

# Second Floor Scoop



## RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE FESTIVAL



**TEACHERS:** Prepare for an Enjoyable and Enlightening Celebration!

LaGuardia students will enter a brave new world on **Friday, April 24**: They will be exposed to exciting developments of the Renaissance and Baroque periods in the fields of art, drama, dance, music, literature, mathematics, science, and sports! The LaGuardia Arts Renaissance and Baroque Festival will enable students to feel as if they were living during those times as they travel from one classroom to the next. Whether you are a physical education instructor teaching students to play badminton or an English educator guiding young people through a Shakespearean sonnet, each teacher will represent his or her department with pride on April 24. If you would like ideas about how to incorporate some aspect of Renaissance or Baroque art, history, literature, or life into your lesson, please talk with your department chairperson or one of the members of the CFI Team: Ms. Lawton, Mr. Moore, Ms. Pace, Mr. Sudduth, or Ms. van Keulen.

## REPORT CARD DISTRIBUTION



**Making (and Receiving) the Grades** Report cards will be distributed in OP on **Wednesday, March 25**. Extra copies for parents will be available during the two days of parent-teacher conferences.

## PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES



**Open School Night Approaches!**

Teachers will meet with parents to discuss student performance on Open School Night, which is held this year on **Thursday, March 26 from 5:30PM-8:00PM**. Parents are also encouraged to meet with educators the following day, **Friday, March 27, from 1:00PM-3:00PM**.

On **Friday, March 27**, classes will be held periods 2,3,8,9, and 10. Each period will last 35 minutes.

## CLASSROOM CORNER

Featured Class: Strings 7



Mr. Meyers conducts Strings 7, the training ensemble for our Senior Orchestra.



## E-MAIL REFERENCE NUMBER



**TEACHERS:** Update Your DOE E-mail Account.

The DOE requires each teacher to change his or her e-mail password every 90 days. The Outlook Web interface will alert you to this need when it arrives. For the first time, however, you will also be asked to provide your Employee ID Number when you update your password. This will help the DOE to confirm active accounts and delete inactive ones.

Your Employee ID Number is also known as the Reference Number. It is a seven-digit number that is found on your pay stub under "Reference #." If your ID is only six characters long, append a "0" to the beginning. Be aware that your Reference Number is different from your file number! Review the diagram below to see how you can locate your Reference Number. If you do not have your Reference Number available when you change your password, you may call HR Connect at (718) 935-4000.

The City of New York		EMPLOYEE		Payroll Management System	
PERIOD	PERIOD END	PERIOD START	PERIOD END	CHECK NUMBER	CHECK DATE
03/01/09	03/15/09	03/16/09	03/16/09	9999	03/05/09
ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER INFORMATION		REFERENCE #		EMPLOYEE NAME	
FEDERAL TAX		SOCIAL SECURITY		CITY TAX	
MEDICAL		DENTAL		CITY BONUS	
REGULAR PAY		LEAVE BALANCE AS OF		NET PAY	
0:00		03/03/09			
IT'S TAX TIME. GET YOUR REFUND. CALL 311					
TR5 414H STD		WAIVERED EE		TR5 TDA	
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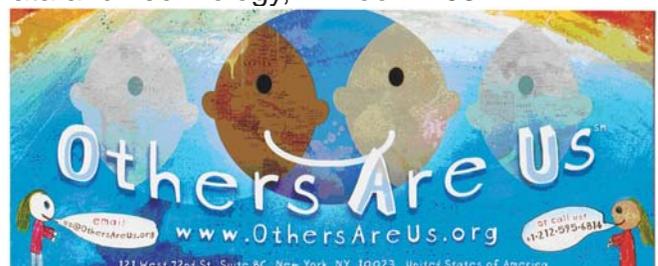


## BUILD BRIDGES BETWEEN CULTURES

**STUDENTS:** Become an Internationally Known Artist!

Build Bridges Between Cultures is an after-school program open to all students at LaGuardia High School; participants will learn about different cultures by reaching out to arts schools across the globe. In collaboration with The High School of Arts and Design, Bronx High School of Visual Arts, and the organization Others Are Us, participating students will create an online digital portfolio. They will then exchange ideas and artwork with the Zi ZhuYuan High School in Shanghai through the use of a chat room and message board. This project, called EMBRACE, will culminate with an exhibition.

