



Garden School Newsletter



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

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"Cultivating Success in Every Child"

Friday, December 14, 2018



Thoughts for the Week

By [Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster](#)



Each year as we move toward one of our significant breaks in the academic year, I always take some time to reflect on the past several months and reflect upon those facets of school life that have added to the life of our community. We have had some wonderful achievements during this first semester: from the championship victory of the Girls Volleyball team to taking first place in

High School debate, to the Upper Division trip to see the performance of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, to the well-deserved achievements and talents of individual students and teachers.

All of this reflects what I think of as emerging from a shared responsibility to the ongoing process of educating our children. I have the luxury and the privilege of walking through the halls each day and visiting or simply looking into classrooms. I am amazed at what I see. Each day, each period, our students and teachers are engaged in studying, thinking, evaluating materials, and evaluating themselves with that material. This process, which rhythmically occurs each day like a symphony, originates in the commitment students, their families, and their teachers have to each other.

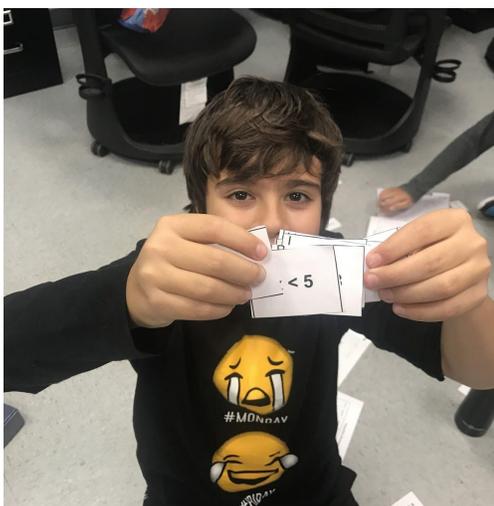
There have been moments in the larger world of education during which we have seen this process fail. Some schools receive failing grades from state education departments, mainly because they have neglected their responsibility to provide children with direct and daily learning experiences. I am so impressed when I see the work being done in the classroom; I am even more impressed when I pass down the hall and hear a student and a teacher engaged in conversation and then realize that learning is taking place even in the hallway.





This happens when members of a community commit to each other to work together, to support each other, and to value the educational process that binds them together. I believe this to be the hallmark of independent school life: responsibility. This responsibility translates into commitment, dedication, and the recognition of the worth of the other. For me, seeing this in action each day reaffirms my belief in the value and the power of what we do, of what family believe and what teachers have dedicated themselves to in their professional lives.

For those of us who work in education, the choice has been clear. We believe in the value of learning; we believe in the importance of developing thinking skills; we believe in the necessity of being critical and evaluative in our lives; we value historical, scientific, mathematical, linguistic, and artistic truth. Moreover, most of us, we value the individual importance of each child for whom we have accepted the responsibility to educate.



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- **Friday, December 21: NOON Dismissal**
 - **Upper Division Winter Trip to Dave & Busters**
 - **Lower Division Winter Show: New York City!**
 - **Faculty Gathering: 1 - 4 PM**
- **Monday, December 24 - Sunday, January 6: Winter Break (no school)**
- **Monday, January 7: Classes Resumes**
- **January 7 - 11: [Upper School Mid-Term Exam Block](#)**
- **Friday, January 11: Marking Period #2 Ends (U.D.)**
- **Thursday, January 17: Upper Division Report Cards Day**
- **Friday, January 18: Lower Division Pajama Day**
- **Monday, January 21: School Closed for Martin Luther King**
- **January 24 - 25: The Garden School Sweet Shoppe is open for business!**
- **Friday, January 25: Second Quarter Marking Period Ends (Lower Division)**
 - **Thursday, January 31: Report Cards Distributed (Lower Division)**



News from Our Daniel Webster Society



Garden Shines at the West End Invitational (Middle School Debate Tournament)

On Saturday, December 8, Garden's Daniel Webster Society, its middle school debate team, competed in a tournament at West End Secondary School. We sent two 3-person teams: Asia C. (8th Grade) / Michael O. (8th Grade) / Josefina G. (8th Grade) and Sophia M. (6th Grade) / Claire O. (6th Grade) / Dante S. (6th Grade). Our division - the Empire Division of the English-Speaking Union of the United States - is one of the most competitive in the country. It contains the last two winners of the East Coast regionals, and perennial heavy-hitters such as Hackley, The School at Columbia, Speyer, and Nightingale.

