

## The Annual Countdown has Begun...

**D**uring my long professional career, I had the opportunity to be an elected official, work for an elected official and hold positions in the Democratic Party. I believed then, and believe now, that public service is a calling - that some of us were actually born to serve. A lot has changed.

Elected officials, in many cases, do not serve as the voice of those who elected them. In many cases, elected officials (politicians) serve interest groups.

Most recently, our New York State Senate and New York State Assembly voted not to hold teachers accountable for low student achievement. Governor Cuomo agreed! Perhaps those who feel that teachers should not be responsible for student achievement are really saying that minority children have limited abilities and we therefore, should not hold teachers responsible. I hope that was not their thinking.

Let's think about that. If a mechanic fixes our car and we pay for the repair, we expect that the problem was fixed. If not, we bring the car back. If we order a sandwich, we expect it will be prepared as we ordered.

We have children who depend on teachers to instruct them properly so they can pass a test. As of now, children are the only ones responsible for their test results. Mechanics and waiters are held more accountable than teachers. Fortunately, most teachers deeply care about their students and most are highly skilled.

What about the teacher who does not have the dedication and skill to properly instruct children? Not only does student failure result, but the unsuccessful teacher is evaluated the same as the successful teacher - thanks to our politicians.

Fortunately, those reading this newsletter are charter school parents. Our teachers **are still held accountable. Our principals are still held accountable. Your much loved superintendent is still held accountable.** Charter schools that do not show continued academic gains may lose their charter. All staff are secure in their jobs **only if test results continue to show improvement.** We are indeed fortunate that Icahn Charter Schools have outstanding teachers, they applied for their jobs and went through an exhausting application process. They have the confidence that they can provide outstanding instruction and bring our children to success. Most importantly, they don't hide behind an insulting law and face their responsibilities professionally.

## **The Annual Countdown has Begun...Pt 2**

I honestly wonder when parents will say, "enough is enough."

Since charter schools are public schools, we must continue the annual testing program. We have 36 school days before the ELA test and 52 school days before the mathematics test. Parents, school administrators, teachers and most importantly the children will now begin to feel the stress of these exams. I ask parents to relieve student stress by telling your child that this is one way for them to show their teachers how much they have learned this year.

Test preparation actually begins on the first day of school. Classroom participation, completion of assignments and concentration lead to success. One cannot expect high achievement by waiting just a few weeks before the exams to focus their attention. During the school year our students participate in a variety of tests which are designed to guide our instructional program. These tests provide the teacher with the necessary information to determine what content needs to be reviewed again.

Our society has certainly changed from a time when a high school diploma was enough to gain a good job. Society progressed and one needed to be a college graduate to gain successful employment. To be successful, one must be able to compete. We strengthen our ability to compete through constant practice. The mind is a muscle, it needs to be strengthened as an athlete strengthens their body.

Our teachers, you as parents and those of us in administration believe that our children can compete... and win. As I said years ago on WNET-TV, "***Yes we can and yes we did.***"

As always, thank you for your wonderful children.

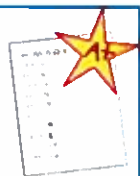
Jeff Litt,  
Superintendent

## ***DISTRIBUTION OF PROGRESS REPORTS***

- #3 Friday, March 1, 2019 - **Parent/teacher Conference**
- #4 Friday, April 12, 2019
- #5 Friday, June 7, 2019
- #6 Friday, July 5, 2019



