

Winter Newsletter



Welcome to the Winter Newsletter! We would like to thank you for a successful first half of the school year. Pan American's mission is to prepare bilingual, internationally-minded inquirers who learn and contribute to the community through service and action. We are working hard every day to make this reality for each and every student. Please enjoy this newsletter and look forward to seeing you at parent-teacher conferences.

FAREWELL MRS. MCNEIL

Mrs. McNeil will soon be resigning from her position as Director of Specialized Services at Pan American Academy Charter School. After eight and a half years in her role, she has decided to explore new professional opportunities. Her last day as Director of Specialized Services will be December 22, 2022. We will surely miss Mrs. McNeil and appreciate the impact she has made on the lives of students, families, and staff at Pan American.

Her responsibilities at the school will be taken over by Dr. Joshua Fineberg. Dr. Fineberg, our Director of Student Services, has been part of the Pan American Academy family since 2019. We feel confident that the Specialized Services Program will continue to run smoothly under Dr. Fineberg's care. Along with Dr. Fineberg, the specialized services program has two dedicated professionals to support the educational and program needs of the students. In Lower School, K-4, Natalie Poltash and Upper School, 5-8, Dennis Hall will be working with students and their families.



Best of luck with your endeavors Mrs. McNeil! Thank you for being a true champion for our students.

BEATING THE ODDS!

A few weeks ago, Elevate 215 announced its approval of a first round of 'Beat the Odds' Planning Grants to a group of five public district and public charter schools that are "Beating the Odds" for their students who are making strong academic progress each year. The new grants, totaling \$250,000, will help these schools build on their track record of success and continue to elevate performance and expand their impact to even more students.

Pan American received a \$50,000 grant to support a six-month planning process for each school to identify areas of research-based practice they can implement to dramatically increase student outcomes. We will also have the opportunity to apply for grants of up to \$825,000 each over three or four years, to help move their schools from good to great.

Our goal for this funding is to further develop and enhance our mental health and behavioral support for students. You can read more details in a story written by the [Philadelphia Inquirer](#).

INCLEMENT WEATHER DELAYS AND CLOSURES

Now that we are nearing winter break and heading into the true winter months where the possibility of snow and other winter storm conditions can impact our routine schedule, it is good for you to know that --

- We will do our best to make a call the night before based upon the weather forecast.
- If a call is not made until the day of and school is delayed/closed, the decision will be made by 5:30am.
- The school community will receive notifications via Class Dojo, School Messenger, Email (staff only) whether there is a delayed opening or school closure.
- Notifications will be posted on our school website and social media (make sure you follow us on Instagram @panamcs2008 and like us on Facebook (Pan American Academy Charter School) -- QR codes are posted in the bulletin board across the office).

COVID 19 Test Distribution

Students will be receiving COVID-19 tests on the week of December 19th to support COVID19 mitigation during the winter break. These tests will be delivered to each classroom for the homeroom teacher to distribute to students to take home. They will be in brown paper bags.

VISITS & AUTHORIZATIONS



CMCI VISIT

The Bureau of Special Education (BSE) monitors all school districts and charter schools in the state to ensure that they are complying with federal and state special education regulations and are improving the performance outcomes of students with disabilities. All programs are monitored at least once over a six-year cycle. Cyclical Monitoring for Continuous Improvement (CMCI) monitoring is conducted onsite by a team of trained personnel. Following the onsite monitoring, the BSE sends a report of findings to the school district or charter school. If noncompliance has been found, it must be corrected as soon as possible but no later than one year from the report. Pan American just underwent the onsite visit and will receive official feedback soon.

CHARTER RENEWAL

The Charter Schools Office (CSO), on behalf of the Board of Education (Board), conducts a comprehensive review of each charter school seeking renewal and then presents a formal evaluation and renewal report (ACE-R) to the Board. The CSO will conduct Pan American's review in January 2023.