As a school, Garden finished third, overall. This was an extraordinary result on many levels, and truly was indicative of the grit and determination that is a Garden trademark. And poor Asia even prepared for a round while having to endure a nosebleed! She, like her teammates, kept on chugging along, no matter the obstacles, and came up with a result that made us all incredibly proud. Well done to the DWS!

[Richard Kruczek](#) and [Philip D'Anna](#), Middle School Debate Moderators



Garden School Hoodie: [Get yours today!](#)



Key Club Holiday Toy Drive



December 17 -21

Make a child's holiday *magical* this year!

Collection Boxes will be in the main hall.

Save the date: February 28th - our very own Isabelle Wilder has written a short play that will be performed under the directorship of Mr. Vallario and our theater partner, Mr. Israel Martinez.





Teacher Spotlight: Mr. Brad Battaglia



Hello, Garden School! My name is Ariadne (7th Grade) and I'm an assigned Garden School reporter sent to talk to you about the college admissions process at Garden School. To complete this task I talked with Mr. Brad Battaglia, our Dean of the Upper School and College Counselling Director. He gave me a wealth of information that I think you all will really want to read.

A: *What preparations do the seniors have to do before applying for college?*

B: The biggest thing is finishing your Senior year well in the classroom. It's really important that students take their academics seriously all the way up through graduation because those students tend to do well during their first year of college and the first year of college is very critical. The second thing is getting to know your roommate - if you have one - you get information that allows you to connect with them over the summer and getting an understanding of who they are is important and also establishing a connection with them so you can coexist well as roommates in college. Anything that the college sends you, either in the spring whether you decided to go or in the summer, you have to read all that stuff, make sure you understand what's going on because you don't want to miss anything. Orientation is a big part of going to college and they usually do that towards the end of the summer - going to that is really really important because you usually need to figure out where your classes are going to be. Then when you actually get to school, you've got to go to class. That's the number one thing students who do well in college without fail is they go to class; they don't skip; they don't oversleep, and they're there are they do the assignments. They give everything they can everyday.

A: *Do seniors have stress when they enter college or do they start developing stress preparing for college?*

B: It depends person to person because Senior year of high school can be pretty stressful because you're trying to figure out where your life will take you next and that's a big moment in a student's life. College for me was a lot of fun. Actually, I enjoyed my classes and I enjoyed my roommates [Y]ou want to do well

in all your classes and develop leadership roles. I don't think it is more stressful than high school was.

A: *What college is the best in the United States?*

B: I believe that there is a best college for you only. There is [a book](#) and they have all the colleges and their rankings. All the Ivy League schools are fantastic. In my opinion, the best school for you is where you feel comfortable, where you like your teacher, where all the resources you need are because every student is looking for something a little different.

A: *What college do most students tend to go to?*

B: Most students don't go to Harvard or Yale because of the admit rate, it's tiny like two or three percent. The largest school in the country is Arizona State University. There's over 100,000 students.

A: *What college did you go to?*

B: I went to Boston college which is in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston. My sister went there. I'm from Ohio and I wasn't going to apply and when my sister came home for Thanksgiving she was really mad at me that I didn't apply so I did and I'm really glad I did.



Mr. Battaglia is the Dean of the Upper School and the Director of College Counseling



Garden Academic Pages:

Read about what teachers and students are doing in their classrooms together.

