You’ve read it in our emails, letters, blogs and even at the left of this very column! You’ve seen it emblazoned on t-shirts, hats and water bottles. For nearly two decades, “The School With a Heart” has been synonymous with PS196Q. So much so, that many people did not even know that our official name was “The Grand Central Parkway” school.

The reason we’ve been using it for so many years, is that it fits. As some children wrote in opinion pieces about the name change:

“When I think of The School With a Heart, I think of everyone in the school PS196 that cares about each other...That’s what The School With a Heart is all about. About being there for a friend or having their back.” ~ 4th Grader

“If I was a new student it would remind me that the teachers and students will respect me and keep me safe.” ~ 1st Grader

Even though it seems like a natural fit to most, some, including students, expressed concerns:

“It can cost a lot of money to change the name...~ 4th Grader

It is true that the school will be responsible for any costs incurred from the change. However, for everything from letterhead to forms, we could make the changes on the computer at no cost. If we wanted to change the signage on the front of our building, we would need to raise funds for that.

With the favorable Parents Association vote last month, we have started the process. The next step will be discussion and a vote at a Community Education Council meeting. As soon as we have a meeting date, we will let you know.

Meanwhile, please let us know how you feel by voting in our unofficial poll at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9GFTCDL

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**Proposed Name Change:**

“The School With a Heart”

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**PS 196Q Online Library – Your virtual learning center!**

A variety of trustworthy, credible resources of high quality content—research and reference sources, magazines, newspapers—can be accessed from our library webpage 24/7, FOR FREE!

**Steps to Access Resources via PS 196Q Library Web Page:**

Access our school’s library web page: [https://tinyurl.com/mq7ratv](https://tinyurl.com/mq7ratv) or by scanning the QR code provided.

On the library’s home page, scroll down past the book interest survey until you have reached the “Online Learning Quicklinks.”

Click the icon of the resource you are interested in using.
Respect For All Week—Feb. 9 -13

Respect for all week, February 9th through the 13th, will be filled with activities and conversations on ways to show respect for everyone, including yourself. We will also be linking our conversations with our Character Development book of the month.

This week gives you a great opportunity to discuss respect and responsibility as a family. Here are some ways to support, and encourage responsible behavior:

- Make agreements with your child and expect him to follow through.
- When things go wrong, help your child take responsibility for his/her part and make a plan to do things differently next time.
- Encourage your child to find out more about the world and how his/her actions may affect others far away.

It’s Math-a-thon Time Again!—Our Goal is $16,000

As most of you know, our school has been supporting the children of St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital through our yearly participation in the Math-a-thon.

During our first year, in 2005, we raised more than $4,000. Since then, we have raised a total of almost $75,000! This money has helped countless children who are suffering from life-threatening childhood illnesses—a true reflection of being “The School With a Heart.”

Students will learn about the Math-a-thon during assembly programs on February 27th.

Here are the steps for participating,

1) Return the signed permission slip
2) Get sponsors
3) Complete the Math-a-thon booklet, or do the problems online
4) Get certificates and prizes during our Math-a-thon assembly on May 4th at 6:00 p.m.

Even though participation is optional, we hope that many children will be involved.

Character Development—One Pillar at a Time

During the month of February, our students will be focusing on the pillar of RESPONSIBILITY, by reading the book *The Paperboy*, by Dav Pilkey. Responsibility includes: Do what you are supposed to do • Plan ahead • Persevere: keep on trying! • Always do your best • Use self-control • Be self-disciplined • Think before you act — consider the consequences • Be accountable for your words, actions, and attitudes • Set a good example for others. The Character Counts Coalition uses the color **green** to symbolize this pillar. As a culminating activity we will be asking the school community to wear **green** to show our commitment to being Responsible.

ELA & MATH SATURDAY ACADEMIES—GRADES 3, 4, & 5

In preparation for the NYS exams, we are pleased to announce that we will be offering Saturday Academies again this year.

**English Language Arts**—February 28th, March 7th & 14th

**Mathematics**—March 21st, 28th, & April 18th

These Saturday classes will be open to all students and parents in grades 3—5, however space is limited so make sure you sign up as soon as the flyers are sent home.
PS 196 is immersed in the Arts. On January 22nd our second grade students wowed the families with their African Dance presentation. Our students in grades K, 1, 3 & 5 are currently participating in their grade residencies.

