

CAACS GLOBE

Cultural Arts Academy Charter School
Welcome Back Scholars!
For Our 10th School Year!



On Friday, September 3, 2019, Cultural Arts Academy Charter School opened its doors to welcome back its Kindergarten-Fifth grade scholars back from their summer break. This 2019-2020 school year marks the 10th

school year for Cultural Arts Academy Charter School. The slogan for this school year is "Great to Greater," and our professors, deans, and staff are ready to take our scholars and school to the next level!

Summer Reading Challenge Completed!



Over the course of summer 2019, CAACS scholars were encouraged to read and document their reading using the website: Biblionasium. Biblionasium is a social platform where scholars can keep their own virtual bookshelf, share their thoughts about what they read, and recommend books to each other. Scholars were challenged to read 1400 minutes over the summer break. Winners, from each grade, were awarded with a certificate and a \$25 gift coupon to our Follet IB Book Fair. Dean Pena, our Information Science Specialist and IB librarian organized this contest.



VOL. 9, SEPTEMBER 2019

IB Professional Development



This August 2019 we welcomed IBEN workshop leader Jacqueline Oussoren for an IB category one in-school workshop for all our new professors titled: *Making the PYP Happen: Implementing Agency.*

2

Service Learning: Taking Action



Counselor Charles-Pierre worked with the 5th grade team to organize a service learning opportunity that afforded our fifth grade scholars time to take action and help out with the local food pantry.

3

Dads Bring Scholar to School Day



Our entire school dressed up and brought in food to celebrate their heritage. We took great joy in embracing and celebrating our diversity.

4

"Education is the key to unlocking the world. A passport to freedom." -Oprah Winfrey

While our scholars were still enjoying their summer vacation, our instructional staff engaged in two weeks of professional development. The teacher training began with three days of focus on being International Baccalaureate inquiry teachers. Our veteran inquiry teachers were lead by Dean Mercaldo through reflective writing, collaborative planning, gallery walks, and more. Meanwhile our new professors earned their certificates for their first official category one IB training titled: *Making the PYP Happen: Implementing Agency* August 20-22, 2019. The IB workshop was an in-house workshop lead by Jacqueline Oussoren. The workshop had our teachers inquire into their own teaching practices and reflect on how they can develop the capabilities of a PYP teacher. By exploring the PYP framework, they connected how voice, choice and ownership are recognized and developed



New professors who completed the IB Category 1 training.
 Top row from left to right: Professor Kaur, Professor George, Professor Knox, Professor King, Professor Williams, IBEN Leader Jacqueline Oussoren
 Top row from left to right: Dean Mercaldo, Professor Stewart, Professor Joseph, Professor Wilson, Professor McBride, Professor Trott



in all members of the IB community. Our teachers were supported in their understanding of learning and teaching in a transdisciplinary, concept-driven curriculum and how to design this in their own classrooms.

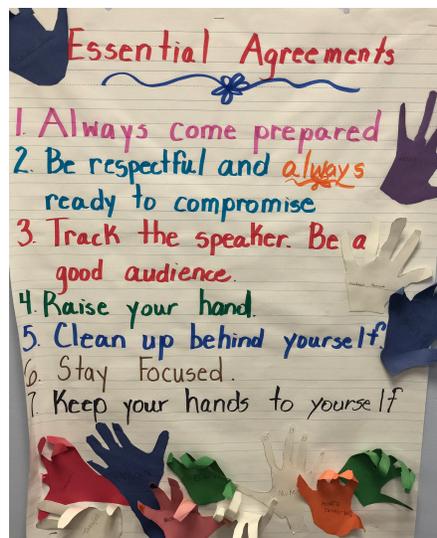
The professional learning continued with Dean Thompson leading professional developments about Making Thinking Visible and Dean Morales reviewing the Leader in Me Program.



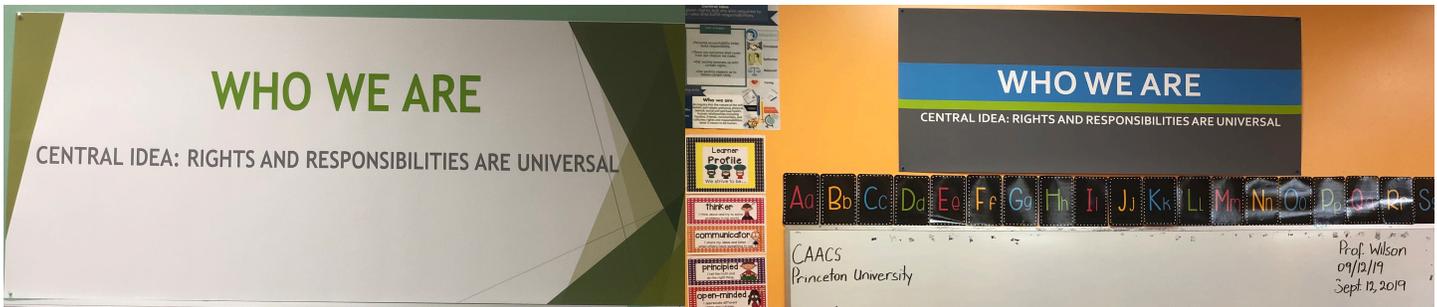
IBEN Workshop Leader Jacqueline Oussoren engages our faculty.

Essential Agreements

Each of our scholars has collaborated to develop an Essential Agreement which they believe will create a better learning environment. The Essential Agreement is unique to each class, but basically provides with the class with a set of guidelines. Each scholar even signed their name in a display of commitment toward their classroom goals!



