

January 2024 Newsletter



School Hours
Monday through Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 5:00
p.m. Friday 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

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Upcoming College Visits:

- Visits coming in February

IMPORTANT DATES

1/2/24 Students and staff return to school
1/4/24 Ski Activity, National Trivia Day
1/9/24 Ms. Adrienne's 1-year anniversary
1/10/24 Mr. Kyle's Birthday
1/15/24 MLK Jr. Day – NO SCHOOL
1/20/24 Elliot's Birthday
1/23/24 National Pie Day
1/24/24 Escape Room Activity (pending weather)
1/24/24 Aliou's Birthday
1/26/24 Liam S. Birthday
1/30/24 Mr. Evan's Birthday
2/1/24 Ski Activity
2/2/24 Groundhog day

[Click Here to View Our
January Calendar!](#)



Birthdays this month

1/10/24 Mr. Kyle
1/20/24 Elliot Z.
1/24/24 Aliou D.
1/26/24 Liam S.
1/30/24 Mr. Evan

Donor Spotlight

Monthly Message From Our Executive Director, [Michelle Tuengel](#)



Many people like to reflect on the past 12 months this time of year.

We are happy that we could host the Food truck nights with the University Park neighborhood again this

year. Just like last year, families could sit in the front yard to enjoy their meals and beautiful evenings with our neighborhood community.

In June, we worked with Guiding Bright Minds and hosted our first-ever Neurodiversity Resource Fair here on the school grounds. We had over 80 vendors and hundreds of people attend. It was so wonderful seeing the community come together. We will be doing it again in Spring 2024 - Hope you can join us.

I would like to thank you to all of the family and community that attended our holiday fundraiser "A Christmas Carol". The classrooms in the building were decorated to match the different ghosts that came to visit Ebenezer Scrooge, staff was dressed in costumes to match the time period, and there was lots of fun decorating cookies, candles, and the tarot card reading was a huge hit for all. Add the photo of the staff in costume from the fundraiser

I would like to welcome Naoki H. to our high school. And a big welcome to Kyle Pepper our new social studies teacher and enrollment counselor. We are so excited to have you here!

Tuesday, January 2, 2024, will be the first day of our new semester. You should be receiving your student's report card in the mail in the first week or so of January. We will be scheduling parent-teacher conferences over the entire month of January. These can be held in person or as a virtual meeting. Just let us know what works best for you.

January 2024

We would like to thank the following individuals and companies for their generous donations and pledges of support during the month of December:

- **Madonna Nuce**
- **April De Roin**

For information on becoming a donor, please visit acceleratedschools.org or contact us via [email here](#).

Donate Here

Monday, January 15, 2024, the school will be closed in honor of Martin Luther King Jr.

Happy New Year, I hope 2024 will bring you joy and success.

Best regards,



Referral Program **Reminder!!**

Attention wonderful Accelerated families (and friends)! The 2023-2024 school year is almost halfway through as 2nd quarter wraps up on December 15th. By this time in the school year, it is easier to see what is and is not working for your student's education. Because of this, we want to remind our families (and friends) about our referral program, which allows us to support more families in our community! Current families who refer a new family will get a **\$1,000.00 scholarship** towards their student's tuition (with a successful referral). AND new families joining Accelerated Schools on referral will receive **\$4,000.00** towards their first full year of tuition.

Want more information? Ask an enrollment counselor or visit our website at

<https://acceleratedschools.org/admission/scholarships>

AC-CELL-ERATED BIOLOGY

Adrienne Chainey, Environmental Science and Drama Instructor

Biology class finished off the second quarter by creating cell models and learning about cellular anatomy. Keeping within guidelines the class turned out some incredibly creative projects! Digital models, watercolors, clay, and paper were all used to create an anatomically accurate animal or plant cell.