Pre-K for All - Where do you live? - World Languages

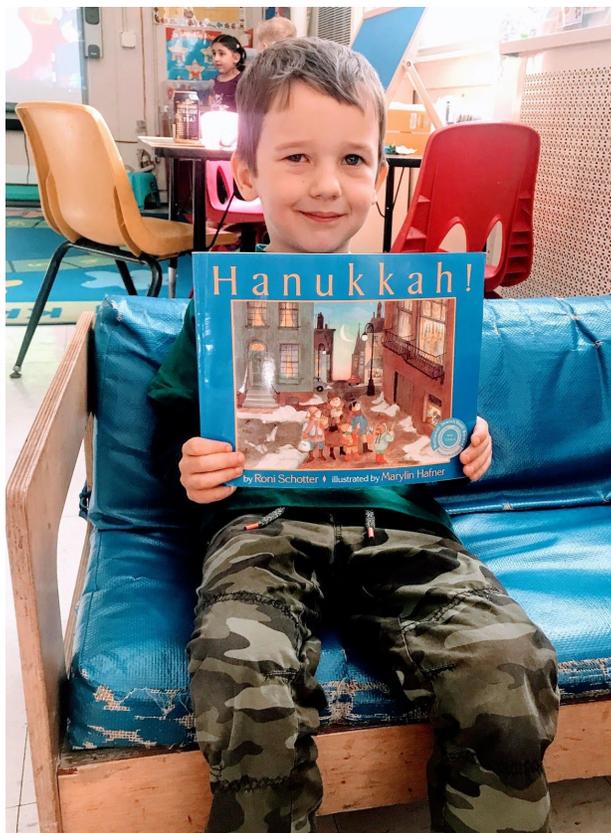
By: [Karina Mendoza](#) (PKFA Faculty)



Many of our Pre-K for All students are bilingual. In fact, we often parlay in multiple languages during the school day. Spanish, English, Mandarin Chinese - to name a few. It's part of being in Jackson Heights - the world's most diverse neighborhood!

Muchos de nuestros estudiantes de Pre-K para Todos son bilingües. De hecho, a menudo compartimos en varios idiomas durante el día escolar. Español, inglés, chino mandarín - por nombrar algunos. ¡Es parte de estar en Jackson Heights, el

vecindario más diverso del mundo!



Rocco reads about Hanukkah in Mrs. Reyes's class



Pre-Kindergarten - Different Holidays Yet it is the Season for Holidays! - Social Studies By: [Eileen Reyes](#) (PKFA Faculty)



Holidays evoke much excitement and anticipation in the preschool classroom. Each season has marked holidays on the calendar along with other unofficial celebrations and multicultural ones as well.

It is important to recognize that children from different cultural and religious backgrounds celebrate different holidays. Our students are taught to respect and honor their holidays and are given the opportunity to learn more about other cultures through holiday celebrations. The Pre-K children understand that not all people celebrate the same holidays as they do.

Traditional holidays have been explored this month with joy and much emphasis on the fun and excitement of giving and receiving. The students have been bringing in a holiday show and tell this month. With prompting and support, each student explained their holiday to their classmates. Some brought artifacts, ornaments, homemade projects, and food to share

their holiday. The holidays are, and always have been, reflections of whatever we bring to them. We have been singing songs, playing games, making art projects, and cooking for the holidays. To support this unit of study we read: *Chanukah Lights* by Judith Moffatt, *What is Hanukkah?* By Harriet Ziefert, *My First Ramadan* by Karen Katz, *Rashad's Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr* by Lisa Bullard, *Diwali* by Allan Morey, *Lighting a Lamp* by Jan Barger, *My Family Celebrates Kwanzaa* by Lisa Bullard, *My First Kwanzaa* by Karen Katz, *The Christmas Magic* by Lauren Thompson, and *My First Christmas* by Tomie dePaola.

Kindergarten - Winter Holidays - Social Studies By: [Lauren Yandow](#) (Physical Education Faculty)

The weeks leading up to winter break all revolve around the winter holidays! Much of our discussions are focused on cultural traditions as well as similarities and differences between family beliefs regarding different holidays. So far the Kindergarten students have learned about Diwali, Kwanzaa, Ramadan, and Hanukkah, and next week we will focus on Christmas! Not only have students learned about the historical stories behind these holidays, but they were also exposed to literature, music, and art related to these different celebrations. Students engaged in an art





project for each holiday- we created rangoli designs using sand for Diwali, Hanukkah cards using sponge paint, and a class wreath for Kwanzaa using finger paint! We are excited to learn about the story of Christmas next week and create snow globes as a winter gift for our families! We would also like to say thank you to the family members of students who came in to share about the holiday celebrated in their home. It was interesting to learn that each family has different beliefs and ways of celebrating these beliefs. Happy Holidays everyone!