## **New York State Exams...** **2018-2019**



### **ELA NYS Exams**

Tuesday - Thursday, April 2-4, 2019... ELA Grades 3-8

### **NYSESLAT Speaking**

Monday, April 8 - Friday, May 17, 2019

### **Math NYS Exams**

Wednesday - Friday, May 1- 3, 2019 ... Math Grades 3-8

### **NYSESLAT Listening, Reading & Writing**

Monday, May 6-17, 2019

### **NYS Science Performance**

Wednesday, May 22-Friday, May 31, 2019 ... Grades 4 & 8

### **NYS Science Written**

Monday, June 3, 2019 ... Grades 4 & 8

### **New York State Algebra Regents**

Wednesday, June 19, 2019 ... Grade 8

### **New York State Living Environment Regents**

Tuesday, June 18, 2019 ... Grade 8

### **New York State Spanish Proficiency**

Monday, June 24, 2019 ... Grade 8



# School Calendar!

## Icahn Charter Schools 2018-2019 School Calendar

|                 |                |   |
|-----------------|----------------|---|
| Tuesday         | February 5     | Lunar New Year (Schools Closed)   |
| Monday - Friday | February 18-22 | Midwinter Recess (includes Washington's Birthday & Lincoln's Birthday) (Schools Closed)   |
| Friday - Friday | April 19- 26   | Spring Recess (including Good Friday & Passover) (Schools Closed) Staff & Students return April 29 <sup>th</sup>                                |
| Monday          | May 27         | Memorial Day (Schools closed)   |
| Tuesday         | June 4         | Eid al-Fitr (Schools Closed)  |
| Thursday        | July 4         | Independence Day (Schools Closed)   |
| Friday          | July 5         | Last Day for Students and School Staff.<br>(12:00 p.m. Dismissal)<br>Network staff, principals/office staff/staff developers & security report. |



### *Icahn Charter School #5*

Kindergarten teachers Ms. Brancati and Ms. Withey for their beautiful bulletin boards of rigorous student work

5th Grade teacher Mrs. Candal for creating enthusiasm and excitement for Amplify Science Experiments

4th Grade teachers Ms. Appel and Mrs. Adolphe; 6th Grade teachers Ms. Corry and Ms. Ciliberto; and 7th/8th Grade teacher Mrs. Reid for Math Benchmark scores ranging from 90% to 100% at Levels 3 and 4.





## ICAHN CHARTER SCHOOL #1

"Another new year is upon us!!! Happy New Year! Icahn 1, as always, is flourishing! Our students are hard at work preparing for the upcoming examinations.

We have had a great 4 months of school thus far and looking to continue along that same path to end the school year. But we need your help....

At this time of the year, consistency is key, not only in school, but in your households as well. At home, it is important to provide your child with routines, such as, homework time in a quiet area consisting of no television. This time provides students the opportunity for completing schoolwork without distraction.

Lastly, talk to your child. Have meaningful conversations about things that are of interest to your child. These meaningful conversations will go a long way. You may not think so, but your child appreciates it. As always, please visit our school's website for the latest school news. [www.icahncharterschool1.org](http://www.icahncharterschool1.org)."



## ICAHN CHARTER SCHOOL #2

This past December the Icahn Charter School 2 students and faculty arranged holiday assembly programs grades K-8. The school-wide assembly featured performances from grades K-5, along with an ensemble performance by the choir which was comprised of middle school students 6-8th. The show culminated with a rendition of "How The Grinch Stole Christmas." The production was a proud accomplishment for all involved. Some students were able to display musical, vocal, and acting talents. The production was helmed by Ms. Rose and Mr. E. Suarez. It was an enriching experience for all those involved and we eagerly await the next year's assembly.



## ICAHN CHARTER SCHOOL #3

Our students have been working very hard in our extracurricular activities here at Icahn 3. We have students in grades 6 and 7 participating in the American Debate League. In the American Debate League, students are given the opportunity to develop debating, speaking and literacy skills through debate training and competitions. On January 26<sup>th</sup>, our students participated in their first debate competition for this year in Queens, New York. Our school placed Second Place in the Middle School Beginners Sweepstake Award. Out of over 100 speakers, we are proud to announce Desjana Celaj and Madisyn Hernandez placed in the top 10! Congratulations to all students in our American Debate Team!



## ICAHN CHARTER SCHOOL #4

For the third year in a row, Icahn Charter School 4 has the privilege of being invited to participate in the New York City Junior Ambassador Program (NYCJA). This unique program is partnered with the NYC Mayor's Office and United Nations. Over 100 educators applied to participate in the program for the 2018-2019 academic year and only 20 educators and their students were selected. Icahn Charter School 4's seventh grade class, co-taught by Mr. Butler (middle school science), Mr. Stimpfle (middle school social studies) & Ms. Melicio (guidance counselor) are excited and honored to have been selected to become NYC Junior Ambassadors.

