

Charter Voices

Building Character....

....Achieving Excellence

Initial Enrollment Period Winds Down; Need for Lottery Still to Be Determined

Only a week away, March 16 is the deadline for our initial enrollment period. That means that on that day we will count the number of applications we have for kindergarten and first grade seats and compare that number to the 75 kindergarten and 50 first grade seats we will have available.

If we have more applications than seats, we must have a lottery to select the students who will be offered the available seats and create a waiting list for those children who are not selected as part of the initial process.

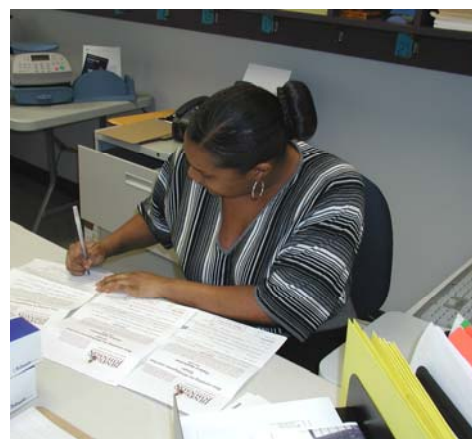
We know that lotteries are not popular among the families who might be affected by them, but the lottery rule is part of charter school law, so no school can avoid a lottery if the number of applications exceeds the number of available seats.

The enrollment process at HJCS will include the following steps:

- We will look first at grade 1 applicants. Assuming we have adequate seats for all who applied, we will offer those seats. If not, there will be a lottery.

- Kindergarten brothers or sisters of any first graders who are offered a seat will automatically be offered a seat in kindergarten.
- We will then count the number of kindergarten applicants, separating children who live outside of Albany from those who are Albany residents.
- If the number of Albany applicants fits within the number of seats available, all Albany children will be offered seats. If not, there will need to be a lottery for Albany children.
- We will then review out-of-city applicants. If the number will fit within the number of seats now available, those children will be offered seats. If it does not, there will be a lottery for out-of-city residents to determine who gets a seat. Order on the waiting list will also be determined by the draw.

If a lottery at either grade is required, we will call families who are affected to invite them to attend. Though we understand that the need for a lottery is bad news to families



Ms Penn works on enrollment applications and transportation request forms.

eager to have their children attend Henry Johnson CS, bear in mind the following: meeting the March 16 deadline gives you a 1-in-75 or 1-in-50 chance of being offered a seat, and waiting lists DO move quickly. Finally, if you are offered a seat and need to decline it, PLEASE inform the school immediately to give another child a chance at Henry Johnson CS.



U'Syi Morris and Lydia Murphy vie to answer that question!

Who ARE Those Adorable Henry Johnson CS Kids?

As we've made our way through this first enrollment season, we've heard many delighted comments about our "Henry Johnson kids." Naturally, since the school is not yet in operation, these beautiful children are not really our students, but they surely look like they'd be good ones! The little girl is Lydia Murphy, a first grader and daughter of Peter Murphy, a member of the HJCS Board of Trustees. Little U'Syi Morris is three years old and the son of Martica Howard, Office Manager at Achievement Academy Charter School. Lydia and U'Syi are being seen all around the town, including on bus shelters and bus panels, not to mention the brochures and postcards that have blanketed the city. Thanks, adorable children, for doing such a great job for Henry Johnson Charter School!

Curriculum Corner

The Proactivity Program

What is "Proactivity"?

"Proactivity" is a unique term coined at Milwaukee College Prep; it is also a character-building program. The word is based on the adjective proactive, which means *thinking before one acts*. Therefore, proactivity, the noun form, means *the process an HJCS and MCPS scholar uses to think before he/she acts; also, a subject taught at HJCS and MCPS that helps strengthen a student's character*.

Why do we teach Proactivity?

- It is the foundation of our curriculum.
- It is a much better approach than reactivity.
- It offers a clearer vision for the students' future and the skills needed to achieve their visions.
- It helps us teach other subjects better.

- It is an effective classroom management/discipline tool.
- In short, Proactivity is a lifelong tool. Additionally, a proactive classroom culture creates a climate conducive to learning, and using proactive discipline insures that students and educators go home each day feeling positive and successful.

How do we teach Proactivity?

The Proactivity curriculum has three tiers. The first is **literature**, which will be part of HJCS scholars' daily lives.

PROVERBS will surround the children, and statements such as the following will help them make good choices:

"Our fate is not in the stars, but in ourselves."

"A poor workman blames his tools."

"Excellence is not an act, but a habit."

"Your life is in front of you, not behind."

Scholars will memorize and recite two POEMS each month. Examples of two short ones are,

"Work while you work, play while you play.

One thing each time. That is the way," or

"I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul."

Teachers will read POSITIVE STORIES to students, such as "The Little Engine that Could," "The Tortoise and the Hare," and "The Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners." The class will discuss these and learn the lessons they offer.