First, Second, and Third Grades - Dribble With Your Heads Up - Our Basketball Unit Ensues By: [Flance Dervishi](#) (Physical Education Faculty)



In PE class for grades 1st-3rd we have started our Basketball Unit, all students have learned the rules of Basketball and the proper way of shooting, passing dribbling the ball. The first thing we worked on is how to dribble the ball with your head up, then they partnered up and learned how to steal the ball from each other without fouling. It's very important for the kids to understand basketball before scrimmaging so this week it's all focused on dribbling and passing with partners. After a long two weeks of drills we will put them into teams and have them all show what they have learning in a basketball scrimmage game. Basketball is a very fun sport but extremely hard especially for beginners and to play it the correct way takes a while to learn. All the students are responding very well to the drills so far and their focus is extremely high on learning we are very thrilled with the hard work they're doing.

Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grades - New York, New York! What a Wonderful Town! - Music By: [Tom Heineman](#) (Physical Education Faculty)



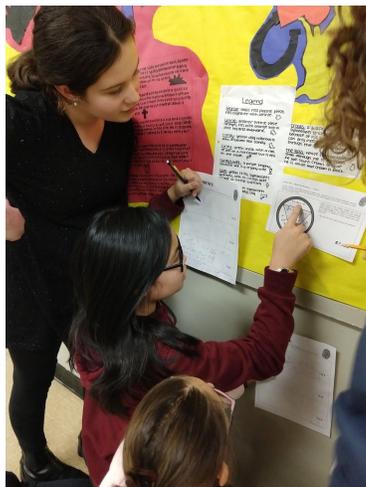
The 4th, 5th, and 6th graders have been working hard preparing for the Garden Winter Show. This year's theme is New York, and to celebrate all things New York students have been drawing various NYC landmarks. The 4th grade have been drawing the Empire State Building, the 5th grade are drawing the Guggenheim museum, and the 6th grade are drawing TWA Flight Center. When the drawings are complete all the student work will be arranged in the shape of what they just drew and will be



displayed during the Winter Show. The work the students have done thus far has been very good and the end results should be incredible.

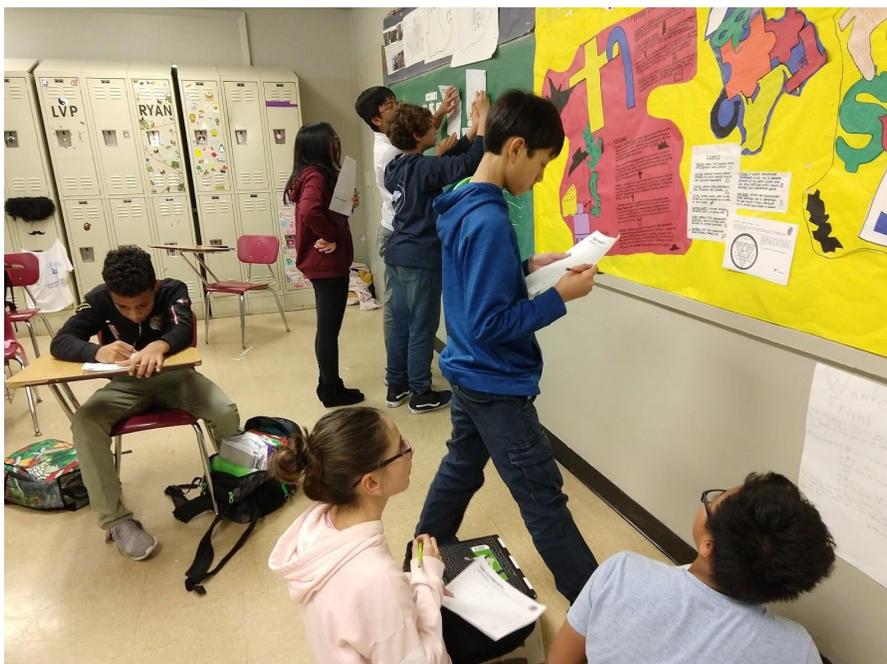
Seventh Grade Math - Cryptology, Ancient Clues and the Mathemagicians to the Rescue! - Math By: Sara Blakely (Math Faculty)