The review and recommendation are based on the Charter School Performance Framework and consider evidence of outcomes-based performance during the current charter term. The CSO's will evaluate the following areas:

- Academic Success
- Organizational Compliance and Viability
- Financial Health and Sustainability

IB Program Evaluation (Primary Years Program - PYP, Middle Years Program - MYP)

At Pan American, we implement the IB PYP and MYP programs. An IB School is regularly evaluated to ensure that the standards and practices of its IB programs are being maintained. Evaluation takes place at least once every five years. As part of the process, the school engages in a self-study which is a key element in the school's continual improvement. We will be going through our evaluation in early March and will have visitors from the IB conducting the evaluations.

PANAMILY SHOUT OUTS

Lower School Staff

Theodora Huynh goes above and beyond to support and encourage her fellow teachers and students. She celebrates them consistently and creates a warm environment in each classroom she teaches in. She is a stellar educator and many seek her out for support, advice and ideas. She is never too busy to help a lower school team member out or advocate for her 3rd grade students. She is a gem and asset to our school!



Upper School Staff

Idalee Escribano for being a consistent support system for students and upper school the team. We appreciate your hard work and dedication. Thank you for your effort!



Lower School Student

Jameson Sanchez is a superstar reader! Jameson participates in Literacy Events and Project LIT. He has already read Stamped, our one book one school initiative. He is an inspiration to his 3rd grade friends!



Upper School Student

Bahiyyah Carter-Pinkney has been an amazing, caring friend and has been focusing on personal growth. Her hard work and constant effort have been noticed. We are proud of you. Keep up the work!



GET INVOLVED

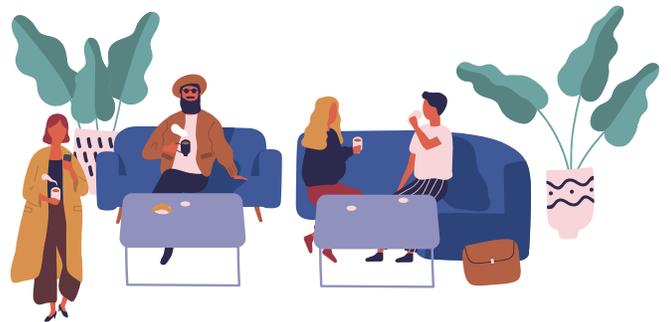
P.E.A.K.

Our parent group P.E.A.K., Parents Engaged and Active for Kids is well underway. The purpose of P.E.A.K. is to develop leadership among parents and caregivers, to educate parents about school-related topics, and to give parents and caregivers a voice in their student's education. Families who are a part of P.E.A.K. can also volunteer at events, attend field trips, and get involved in on-site events as long as they have obtained their clearances.

If you are interested in joining P.E.A.K, please reach out to Lower School Principal, Mercedes Mason at mmason@panamcs.org.

Cafecito con los Principales

Since the beginning of the school year, we have hosted Cafecito con los Principales meet-ups. During this time, families and our principals Ms. Mason, Lower School Principal and Mr. Shemaria, Upper School Principal meet for coffee and to discuss important topics with parents and caregivers. If you would like to join us, meetings are the first Friday of every month at 8:30AM in the cafeteria. Please enter through the main school yard.



ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL, & RECESS

Ideally, arrival, dismissal, and recess should take place outdoors on school grounds as weather, space, and safety permit. The school uses the following guidelines to determine whether arrival, dismissal, and recess are held indoors or outdoors during the cold weather months. For more details regarding our Weather Policy please [CLICK HERE](#).

Weather	Arrival, Dismissal and/or Recess Held
Above 32°F with wind chill (feels like)	Outdoors
30°F to 32°F with wind chill (feels like)	Abbreviated Outdoor Recess - 5 to 10 minutes
Below 30°F with or without wind chill	Indoors

Your Opinion Matters

Please take a moment to answer the 3 questions in [THIS LINK](#). These questions will help us better serve students.

