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## Charter School of Educational Excellence

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### Announcing the Opening of CSEE's "NEW" Middle School Building



January 10, 2012

Dear CSEE Parents & Guardians:

This letter brings news you have been waiting for. I am proud to announce the completion and opening of CSEE's new middle school building. Our middle school students and staff are finally coming home on **Wednesday, January 11, 2012**. The building passed all inspections and the City of Yonkers Building's Department issued a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) on the late afternoon of Monday, January 9, 2012.

Our state authorizers from the New York State Charter School Office have reviewed the TCO and approved CSEE returning students from St. Bartholomew to the new middle school building. Representatives from the State Department plan to visit CSEE sometime in late January to tour the facilities, observe, and assess how things are going with our middle school program.

As we prepare for school's opening, please read over the transition plan that was developed for the smooth transition of our middle school students in grades 5-8 below. Please review and discuss this plan with your child before he/she reports to school on Wednesday.

#### **TRANSITION PLAN FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS:**

- **Reporting to School.** Middle school students will report to the middle school between 7:30 a.m. and 7:55 a.m. for breakfast. Entrance to the new building for morning arrival will be through the ramp entrance located at the right side of the main entrance to the MS building – **EXIT 5** (not the main entrance of the middle school or the elementary school). Cars will not be permitted to enter the staff parking area during arrival time.
- **Breakfast.** Students are to proceed to the gymnasium, where they will have their meals. Teachers will meet the students in the gymnasium to bring them to their classrooms at 8:00 a.m.
- **Program Schedules.** Student schedules have been revised now that they will be following the bell schedule in our building. Schedules will be distributed to students on Tuesday when they report to their homerooms.
- **Attendance & Punctuality.** We anticipate our students arriving on time to school and attending classes regularly. With upcoming New York State Assessments, every minute of instruction is critical to promoting student achievement. We want and expect our students to take their education seriously and work hard to meet and exceed both academically and socially. MS students must show responsible behavior by arriving timely to school and to their classes every day.
- **Uniforms.** Now that students will be settling into their new home, they are expected to report to school in full uniform every day. I have attached a copy of our uniform policy again, which we intend to enforce immediately upon students reporting to their new school. It is our hope that the new building will inspire our students to represent their school with pride. *\*Note: The middle school uniform is changing for the 2012-2013 school year. The uniform company will be presenting samples of the new uniform at the PTO meeting scheduled on January 12, 2012 at 6 p.m. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting.*

- **Lunch.** Lunch periods have been arranged so that our gymnasium is not utilized for meals after breakfast. We intend to maximize the use of our gymnasium by giving students in all grades more physical education activities throughout the week. Middle school students will eat lunch in the MPR located in the elementary school building. Students are expected to transition throughout both buildings in an orderly and disciplined manner. As the oldest children in our building, we expect them to set a good example for our elementary school children.

*MS students will follow these lunch periods:*

- **Grade 5:** 11:35 a.m. - 12:25 p.m.
- **Grades 6-8:** 12:25 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.

\*All students in grades K-8 will continue to receive their daily free snacks during the school day.

- **Lockers.** Middle school students will have the benefit of using lockers to secure their belongings and books, therefore, please purchase a lock for your child's new locker. Please note that we expect our students to keep only books and coats in their lockers. Remind them that cell phones and electronic devices are prohibited in school.

**\*Combination locks are recommended, as these will not scratch the new lockers.**

- **Dismissal.** Students will begin dismissing a little later now that we do not have to worry about having students take a shuttle bus to make it in time for the Yonkers and Bronx transportation buses at CSEE. Dismissal will begin for bus students at **3:50 p.m.** and walkers will be dismissed at **4:00 p.m.** Middle school students will be dismissed to walk home on their own using the front/main door of the middle school building – **EXIT 5**. Bus students from Yonkers and the Bronx will board their assigned buses to go home.

If you pick up your youngster from school, please wait for your child on the **sidewalk of Warburton Avenue** (in front of the MS). In efforts to ensure the safe and smooth dismissal of students, we ask parents not to drive into or park in the staff parking area where teachers are exiting the lot and where buses are arriving and departing from the premises. Be mindful that with so many people and vehicles on busy Warburton Avenue, there are potential dangers to children if safety and dismissal policies are not followed. Thank you in advance for supporting our efforts to keep our children safe.

- **Open House for Parents.** An Open House for the new middle school will be announced shortly. We want to give our parents the opportunity to visit the new building and take a tour. I am certain you will be very impressed with the beautiful state-of-the-art building construction. Our students should be very proud to be part of Yonkers' history as the founding students of the first middle 'charter school' to open in Yonkers, NY.

In closing, allow me this opportunity to thank you again for your continued patience and understanding during the two-year construction of our new building. Please know that we appreciate and are very grateful to you for the loyalty and support you have shown the Charter School of Educational Excellence throughout it all.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, school leaders and staff, it is our pleasure continuing to serve such a wonderful parent and student community.

"2012" is off to a great start! Congratulations and Happy New Year!

Sincerely yours,

  
Catalina Castillo  
Principal