The good news - everybody remembers their algebra skills from last year. The even better news: students completed most of the seventh grade algebra curriculum last year so we get to do fun math activities like saving the world! Yesterday, 7th period received a letter from the Director of Homeland Security. We were informed that there have been a string of ancient artifact heists. At each crime scenes the thief, a member of the notorious crime group the Mathemagicians, left a clue. Our class was drafted to



solve these algebraic clues and find the culprit...or else the Mathemagicians would use the artefacts to create a mind-control machine and rule the world!

The clues are intense and many of the students wanted to give up in despair. However, through a little teamwork, hints, and a lot of encouragement we were able to persevere. World saved!





Eighth Grade - From Linear Equations to Factoring Polynomials - Algebra

By: [Lauren Little](#) (Physical Education Faculty)

In Algebra Honors we are in the middle of a unit on linear equations and functions. The students have learned all about linear equations and their graphs. Next, they will learn about functions. They will learn what makes a relation a function, what is the domain and range of a function, and how to evaluate functions. Lines are the first type of functions that the students encounter, though there are many, they will continue to study functions all the way through Calculus.

Ex 3: Factor each polynomial.

b) $x^3 - 4x^2 + 3x - 12$

$(x^3 - 4x^2) + (3x - 12)$

$x^2(x - 4) + 3(x - 4)$

$(x^2 + 3)(x - 4)$

For the past couple of weeks in Algebra, the students have been learning about factoring. First, we reviewed the concepts of factors of numbers, before moving on to factors of polynomials. We learned how to factor the greatest common factor from a polynomial. Then they learned to factor trinomials, which they will eventually use to solve quadratic equations. Going into next week, we will combine these two types of factoring together for problems that need to be factored using multiple steps.

Tenth Grade - How To Write Chemical Formulas for Ionic Compounds - Chemistry

By: [Marlene Dapice](#) (Science Faculty)

| Ion | Name | Ion | Name |
|---|----------------------|---|--------------|
| NH ₄ ⁺ | Ammonium | CO ₃ ²⁻ | Carbonate |
| NO ₂ ⁻ | Nitrite | HCO ₃ ⁻ | Bicarbonate |
| NO ₃ ⁻ | Nitrate | ClO ₄ ⁻ | Perchlorate |
| SO ₃ ²⁻ | Sulfite | ClO ₃ ⁻ | Chlorate |
| SO ₄ ²⁻ | Sulfate | ClO ₂ ⁻ | Chlorite |
| HSO ₄ ⁻ | Bisulfate | ClO ⁻ | Hypochlorite |
| OH ⁻ | Hydroxide | C ₂ H ₃ O ₂ ⁻ | Acetate |
| PO ₄ ³⁻ | Phosphate | Cr ₂ O ₇ ²⁻ | Dichromate |
| HPO ₄ ²⁻ | Hydrogen Phosphate | CrO ₄ ⁻ | Chromate |
| H ₂ PO ₄ ⁻ | Dihydrogen phosphate | CN ⁻ | Cyanide |

Chemistry students are currently studying ions - their formation, bonding in ionic compounds, and how these relate to our previous study of the quantum mechanical model of the atom. Using electron configurations, orbital notations, and electron dot structures, students can visually gain an

understanding of how ionic compounds form, and further, why only certain elements are able to combine to form these compounds. Students will be utilizing this information and their knowledge of the periodic table to learn to write chemical formulas for ionic compounds.