The second tier is found in the **STAR habit** and the Thinking Tools that HJCS scholars will learn to use:

S—Sit up straight

T—Track the speaker with your eyes

A—Ask questions

R—Respond in complete sentences

Thinking Tools:

CAF: Consider All Factors

APC: Alternatives, Possibilities, Choices

FIP: First Important Priority

C&C: Choice and Consequence

C&S: Consequence and Sequel

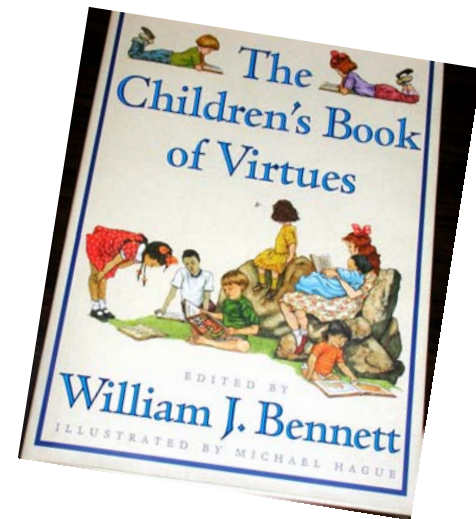
COV: Consider Others' Views

AGO: Aims, Goals, and Objectives

The third tier is **the plan**:

- Students will write personal mission statements
- The class will spend 20-30 minutes daily on the Proactivity lesson
- Each month HJCS scholars will explore a value, such as these centered on the idea of **RESPECT**: Respect Yourself, Respect Others, Respect the Past, Respect Learning, Respect the Community, Respect Rules, Respect Differences, Respect a Challenge.

Proactivity is one of the elements of the Henry Johnson curriculum that will make your child's experience at HJCS unlike that in any other elementary school in the city of Albany. How do we learn to succeed, achieve, and live a satisfying life? By being proactive, and we learn that through **PROACTIVITY!**



Henry Johnson Charter School and Henry Johnson Post #1257: Sharing a Connection and Looking to the Future

The name of Henry Johnson continues to appear in new places in the city of Albany. Our school, for instance, will open for the first time in September, and a newly discovered VFW post bearing his name will hold its first annual meeting at the end of this month.

With the help of Lillian Garland and James Chandler of the Brighter Choice Project, HJCS was put in touch with Mr. Sam Ballard, Commander of Henry Johnson Post #1257. An initial meeting with Commander Ballard at the Empire State Plaza during the Black History Week Celebration has yielded a connection that will be enjoyed by and beneficial to both the school and the post.

Already Commander Ballard arranged for the plaster bust of Henry Johnson to be available at the school's Kidz Expo display booth last week. Promise of future joint efforts



This bust of Henry Johnson by Vincent Forte, Sr., is the same as the one atop the monument in Washington Park. This plaster version is noteworthy for the textural detail that can be seen in the veins at the temples, the hair on the head, the embroidered stitching on the sergeant's stripes, and the grosgrain ribbon of the medals. Thanks to Vincent Forte, Jr., who made the sculpture available to us and delivered it for the Kidz Expo event on March 3.



sculptor
Vincent J. Forte, Sr

include involvement of the Post at our building's ribbon-cutting and participation of our students with the Post in the Veterans' Day Parade in November.

Through his work with the group seeking the Medal of Honor for Henry Johnson, Commander Ballard is also in touch with members of Henry Johnson's family, and this may allow our school to establish that connection as well.

We are very excited about this new relationship that will enrich students' experience at Henry Johnson CS. We will be attending the Post's First Annual Meeting on March 27 at 7:00 pm at the Albany VA Hospital, 6th Floor, Room 603C. Perhaps you would like to as well. Contact 518-283-1561 for more information.



Principal Lillian Turner introduces the school's math program to prospective teaching staff.

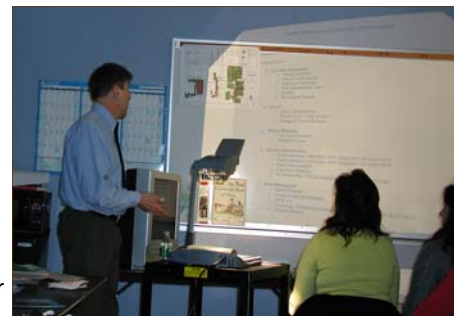
Prospective teachers and teaching assistants visited Henry Johnson CS's temporary home in the KIPP Building in February to meet with Principal Lillian Turner and learn about the school's Proactivity and academic

Staff Hiring Moves Forward

programs. They also watched videos from MCPS and saw how Proactivity and the wall cards are taught.

Thus far, the school has hired its Dean of Students, several classroom teachers, and teaching assistants, in addition to our Business Manager and Office Manager introduced in the February newsletter. Teaching staff will be introduced to HJCS families later in the spring. Besides taking part in a two-week orientation period in August, teachers will visit the Milwaukee school to experience the model first-hand.

All of our newly hired staff are enthusiastic about joining HJCS and can't wait to meet our kids!



Business Manager Frank Sheldon presents HR information to interested candidates.

A Gallery of Photos from Kidz Expo



Achievement Academy's Nala Woodard shows that tigers can be very friendly creatures!



Sonny Turner captivates D'Andre Hawley as he describes Henry Johnson's heroic acts.



We had a great time at Kidz Expo on March 3 at the Empire State Plaza, as these photos show—



Our Dean mans the Henry Johnson booth and highlights the historical information about our namesake.

Joseph Foglia has fun with U'Syi Morris and his mom and sister, who stopped by our booth.



James Chandler keeps the Brighter Choice sun shining.



Our school display, featuring videos from MCPS, a drawing of our building, and photos of the HJCS uniforms for girls and boys.

Construction Work on HJCS Building Continues, Despite the Cold



Steel to go up in a couple of weeks!



*Building Character...
...Achieving Excellence*

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