From our "behind the scenes" crew, shout out to our amazing Board of Directors!, to the administrative staff and teachers, to the students, the roles filled at Accelerated Schools are extensive, and involved. It is easy to see how complex of a system a school is when one considers the vastness of the roles played to keep up on daily tasks, prepare for the future, and to make the most out of every day! One student took this complexity as an opportunity and identified which person, place, or part of Fitzroy Mansion accurately fills the functional roles of each organelle



The Creative Spark

Raechel Kimsey, Fine Arts Instructor

A recent conversation with our bright, Accelerated Schools Graduate - Skyler, led me to reflect on the nature and importance of creativity. Sometimes it seems that which is logical and practical is seen as separate and more important than that which is creative. However, the way I see it, one cannot exist without the other. We take modern comforts for granted sometimes, crediting dry, objective

science for the advent of modern technology, but things are not so simple. The beautiful archways and corridors of Fitzroy Place would never have been built if someone, long-ago, hadn't had the idea to create a free-standing shelter using natural materials in a new context rather than rely on the shelter that could be provided by a cave. The creative spark is what nourishes ingenuity.

Many great scientists were creative geniuses. You may knowingly conjure the image of the Mona Lisa here, created by a notorious inventor Leonardo DaVinci, but did you also think of Georges Seurat whose use of the primary colors and innovative use of pointillism eventually resulted in our ability to print in color? Did you think of Eadweard Muybridge whose lighthearted bet with a colleague led to the invention of animation?

Too often, creatives are typecast as the opposite of logical thinkers and given the responsibility of shouldering the negative connotations that come with that. Creative work is seen as self-expression, separate from progress. However, I feel the most successful people are able to strike a balance between both. Art class gives our students a space to nourish the creative nature that will aid them in having a successful and fulfilling future. I am wishing you all an inventive and prosperous New Year!

Photo: A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte, Georges Seurat, 1884-1886, 81.7 in x 121.25 in, oil on canvas.

Skyler's Mathematical Odyssey at Accelerated Schools

Taleya Zinnea, Mathematics Instructor

As we bid farewell to 2023, we also said goodbye to one of our exceptional students, Skyler, who recently graduated from Accelerated Schools. Skyler's academic journey with us began in September 2020, marking the start of an inspiring story of resilience and determination.

Upon joining Accelerated Schools, Skyler had just completed wilderness therapy, and traditional online schooling didn't align with his needs. Accelerated Schools offered in-person classes even during the challenges posed by COVID-19, providing Skyler with a swift and suitable academic environment. During his freshman year, Skyler demonstrated remarkable proficiency in mathematics and under the guidance of Ms. Evyn, he successfully completed Algebra 1 and Geometry. Her teaching style, well-balanced curriculum and goal-setting approach made the experience memorable for Skyler ensuring that he remained focused and engaged.



Skyler faced a profound and heartbreaking challenge when his mother, battling serious mental health issues, passed away in October of his sophomore year. This devastating event brought his academic pursuits to a temporary halt, forcing Skyler to confront the fragility of life and prompting a deep introspection about the importance of living each day to the fullest. Despite the immense emotional toll, Skyler exhibited remarkable strength in the face of adversity. When he returned to school, he picked up right where he left off, displaying a renewed commitment to his education. Mr. Evan and Mr. Kevin guided Skyler through Algebra 2 and Pre-Calculus, creating an environment where he could continue his educational pursuits amidst the challenges he faced.

Junior year marked a shift to more advanced math courses, as he delved into the complexities of Calculus. With another teacher departing, the learning process seemed slower but Skyler continued self-learning and showcasing his unwavering dedication to absorb and apply knowledge.

One of the memories Skyler cherishes the most is his ski trip with friends to Loveland, where the fresh snow and exhilarating slopes created lasting memories. In the world of mathematics, he fondly recalls collaborating with Mr. Evan on creative projects, such as calculating the hypothetical speed of Santa Claus while delivering packages on Christmas Eve and determining the integral of Kenny from South Park.

