

November 2024

IN THIS ISSUE:

- COCREATE UPDATE: DONORS CHOOSE PROJECT
- WORLD KINDNESS DAY
- RJ FAMILY WORKSHOPS
- CULTURAL HERITAGE AND IDENTITY CELEBRATIONS

Restorative Justice Scoop

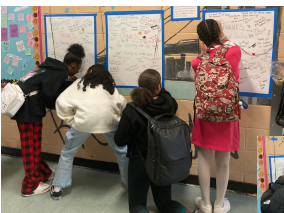


MS447
THE EXPLORATORY SCHOOL

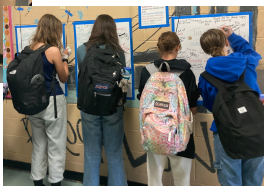
RJ Department: Dallas Alexis, Sameera Abadi, Joy Canning, Administration

CoCreate Update:

CoCreate is a way to create COLLECTIVE CHANGE. It is a lunchtime conversation that allows for student voice and collaboration. CoCreate participants are special advisors that use their voices to influence classroom and school practices because they are the experts in what they and their classmates need or want. Grade specific CoCreate groups meet one lunch period per 6-day cycle. Most recently the 7th grade CoCreate discussed the student voiced problem of limited play equipment for use in the courtyard during lunchtime. The courtyard is such an important and necessary space for our students, providing opportunity to move their bodies, socialize, and get outside. It is absolutely one of those spaces where students can experience belonging and connectivity. CoCreate took action, emailing the administration and lunch staff in an effort to collaborate towards solutions. The students created a Donors Choose project, curating a wish list of equipment they felt would meet the students' needs. They also plan to continue to work to add hopscotch, foursquare, and bounded areas for soccer. Additionally they will create a plan to help protect and preserve the newly purchased equipment, upholding responsibility toward community care. If you are able to give a donation to help meet their goals please follow the [link](#) to Donors Choose: Let's Get Movin' - Playground Fun Project.



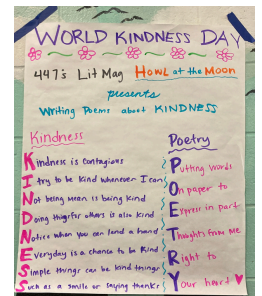
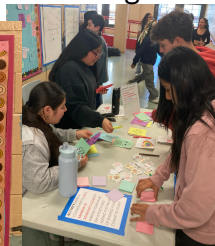
Signing "Thank You" Posters for Custodians, Food Service Staff, and School Safety



Committing to Kindness Writing notes of affirmation and encouragement



World Kindness Day November 13, 2024



Kindness Poems

RJ Family Workshops - Next Opportunity December 5

Join us for Restorative Justice Workshop #1: Interconnection. This is the first of a two part series. There are multiple opportunities between now and the end of January, both in person and on zoom. Everyone on the NYC Public Schools HomL email list received an email with the flier and the sign up link. If you are not receiving those emails please let Amy Sirot know, asirot@ms447.org. Check out the flier below and RSVP at [this link](#). We hope that all or the majority of our grown ups from home will attend this first workshop as together we grow in our understanding of and practice of Restorative Justice at MS447.

MS447 RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Family Workshop #1 Interconnection
Taller Familiar #1 Interconexión
 家庭工作坊#1互聯

Workshop Dates and Times

10/23:
 AM in person, 8:40
 PM on Zoom, 6:30

12/5:
 AM in person, 8:40
 PM on Zoom, 6:30

1/30:
 AM in person, 8:40
 PM on Zoom, 6:30

[Zoom Link](#)

MS447 BKLYN

In our community...

- We act with **INTEGRITY**
- We work for **JUSTICE & EQUITY**
- We listen and learn with **CURIOSITY & JOY**
- We take **RESPONSIBILITY**
- We all **BELONG** here!

Learning Targets

- I can understand the importance of interconnection and relationship in the process of restorative justice.
- I can live with questions and discomfort that might arise in myself and others during conversations about (and my reactions to) RJ.
- I can move forward with a growth mindset and with curiosity about RJ.

Please RSVP Here

Workshop #1 is a prerequisite for Workshop #2: Repairing harm (Spring 2025)

Cultural Heritage Celebrations ... and other acceptance, awareness, and diversity celebrations

Celebrating diversity, acceptance, and cultural heritage is important because in doing so we provide a dedicated time to **educate people** about the histories and contributions of diverse groups; **promoting understanding, inclusion, and appreciation** for different cultures and all humans. This helps us **learn about and value the rich tapestry of identities within our community at 447**. We also acknowledge that **celebration, learning, acceptance, and awareness** must extend beyond designated months and specific events to permeate our culture and community. This is ongoing work.

As we honor each other throughout the year we plan to:

- ***Add to** current Narratives
- ***Complicate** current Narratives
- ***Disrupt** harmful or inaccurate Narratives
- ***Make Connections** to our community – *Source: Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden*

Key reasons why multicultural and diversity/identity celebrations and learning opportunities are important:

- **Celebration**
- They offer opportunities to celebrate the diverse identities in a community.
- **Education and Awareness:**
- They offer a platform to teach people about the historical and cultural significance of different groups, often highlighting diverse stories and perspectives.
- **Combating Stereotypes:**
- By presenting a nuanced view of cultures and identities multicultural, acceptance, and diversity celebrations can help challenge harmful stereotypes and promote accurate understanding.
- **Promoting Inclusion:**

- Recognizing and honoring diverse identities can foster a more inclusive environment where people feel valued and seen.
- **Empowering Identity:**
- For individuals from celebrated cultures and identities, this can provide a sense of pride and belonging to their heritage or identity.
- **Social Justice Advocacy:**
- These dedicated months and celebrations can be used to raise awareness about ongoing challenges and advocate for social change.
- **Community Building:**
- Celebrating cultural heritage and identities can bring people together from different backgrounds, fostering a sense of shared community.

MS447, an anti-racist and anti-bias school recognizes that it is important to celebrate, honor, listen to, include, learn from, and hold space for those of varying heritages and identities continuously, throughout the year. Government-designated awareness months come with conflicting feelings and views for those who hold the honored identities, some embrace the month enthusiastically, experiencing joy and pride, while others feel minimized and diminished as they feel they are forcibly contained to one month of the year. A problem with the heritage month approach to including diverse cultures is that it places some groups in silos outside of the standard curriculum, which can reinforce marginalization rather than inclusion of these cultures and identities. This approach fails to teach us about people, groups, events, experiences and accomplishments in authentic contexts. We do not want these varying perspectives on designated months to keep us from collaboratively working to determine how we can honor and celebrate each other at MS447.

We acknowledge that there are conflicting feelings *around designated months and we are trying to determine how to approach these months with intentionality while remaining critical of the inherent separation they create*. At 447 we are attempting to approach the tradition of these months with thoughtfulness, empathy, and insight, while listening closely to what our community and students desire.

Earlier this year a [Survey](#) was emailed to MS447 families asking for input into what celebrations, holidays, and honorings were important to you. We have compiled [those answers](#) and now seek to know how families might like to be involved in celebrations, teach-ins, events, and honorings, as well as initiatives to ensure the inclusion of all of our identities in our community and curriculum throughout the year. You can indicate your interests on our [Family Involvement: Celebrations and Belonging Survey](#). Thanks so much for thinking and acting collectively in this important task of creating authentic belonging and a community where all are included and dignified.