Kindergarten—Be Well Movement
1st Grade—Puppetry
3rd Grade—Dance on Broadway
5th Grade—Ballroom Dancing

Families will be invited to enjoy the culminating events for each residency. We look forward to welcoming you to witness first hand, what the children have learned and enjoyed during their 10 week residency.

Just a reminder to remember to carry your identification with you at all times. Our school safety agent will need to see ID even if you are a frequent visitor to our building. Everyone is asked to sign-in and to wear a visitor’s pass throughout their visit. We also ask that you PLEASE exit ONLY through the main door—this is for everyone’s safety. We appreciate your cooperation.

Our Wellness Committee is pleased to offer a Compassionate Communication Workshop on February 2nd from 6:30—9:00 p.m. Please join us for this workshop, where you will be given tools and techniques for managing situations particularly relevant to busy parents—balancing work needs, the needs of children and parents’ needs, as well.

Compassionate Communication is a set of skills that allows us to effectively listen to others and to communicate clearly our needs, and feelings; it creates a foundation for respect and cooperation with our children, family and beyond.

This time of year brings spikes in influenza, and other viral and bacterial illnesses. The CDC reports that the current flu vaccine has not been as effective as expected. There is an increase in influenza nationally. In order to maintain an environment for optimal learning, please keep your child home if they are ill.

Keep in mind the 24 hour rules:
- Must be afibrile (without fever) for 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing medication.
- 24 hours without nausea, diarrhea, vomiting and tolerating a normal diet.
- 24 hours after receiving antibiotics or eye ointment.

Children are not allowed to bring medication to school. If your child has an illness or condition that requires medication in school, please notify me and I will issue an MAF (medication administration form) for your child’s physician to complete.

Chapped and cracked lips are very common during the winter. Your child may carry lip balm.

Hand washing and cough etiquette are key to avoid spreading germs.

Lastly, if your child is in a cast, please stop by the medical room with required documentation from the physician, indicating permission to return to school and activity restrictions.

If you have any questions, please call or stop by.

Stay well, Annette Neglia, RN.
Dates to Remember...

February 2 — Return Signed Interim Progress Reports to Classroom Teacher
February 2 — Parent Workshop, Compassionate Communication @ 6:30 p.m.
February 11 — 5th Grade trip to Alley Pond Environmental Conservation Center
February 12 — 100th Day of School
February 12 — Coffee & Conversation @ 8:15 a.m.
February 12 — Parent Workshop, Making the Most of PTC @ 7:00 p.m.
February 13 — Kindergarten Application Process Ends
February 13 — LUNCH COLLECTION
February 16 — 20 — SCHOOL CLOSED — Mid-Winter Recess
February 23 — Data-Tech Meeting @ 6:00 p.m.
February 24 — 3rd Grade Trip to Kupferberg Center for the Arts
February 24 — Star Student Awards @ 7:00 p.m.
February 24 — Parents Association Meeting @ 7:30 p.m.
February 25 — Parent Workshop, The Learning Environment Survey @ 7:30 a.m.
February 27 — School Leadership Team Meeting @ 7:00 a.m.
February 28 — ELA Saturday Academy — 9:30 a.m. — 12 noon

PS196Q 2014-2015 Goal Highlights

- Our teachers will continue to use effective questioning and discussion techniques, in order to deepen students’ understanding across curricular areas. Teachers will use Charlotte Danielson’s component 3b and Webb’s Depth of Knowledge as resources for creating rigorous lessons, and planning for questioning and discussions.

- As a school committed to educating the whole child, we will continue to give our students the opportunity to participate in a variety of rich learning experiences in dance, music, theater and visual arts across the curriculum. Our efforts will be supported by our Parent Association, who will fund our Performance Arts program.

- We will reconfirm our commitment to the progress of our special education and at-risk students, especially those who scored levels 1 and 2 on the 2014 New York State ELA exam. Teachers will use the concepts of Universal Design for Learning and differentiation to embed multiple entry points into instruction, and we will measure their progress by analyzing their performance on the Measures of Student Learning (MoSL).

- Our entire community—students and staff—will be trained on and implementing the “Don’t Laugh at Me” system for character development and anti-bullying. This program will lead to more civil behavior among students, and a reduction in student-to-student conflicts.

- We will continue to welcome and engage parents in all aspects of our community, including taking leadership roles on our Wellness Committee, and participating in all school events. We will also work to increase our percentage of parent respondents to our annual School Survey by at least 10%.