As we celebrate Skyler's graduation, we commend his resilience, determination, and passion for learning. His journey at Accelerated Schools serves as an inspiration to us all, showcasing the transformative power of education and the strength that lies within each student's unique narrative. Congratulations, Skyler, and best wishes for your future endeavors!

Perfection is Overrated!

Val Montano, Music Instructor

In a culture full of digital, recorded music, we are so used to hearing edited music that is made to sound flawless. Consequently, music students often find themselves comparing their performances with what they have heard online. When they play their instruments for their peers they are often concerned about making mistakes. But in reality, even professional musical performers regularly make mistakes in live performances. No concert is perfect. For instance, some notes might be missed, out-of-tune, or louder or softer than desired. When these things happen, common practice is for the performer to continue playing without blinking an eye, so as not to disrupt the flow of the performance. Most audience members don't even recognize those minor imperfections while enjoying the total performance. I encourage our students to have confidence when they perform for each other. I implore them not to compare their live performances with recordings that have been retouched, cut, spliced, and made "perfect." We would rather hear them play an authentic performance. They sound awesome just as they are.



Launching Korean Language Class at Accelerated Schools

Kate Oh, Cooking Instructor

I am thrilled to share exciting news with you all! This semester, we're diving into Korean language and culture as I take on the role of teaching Korean to our esteemed students. Learning a new language offers an incredible opportunity to expand cognitive abilities and enhance memory. Specifically, Korean stands out due to its unique writing system, which presents an exciting challenge for learners. In a recent article, "How Learning Korean Boosts Cognitive Skills And Memory" by John Carry featured in the NEWS & ARTICLES section of the Higher Education Review, the benefits of mastering Korean are highlighted. Carry's research emphasizes that acquiring a foreign language like Korean can lead to brain rewiring through neuroplasticity, resulting in improved problem-solving skills, enhanced memory, and heightened adaptability in various scenarios.

Remarkably, we've only just embarked on this journey, and it's heartening to witness our students grasping the concepts of Korean phonetics within the initial days of the class. Way to go, Quinn, Katherine and Lars! As an educator, I am immensely enthusiastic about sharing the nuances of Korean language and culture with our students. This language not only presents a new form of communication but also opens doors to understanding a vibrant heritage and traditions.

I invite everyone to join us in this thrilling venture, exploring the beauty and intricacies of the Korean language. Let's embark together on a journey that not only broadens linguistic horizons but also deepens our understanding of a diverse and captivating culture.

Thank you for your support and enthusiasm as we venture into this new chapter of linguistic and cultural exploration!

Happy New Year!

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Last Month in Science

Dan McMahon, Science Instructor

Chemistry

As the semester comes to an end the chemistry class is wrapping up its study of the Jakobshavn Glacier which is located on the west coast of Greenland. This is the fastest moving glacier in Greenland and is responsible for nearly 7% of ice loss from the ice cap. During these final weeks students have modeled the topography of Greenland as well as the Ilulissat Fjord where the glacier terminates. Coupled with an in depth study of chemical bonding students have developed a method for calculating the amount of energy transferred to the glacier in the fjord by the warm saline waters of the Gulf Stream. This provided a means of measuring how much ice is melted as the glacier meets the sea. The work was done to evaluate the feasibility of the geoengineering project calling for a suspended shield to be installed directly above the sill that is located at the front of the fjord.



Environmental Science

Environmental Science students recently concluded the 3rd unit on Energy and Equilibrium. For the final project the class evaluated two "Tipping Point" scenarios, one from Apo Island in the Philippines, and the second was the Community Garden movement in the Bowery neighborhood of Manhattan. This past week they have started to look at the relationship between human activity and pollution. The current focus is on types of water pollution. Students are looking at 2 persistent pollutants that are found in the Harvard Gulch watershed, E. coli bacteria, and nitrogen. The class collected water samples, and prepared cultures of the water looking to quantify the amount of bacteria in the samples.

