

# Charter Voices

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

## The School Year Mapped Out— On Our School Calendar

**A**s our September opening approaches, the pieces are falling into place that will make Henry Johnson Charter School a concrete reality. (And on that point, see the photos on page 3 that show the **literal** concrete reality of our new building!)

One of those pieces—and one of great interest to families—is the school calendar. Here is your first glimpse of what our school year will look like.



### 2007

**Students' First Day of School** — September 5

**Columbus Day Holiday** — October 8

**Professional Development Day—No School for Students** — October 19

**Veterans' Day Holiday** — November 12

**Thanksgiving Holidays** — November 21-23

**December Break**— December 24-31

### 2008

**New Year's Day** — January 1

**Professional Development Day—No School for Students** — January 18

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day** — January 21

**Winter Break**— February 18 & 19

**Professional Development Day—No School for Students** — March 20

**Good Friday Holiday** — March 21

**Spring Break** — April 14-18

**Memorial Day** — May 26

**Possible Unused Snow Days** — May 22, 23 & 27

**Independence Day Break** — July 3 & 4

**Students' Last Day of School** — July 10

## Summer Events to Plan On —

Since we are developing a calendar theme here, a few events you should expect to receive information about in the next few weeks are the following:

**Parent Orientation**—mandatory for all parents. Your choice of 10 a.m., 2 p.m., or 5:30 p.m. on June 14. We'll review Parent Handbook, general expectations, and uniform voucher arrangements.

**Kindergarten Screening**—for all kindergartners during the week of July 9.

**Open House Barbecue**—for all HJCS families and staff in late August or early September.

## Curriculum Corner

# Mathematics

Just as literacy—the ability to read and write—is the foundation of all other learning and essential to a successful and fulfilling life, so mathematical proficiency is not only necessary as a life skill but also fundamental to learning in the sciences and technical fields.

And, just as Reading First identified key elements for teaching children to read as discussed in last month's *Curriculum Corner* article on reading, so the mathematics research community has identified five key proficiencies that students need to achieve in math. Those strands include the following:

1. **Understanding**, which is comprehending mathematical concepts, operations, and relations—knowing what mathematical symbols, diagrams, and procedures mean.
2. **Computing**, or carrying out mathematical procedures, such as adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing numbers flexibly, accurately, efficiently, and appropriately.
3. **Applying**, which means being able to formulate problems mathematically and devise strategies for solving them using concepts and procedures appropriately.
4. **Reasoning**, which is using logic to explain and justify a solution to a problem or to extend from something known to something unknown
5. **Engaging**, which means seeing mathematics as sensible, useful, and doable.

Note that each strand builds on the previous ones to ultimately culminate in a level of proficiency that results in the students' valuing of math—certainly a

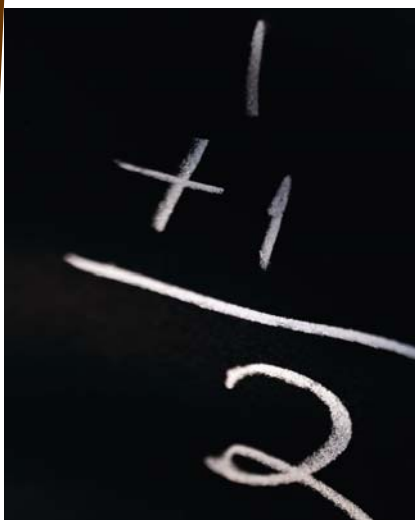
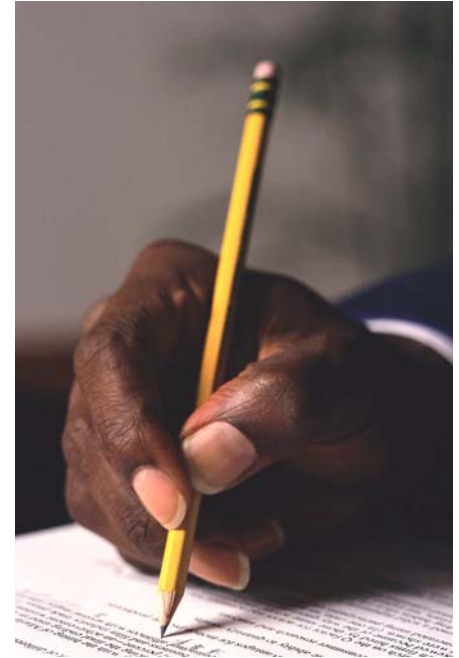
goal we strive for in our teaching of the subject.

To get us to that goal we need to help our students understand the important role of math in their everyday lives. The program we have chosen for our math instruction is ***Real Math***, published by

SRA, a new standards-based curriculum that presents true-to-life applications that will open students' eyes to all that math has to offer. The program builds on what students already know as well as on what they learn outside of the math classroom and helps them see that math is useful and important in their own lives. For example, "Across the Curriculum Math Connections" is a feature of the program that illustrates how math is used in science, history, data collection and representation, art, sports, music, and dance.

Furthermore, in addition to the systematic and explicit instruction that our teachers will provide, the ***Real Math*** approach includes activities that engage students actively in hands-on experiences with math through manipulatives and games, thus developing their conceptual thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. The questions and problems they will grapple with will require thinking—not just calculating and memorization. Moreover, differentiated instruction meets the needs of all students—those who will benefit from intervention as well as those ready for enrichment—so that everyone is embraced in the instructional loop.

Incorporating the five strands of mathematical proficiency in every lesson, ***Real Math*** should take us far in realizing our goal that students will value—and enjoy—math.



# The HJCS Building in May



In early May, the side addition is framed and the cement blocks are being put in place, *above and at right*.



Our gym/multipurpose room in mid-May, *above*.



Our Social Worker's office.



Future classrooms (*above left*), Special Education resource rooms (*above*), and new main entrance (*left*) on Hunter Avenue. **WELCOME !**

# HJCS Staff Visit Sister School in Milwaukee



HJCS Dean of Students Joe Foglia works with Milwaukee College Prep kindergartners (*upper left*), while their teacher Ms Brooke Halsey poses with the class in front of the Math Wall (*above*). Ms. Jones leads the class in reciting the wall cards (*left*). Teachers from MCPS and HJCS enjoy dinner at Milwaukee's Buca di Beppo, *below*. HJCS kindergarten teacher Mrs. Susie Caplan, *at left*, chats with MCPS teacher Mrs. Amy Holtz and Mrs. Kari Whalen, MCPS Director of Curriculum and Instruction, *at right*.



Members of Henry Johnson Charter School's staff—teachers and Dean of Students—accompanied Principal Lillian Turner on a visit to MCPS earlier this month. They spent two days in Kindergarten and First Grade classrooms, absorbing the culture and routines of this outstanding charter school in the heart of Milwaukee. They were impressed by all they saw, getting a first-hand view of how and why this school works. Since we are modeling Henry Johnson on MCPS, this opportunity to visit—to see students and talk with teachers—was invaluable in helping us to duplicate the success of this sterling example of what an urban educational setting can be.



**The prize for referring Grade 1 parents to HJCS is now raised from \$15 to \$25 per referral. Please help our school!**

"I am currently an Assistant Vice President in M&T's New York City Commercial Banking Group. I specialize in Real Estate and Hotel financing. I got involved with HCJS because I believe education and most importantly school choice in education is critical starting at a young age, especially in underprivileged areas and communities."  
—Brennan Keating  
Treasurer, HJCS Board

## Countdown to September...

- ☑ Furniture and equipment ordered
- ☑ Scholastic Book Fair scheduled for October
- ☑ All teachers hired
- ☑ Teacher visit to MCPS completed



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