Eleventh and Twelfth Grade - Speaking Truth To Power - Literature Through Different Genres

By: [Amira Booth-Soifer](#) (English Faculty)



In the 11th/12th Grade English elective “Literature Through Different Genres,” the students recently finished a unit on “To Kill A Mockingbird” which allowed students the rare chance to compare the novel, the famous 1962 film starring Gregory Peck, *and* the first-ever Broadway production (which the students saw, with the rest of the upper school, on November 7th). Since then, students have been reading “Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet” by Ta-Nehisi Coates and discussing and writing about notions of power, resources, monarchy, and memory.

Eleventh and Twelfth Grade - - American Identity

By: [Amira Booth-Soifer](#) (English Faculty)



In the 11th/12th Grade English elective “American Identity,” students are almost through exploring the always uplifting topics of Puritan hypocrisy and the moral code of the individual in opposition to societal norms through Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel “The Scarlet Letter.” Through in-class art projects deeply exploring each character, enthusiastic and always inquisitive class discussion, and reading reflections, students have analyzed the traits and actions of the novel’s various characters-- many of whom the students find to be problematic. The subject of how the students find this book “depressing” has returned again and again.

Given that this was also a criticism raised when we read “The Great Gatsby” during the 1st quarter, this topic led to an in-class discussion about which book was more “depressing.” Two students cited “The Great Gatsby,” saying that Daisy is an immoral character who ruins the lives of those around her without a care. Another student cited “The Scarlet Letter,” arguing that Pearl (a child for almost the whole novel) is “...the only character with any redeeming qualities.” “The Scarlet Letter” was also ‘chosen’ because of Pearl’s perception of the world being colored by the fact that her mother has been ostracized from the greater society. Others cited ‘the whole concept’ of “The Scarlet Letter” as more depressing while still others argued that the vacuousness presented in “The Great Gatsby” made it, in fact, the more depressing novel. Finally, one student made the case that neither text was depressing — instead, they are merely ‘true to life.’ Going into next week, students will be writing 5-paragraph essays delving into issues of guilt, gender stereotypes, and the presentation of certain characters therein, and hypocrisy.

I am looking forward to reading these insightful students’ writing!



Eleventh and Twelfth Grade - Creating Short Films about Our Neighborhoods - Introduction to Film

By: [Christopher Vallario](#) (English Faculty)

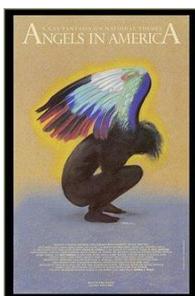
Below you will find my 12th grade elective details for the newsletter:



For our *Introduction To Film* elective, the students are drafting scripts that illustrate an inanimate object and a protagonist. One story reveals LeBron James's basketball hoop and another a faulty alarm clock. On Monday, we watched a documentary entitled, *Good White People* by Erick Stoll and Jarrod Welling-Cann, which follows a small business owner in Ohio who is being pushed out due to gentrification. Using this film as a muse and connecting it to the idea of New York City as our home, students will create a shot list to capture their own neighborhoods. They will record

these shots on their iPhones, or Android devices over the holiday break. Then, they will create a live action video and present it to the class. Lastly, we are finalizing our original short screenplays, and one of them will be selected for a group project during the springtime.

Twelfth Grade - Understanding the AIDS Epidemic in American Plays - Contemporary Plays By: [Christopher Vallario](#) (English Faculty)



For *Contemporary Plays*, we are finishing up Act One of Tony Kushner's *Angels In America*, which in 1993 opened our culture to the story of the AIDS epidemic and continues to reach new generations today. We are focusing on the politics and pressures of identity; at one point or another during the play, the main characters feel limited or pressured by the identities that society imposes on them. Identities do not have to restrict us when people can look beyond stereotypes and labels. The students are a part of a larger conversation; for example, they shared a time when they may have felt pressured or restricted by their identities, and how their identities have allowed them to form new friendships. As a result, our discussions

included examples of when human progress has had positive and negative impacts on the world. At the same



time, we are looking at the ways in which identities also play a positive role within the play as friendships are formed between characters whose identities would appear to drive them apart.

Just One More Picture, Please