Upcoming in Middle School

January marks a time for new beginnings for many people. In the United States we mark January 1st as a new year and a time to inspire new goals. For 2024, January 10th is the Chinese New Year. The middle schoolers at Accelerated have started a unit of study on The Eastern Hemisphere. In this unit, we will learn why it is so important to study social studies as part of achieving a well-rounded education. We'll also learn some of the basic vocabulary that we will be using throughout the year while studying history. We'll learn how to create timelines from written historical sources. We'll review the Five Themes of Geography. Finally, we will be learning the locations of the continents, regions, and major bodies of water in the Eastern Hemisphere.

In our studies so far, we learned about Calendar Systems around the World. The Chinese calendar is the only calendar that doesn't start the year count with a specific event. The Chinese calendar differs from the Jewish, Islamic, and Western calendars in that it does not count its years from a single event in time. It counts its year in cycles. They last for 60 years and repeat over and over again. They are named for a number and an animal from the Chinese zodiac. The zodiac animal for 2024 is the dragon. Every culture has its own calendar it uses for religious purposes but most cultures use the Western calendar for civil and business purposes. Whatever culture you're from, the Chinese New Year is always fun to experience because of their rich traditions and their zoolatry, animal worship, and beliefs.

A Time and a Place

Jessica Machetta, English Language Arts, English Literature, Civics, Life/Study skills, and Activities Coordinator

How many of us have been appalled at other people's kids acting out in public? How many of us have *been appalled because – oh my gosh – that's MY KID! Our kids earn points each day for working quietly and using polite language. (That means body language, too.) However, kids and adults need to cut loose every once in a while. On activities, that's where we loosen up a bit and let the kids use a little more free speech. That said, we are usually in public, so we remind them that they are a reflection on themselves and our school. Teaching our kids when it's appropriate to be a little loud, be silly and when it's not, well, that's a big part of our culture here at Accelerated Schools.*

Now, let's shift gears. How many of us have been appalled at other *adults acting out in public? Those of us who braved the stores for holiday shopping probably witnessed several instances of poor behavior by people who are old enough to know better.*

There's that old saying that nods to hypocrisy, "Do as I say, not as I do," penned by John Selden in 1654, and trust, kids can smell hypocrisy from a mile away. I try to offer gentle reminders to my students to give themselves and each other grace – we all have bad days – but like the framed art in my classroom says, "In a world where you can be anything, be kind."

I'm teaching an elective this semester called Life Skills/Study Skills. Among various IRL (that means "in real life" in text speak) topics, we talk about stress and coping mechanisms. I'm finding a lot of kids welcome the opportunity to talk about what they have going on in their lives and what they struggle with. We talk a lot about how you can't control how others behave, but you can control how you react. What drama in your life is real versus what is fabricated that you can avoid? (Ahem, social media.)

Back to "a time and a place" – I value my role as activities coordinator and a chance to take our kids out into the real world where we can have fun. I also value the opportunity to show them – by example – what's acceptable on campus versus off campus. Teaching them empathy and compassion, I feel, is a key part of my job as an educator. I hope they take these skills forward into life after high school and make the world a kinder, better place.

December Pictures!

12/14/23 Ski Trip









For more than 40 years, concerned parents have turned to Accelerated Schools for individualized learning programs helping students overcome challenges, and excel academically. The fact is, a traditional school system is not designed to meet the needs of every child. When a student is not being successful, or is not thriving in a traditional environment, parents must often look elsewhere for a solution. This is where Accelerated Schools comes in.

Accelerated Schools begins by creating a learning program designed specifically for a student. Our work points are toward changing the ratio of failure to success and by cultivating an environment of accountability. Our students are given attainable goals and are rewarded by celebrating their accomplishments. Once a student starts experiencing success, their attitude, motivation and effort improve dramatically. This ends the negative cycle and leads to positive academic progress and positive self-esteem.

If you have comments and/or suggestions about our newsletter, email [Kayla Presnal](mailto:Kayla.Presnal)

Accelerated Schools

www.acceleratedschools.org



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