NYCJA empowers students to become global ambassadors involved in addressing the challenges of the world. Students learn about the structure and function of the UN and then determining a global issue that they, as NYC seventh graders, will actively address. NYC Junior Ambassadors are then given support by their educators and partners at the United Nations to investigate, plan, and then act on the global issue that they have chosen to focus on. This year, their area of focus will be Affordable and Clean Energy.

Officially launched in January, as NYC Junior Ambassadors the students will:

- learn about the structure and function of the United Nations
- Investigate and address a global issue or crisis
- Enjoy a curated tour of the United Nations
- Receive a visit from a United Nations ambassador
- Create a group project centered around a sustainable development goal (SDG)
- Present their findings on the issue or crisis of their choice at a culminating ceremony
- Graduate from Junior Ambassadors to full-fledged ambassadors

We are excited about the opportunity for Icahn Charter School 4 to participate in this program again!



## ICAHN CHARTER SCHOOL #5

Happy New Year to all our Icahn families! Icahn 5 has some wonderful new ventures as we move full speed ahead into the New Year. First we would like to congratulate ALL of our seniors for being accepted into their first choice high schools. We can't wait for their new adventure to begin. We have started our first Icahn 5 student council. The campaigns and pitches were remarkable to say the least. We have some great future leaders on our hands! The LEAP program is continuing to thrive as students just completed masterpieces on the Mona Lisa and Albert Einstein. We are looking forward to the completion of their Chinese New Year mural with the works in the style of Eric Carle. As always, we ask that you continue to play an avid role in your child's education. Please continue to ensure the completion of homework each night, that your child is attending all tutorial programs, and continue regular communication with your child's teacher.



## ICAHN CHARTER SCHOOL #6

At Icahn 6, students learn science through active investigation. We are excited to partner with New York Hall of Science to bring science concepts to life. Our scientists are gaining an understanding of engineering design and concepts as well as the scientific method.



Congratulations to Mr. Motie and our 7th & 8th grade debate team who won third place at the American Debate League Tournament on Saturday, January 26, 2019. Hard work and persistence made this happen.

I am continuously impressed with the amount of time and energy the staff at Icahn Charter School 6 puts into making sure all students are successful! Kudos to the academic progress we have shown thus far!



## ICAHN CHARTER SCHOOL # 7

Icahn Charter School 7 students enjoy being active participants in the learning process each day. Our scholars are motivated to do their best and are always excited to learn something new. The students were thrilled to participate in our STEM school assembly program facilitated by the New York Hall of Science Museum.

The STEM assembly was a live show in which the students learned and participated in experiments involving chemical interactions with elephant toothpaste and liquid nitrogen. The students also examined the power of air pressure and participated in a hair-raising experience with electricity. Our Icahn 7 debate team also did a wonderful job and brought home the second place trophy in the recent American Debate League Winter Classics sponsored by NYS Assembly member David Weprin.

We are so proud of the work our students are doing and we look forward to all that they will continue to accomplish as the school year progresses.



### Saturday Academy 2018-2019

As you know, there are several support programs to ensure that all students are brought to grade level or above on both New York State ELA exam & mathematics exam. If your child is invited to participate in our after school tutorial program or Saturday Academy, he /she **must attend**.

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>February 2019:</b> | <b>February 2nd, February 9th,</b>   |
| <b>March 2019:</b>    | <b>March 2nd, March 9th, March 16th, March 23rd,<br/>(ELA only) March 30th, (ELA only)</b> |
| <b>April 2019:</b>    | <b>April 6th, (math only) April 13th, (math only)</b>                                      |





## Icahn Charter Schools

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*Jeff Litt, Superintendent*

*Daniel Garcia, Deputy Superintendent*

*Richard Santiago, Deputy Superintendent*

**YES WE CAN!!!!...AND YES WE DID!!!**



## *Our mission*

*Icahn Charter Schools, using the basic Core Knowledge curriculum developed by E.D. Hirsh, will provide students with a rigorous academic program offered on an extended day/year. Students will graduate armed with the skills and knowledge to successfully participate in the most rigorous academic environments, and will have a sense of personal community responsibility !!!*

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