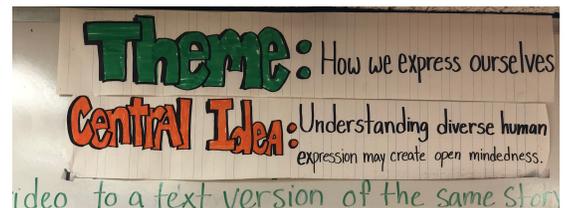
Rather than the teacher dictating a set of rules with negative language like “Don’t do this” and “Don’t do that,” our professors at CAACS facilitated the creation of an Essential Agreement by involving all members of the class. Our professors were trained to guide the scholars in keeping the language of the Essential Agreements positive and to also keep the agreements broad enough so as to not have too many.



In our two second grade classes: Brooklyn College and Princeton University, Professor Wilson and Professor George have gone above and beyond to make their central ideas clear to their scholars. The second grade team posted large banners over their white boards that in large print state both their theme and central idea for their first unit of inquiry of the 2019-2020 school year.



In the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program, each of the units of inquiry has a **central idea**. Each central idea supports students' understanding of the particular transdisciplinary theme it is connected to, and challenges and extends students' prior knowledge. The central idea is engaging, relevant, challenging and significant.



Counselor Rachel Charles-Pierre is a founding staff member at CAACS who recalls when the school opened in 2010: welcome banners displayed the slogans, "Welcome to CAACS Where We Grow Leaders." Counselor Charles-Pierre thought to herself, "How can we give scholars opportunities to lead? In the coming years she would develop the *Your Turn to Lead* program in which our older scholars mentor our younger scholars.

In 2017, when CAACS had expanded to include 6th grade, Counselor Charles-Pierre again thought how can we provide our scholars the opportunity to lead? This time she looked outside the walls of the school for options that would provide the 6th graders with bigger roles to be engaged in helping the community and those less fortunate. Some of the scholars had already volunteered at the neighboring food pantry during their 5th grade exhibition. Thus began the practice of our upperclassmen volunteering at our local food pantry.

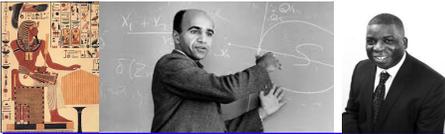
As an International Baccalaureate designated world school, we want to prepare our 5th grade scholars for the Middle Years Program and its *community project* which, "encourages students to explore their rights and responsibility to implement service as action in the community." Once again, this 2019 school year began with scholars become more open-minded when realizing the needs of the people in our local community and more caring as they voice their desires to help more.

Service Learning

"After I graduate, can I come back and help more?"

"How else can I help people in need?"

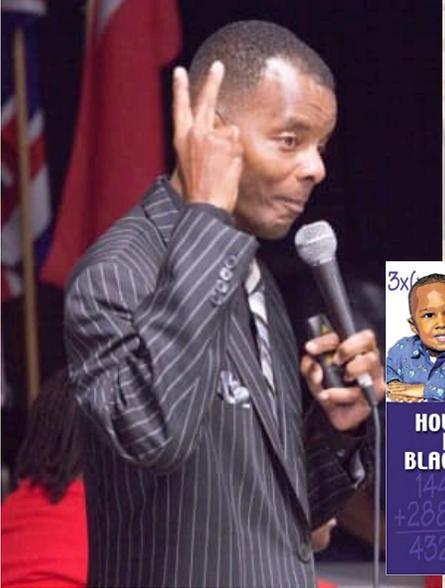




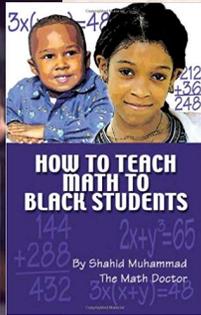
The Math Doctor



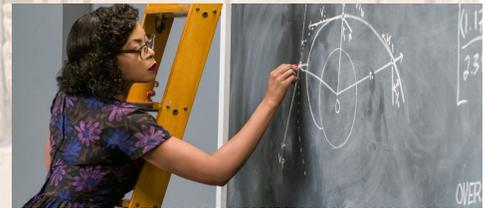
GET YOUR MATH ON



On Friday, September 13, 2019, Shahid Muhammad, visited Cultural Arts Academy for inspirational presentations focusing on the mathematical competency of underrepresented students. Known as "The Math Doctor," Shahid Muhammad has written and published several books. *How To Teach Math to Black Students* is considered a favorite among educators. His presentation to the scholars of CAACS introduced them to the rich history of black mathematicians who look like them and then drove home the concept that math is all around us and inside of us. His catchy slogan "Get Your Math On" also helped reinforce the point that we need to make mathematics culturally responsive. In the afternoon, his presentation to the staff provided an abundance of resources for building proficiency in mathematics.



"You are Math!"



Dads Bring Your Scholar to School Day

On Tuesday, September 17, 2019, Cultural Arts Academy Charter School hosted its annual Dads Bring Your Scholar to School Day. The father figures of our school community include biological fathers, stepfathers, foster fathers, grandpas, uncles, cousins, and more. The father



figures who took their scholars' to school this day received a complimentary continental breakfast and then visited their scholars' homeroom University before departing. Our family specialist, Dean Battle, said the "turnout was amazing and the scholar's were excited that their dads came out.



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Cultural Arts Academy Charter School
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Cultural Arts Academy Charter School's Attendance

CAACS Attendance Rate for September 2019: 91.5%