent Timothy McNiff



Superintendent Timothy McNiff thanks Music Director Ed Ornowski and the St. Joseph Band.



Music Director Ed Ornowski conducts the St. Joseph School band during Dr. McNiff's November visit.

New Partnership Will Lead to Growth at St. Joseph

St. Joseph has recently partnered with the Sumeria Group, a social outreach organization that connects young professionals with New York City non-profits and schools. Sumeria reached out to St. Joseph in October through Advisory Board members Brett Shisler and Simon Hammer. “We are very excited to work with St. Joseph School as the partner for our next initiative,” said Executive Director Alex Widen. “We believe the school is a great fit for our mission to use social engagement to achieve social change. Sumeria looks forward to creating a lasting impact on this fine school and watching it grow.”

There are two primary goals for this partnership. The first is to raise much-needed funds for the school's various initiatives, such as the extended day program and school band. The primary fundraiser will be Winterfest, a 1,000-person event to be held on January 21st at Terminal 5. All ticket proceeds will support programs essential to St. Joseph's continued success: the school band, mentoring programs, extended day, and scholarships.

In addition to fundraising, Sumeria will connect volunteers to St. Joseph for on-going service opportunities. A core group of volunteers, the Host Committee, will recruit 50 to 100 young professionals from the Sumeria network to work with St. Joseph students. These individuals will visit the school for “Career Days,” take students into Manhattan for field trips, and establish a new mentoring program. Mentors



Advisory Board members Brett Shisler and Simon Hammer with Sumeria Group co-founder Alex Widen and Ms. Rodriguez's 2nd grade class.

will work with a group of current 7th grade students through their graduation from St. Joseph. In addition to monthly meetings, the entire cohort of mentors and mentees will assemble four times each year for special events, including attending sporting events, going to museums, and sightseeing tours.

“The partnership with the Sumeria Group is truly a win-win,” said Principal Janine Hughes. “This will be a huge benefit for our students.”



Sumeria Group volunteers sponsored a Fall Celebration for 6th and 7th grade students in November.

St. Joseph School

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Help the Children of St. Joseph Fulfill their Dreams

I want to help St. Joseph School achieve its goals!

My contribution level is:

- _____ **\$3,650** (Provides a full scholarship) _____ **\$100** (Provides a collection of leveled readers for 4th grade)
_____ **\$1,000** (Provides classroom library books) _____ **\$50** (Provides a microscope for our science program)
_____ **\$250** (Provides a Big Books set for our Pre-K class) _____ **Other Amount:** _____

Name _____ Phone: (____) ____-____ Email _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Class: _____

My check is enclosed payable to St. Joseph School in the amount of \$ _____

Please charge my credit card for the amount of \$ _____ (circle one) Visa MC AMEX

Card number _____ Expiration Date _____ Sec. Code _____

Cardholder Name _____ Signature _____

This DONATION IS A GIFT in honor of the person I have named below.

SJS will send a personalized letter to the person or family listed.

The amount will not be disclosed.

Gift Recipient Name: _____

Gift Recipient Address: _____

Please mail your donation to:
St. Joseph School, c/o Noah Feder
1946 Bathgate Avenue, Bronx, NY 10457

Gifts of stocks and bonds are deductible at the fair market value on the day they are received by the school. Real estate is also accepted. Please let your company know about your donation if they have a matching gift program. You could potentially double your gift to our school. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.