Any student who is interested in sharing artwork with students overseas is encouraged to participate; many sophomores in the classes of Mr. Jung, Ms. Ross, Mr. Diriggers, and Ms. Mintz are exploring this option. Register with Ms. van Keulen, AP of Data and Technology, in Room 203.



If you have any questions regarding information on this page, please call Ms. van Keulen, AP of Data and Technology, at X3203 or Mr. Sommers, AP of Organization, at X3237.

# Data for Decision Making

## THIS WEEK'S FOCUS: AP PERFORMANCE - PART TWO

In December, Ms. van Keulen invited every educator who teaches AP classes to enter into an ongoing conversation about the AP program in our school.

The majority of the teachers with whom she met agreed with the College Board's definition of success, "an AP exam grade of 3 or higher, which represents the score point that research finds predicative of college success and college graduation."

The majority of the AP teachers present considered it to be necessary for our students to be competitive while applying to colleges and to excel in academia. Therefore, greater student exposure to AP level classes is a common goal.

Our AP teachers shared more information regarding these specialized classes, such as their belief that students who would like to take AP classes must be equipped with the skills listed below before registering for the class.

- good writing skills, which include note-taking skills and the ability to write research papers
- willingness to work hard (30-45 minutes per day to study that subject alone)
- reading comprehension at an adequate level
- willingness to thoroughly understand concepts rather than merely memorizing the applications of rules
- a solid knowledge of English grammar and syntax
- a desire to be challenged

Some of our AP teachers feel that many of our students have an unrealized potential to "Research finds [an be successful due to AP score of 3 or insufficiently rigorous higher] predictive of preparation in earlier college success." grades. The school does offer honors

-The College Board classes in most of the subjects for which we make AP classes available, however. These honors classes should challenge students and help them to develop the skills listed above, such as reading, writing, note-taking, and conceptual understanding. We need to emphasize that in schools around the nation, teachers of honors classes require students to write research papers and/or final term thesis papers.

The AP teachers unanimously agreed that with more students taking AP classes, the student population with which they are working is more diverse in skills; this necessitates time-intensive work to differentiate instruction, to plan, to implement highly challenging lessons, and to give students meaningful feedback. Two ideas were raised, therefore: One, following up on the precedent that exists in this school and in sync with the UFT

contract, is for those classes that require extra preparation time to be no larger than 28 students. Smaller class sizes are already in place for print-making classes, non-digital photography classes, and sculpture classes. The second option, which is a bit less popular but still acceptable, would be to have educators who teach at least two sections of AP classes to have an AP prep assignment count as their C6.

To be continued...

### A STUDENT'S DAY DURING THE RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE FESTIVAL

One imagined student might enjoy the class topics below on the day of the Festival:

#### Period 2: English:

The teacher will ask students to take notes during a class discussion of Shakespeare's Sonnet 130, "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun." They will then work in pairs to write the first few lines of their own original sonnets.

#### Period 3: Math:

Students will discuss the revolutionary ideas Rene Descartes presented in his work *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason in the Search for Truth in the Sciences*. Here he crafted the bases of a new geometry: the analytic geometry or coordinate geometry, which is the study of geometry using principals of algebra.

#### Period 4: Science:



Students will discuss this image..

#### Period 5: Italian:

The class will read

aloud a passage from Machiavelli's *Il Principe*, discussing the text and how it relates to politics today.

#### Period 6: Social Studies:

The teacher will talk about the Medici family, which at a certain point was the most wealthy family in Europe, influencing Europe in everything from economics, banking, politics, religion, visual arts, architecture, and music.

#### Period 7: Lunch:

Each student will attempt to consume an entire turkey leg.

#### Period 8: Physical Education:

The educator will teach students to play badminton, a sport played during the Renaissance.

#### Period 9: Art: Pen and Ink Illustration:

Students will learn about chiaroscuro, modeling in light and shadow, a method developed by Italian Renaissance artists. Also, they will explore compositional devices popular during the 1500's in Italy (by Ms. Amity).

# Data for Decision Making

## THIS WEEK'S FOCUS: AP SUCCESS STORIES

Student success makes a great story. Indeed, the news media have been reporting over the past three months on student performance, focusing in particular on the nationwide extension of AP programs. This may be due to the following trends:

- Over the last ten years, extensive research has demonstrated that students benefit in college if they had previously enrolled in AP classes. There is also an abundance of data that shows the strong correlation between completion of AP courses in high school and graduation rates from four-year colleges.
- A significant number of colleges consider AP classes a good indication that students are ready for their school; not giving students the opportunity to take such classes lessens the likelihood that they will be able to go to reputable colleges, particularly in a state with such a strong AP program. More than 2.6 million students took at least one AP course last year, and over 140,000 of those attend classes in New York State.
- New York State has the highest percentage of seniors taking and passing an AP exam with a 3 or above by the end of their high school career: 22.7%.

In its Fifth Annual Report, The College Board emphasizes these recent great advancements in the enriching of students' high school learning. Some critics may see a financial conflict of interests here because The College Board benefits from student gains; however, even President Obama was quoted as saying the following while talking

**In 2004-2005, 23 LaGuardia students passed the English AP exam. In 2007-2008, 144 students passed the test.**

about Arne Duncan, the Secretary of Education:

"I remember a conversation we had about one of those lessons a while back. We were talking about how he'd managed to

increase the number of kids taking and passing AP courses in Chicago over the last few years. And he told me that in the end, the kids weren't any smarter than they were three years ago; our expectations for them were just higher. Well, I think it's time we raised our expectations for our kids all across this country and built schools that meet – and exceed – those expectations."

The bar has indeed been raised: Since 2002, the number of AP test takers has risen nearly 40%, and the number of students passing an AP exam has risen more than 30%. The greatest increases in AP participation in 2008 came among African-American and Latino students. The College Board is committed to the following principle: "All students deserve an opportunity to participate in rigorous and academically challenging courses

and programs. All students who are willing to accept the challenge of a rigorous academic curriculum should be considered for admission to AP courses...Schools should make every effort to ensure that their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population."

All of our AP teachers are aware of this national trend. We consider the AP Program at Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts to be very successful; the results from 2007-2008 support this perception.

The most impressive data were produced by the departments that increased enrollment in AP classes. For example, in 2004-2005, only 26 students took an English AP class with 23 students passing the AP exam; last year, however, 172 students took the class with 144 students passing the exam. Results from other departments will be discussed in the next issue.

**"[H]e told me that in the end, the kids weren't any smarter than they were three years ago; our expectations for them were just higher."  
-President Obama**

Educators' efforts to teach students college-level material that then helps them to earn AP credits is certainly commendable. In a recent discussion with AP teachers in our school, however, the concern was shared that complex, time-consuming Advanced Placement classes require AP teachers to do considerably more work than their regular classes require them to do. We took note of this issue and looked into different proposals within the UFT Contract relating to teachers' work, keeping in mind the need for every job to be equitable. We are thinking about a plan to address this concern.

To be continued.....

Exam	2004-2005		2007-2008	
	Total Students Taking the Exam	Percent of Students Achieving Level Greater Than 3	Total Students Taking the Exam	Percent of Students Achieving Level Greater Than 3
French	27	77.8%	31	48.39%
Spanish Language	47	80.9%	81	62.96%
Music Theory	15	95%	14	78.57%
US History	95	49.5%	144	66.67%
Calculus AB	134	33.6%	119	31.09%
Art History	96	70.8%	156	48.07%
Biology	22	100%	22	68.18%
English Language	26	88.5%	172	84.30%
English Literature	67	90%	91	84.62%