



# SciTech Parent Newsletter

October 2015

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## Restorative Practices at SciTech

At the close of last school year, the School District of Pittsburgh announced that our school community, along with 22 other District schools, were randomly selected to implement the Pursuing Equitable Restorative Communities (PERC) grant received by the U.S. Department of Justice.

In the article, *Defining Restorative*, Ted Wachtel, International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) President and founder, describes restorative practices as a social science that studies how to build social capital and achieve social discipline through participatory learning and decision-making. SciTech staff are receiving support from IIRP instructors and will continue to participate in professional learning related to the implementation of Restorative Practices within our school community. The use of Restorative Practices is intended to strengthen relationships already established between students and adults within the school and make it easier to respond to wrongdoing as it occurs. Additionally, reducing misbehavior, bullying and student code of conduct violations among students are expected as a result of these practices.

One of the first steps that our staff has taken in this process has been the inclusion of proactive circles within classrooms. The following information is found in the book, *Restorative Circles in Schools - Building Community and Enhancing Learning*:

*“A basic premise of restorative practices is that the increasingly inappropriate behavior in schools is a direct consequence of the overall loss of connectedness in our society. By fostering inclusion, community, accountability, responsibility, support, nurturing and cooperation, circles restore these qualities to a community or classroom and facilitate the development of character. As a consequence of fostering relationships and a sense of belonging, academic performance, too, flourishes.”*

You can see what restorative circles look like here at SciTech by viewing the video created by Mr. McCoy and Mrs. Eiding on our SciTech website or Facebook page. We are confident that the partnership with the IIRP to implement the Restorative Practices program will advance the great work already occurring at SciTech. Please feel free to reach out to Mr. McNeil or Mr. McCoy with any questions.



## Parent Teacher Conferences

Our parent teacher conferences will take place on **Monday, October 12th from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM and 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM**. There is no school for students Monday, October 12th. Please note that October 15th is a half day for students and all students will need to leave the school building at dismissal. We are encouraging parents and guardians to schedule individual appointments with teachers in advance, as there is a limited amount of time available to meet throughout the day. On the day of the conference a schedule will be placed outside the classroom that shows the times that are still available to meet with each teacher. You can sign up for any open ten-minute window at this time as well. According to our data from previous years, our heaviest crowds are from 5:00-7:00 p.m.

We are encouraging all students to accompany their families to Parent-Teacher Conferences, and even lead the conference themselves with the teacher still available as a facilitator. This places the student in a position of responsibility for explaining their learning and progress to their parent or guardian. We strongly believe that when students take ownership over their learning they are more likely to achieve and find success in school.

Attached to this letter is a parent tip sheet for Parent-Teacher Conferences. Please read through the tip sheet prior to the conference so that you are prepared to make the conference as productive as possible. You may want to ask your child some of these questions before the conference so that he or she is prepared to answer them. Light refreshments will be available in the cafeteria.

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## PSAT Grades 10-11

SciTech will be administering the PSAT/NMSQT to all Manager level (10th & 11th grade) students on Wednesday, October 14th during the school day. The PSAT/NMSQT is a test given by the College Board to all Pittsburgh Public School District sophomore and junior students. This is great practice for the College Board SAT, provides feedback about critical academic skills such as reading and math, and will also enter students into the National Merit Scholarship Award. Please encourage your son or daughter to be well rested, have a good breakfast and start thinking more about college on test day.

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## Magnet Applications for the 2016-2017 School Year

The open magnet application process began September 21st, so at this time students and families can begin to apply to magnet programs for the 2016-2017 school year. Our annual district Magnet Fair will take place Saturday, October 24th from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Pittsburgh Obama 6-12. We will be hosting our own SciTech Open House for prospective students and families on November 5th from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM.

**Current SciTech students do not need to reapply.**

For additional information please call the Magnet Office at 412.529.3991 or email [magnetoffice@pghboe.net](mailto:magnetoffice@pghboe.net). Additionally, please check the Magnet webpage ([www.pps.k12.pa.us/magnet](http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/magnet)) periodically for the latest information.

## Family Addresses and Phone Numbers



Families are reminded that if their address, phone number or email address changes during the school year, it is very important to call and notify the main office. The addresses we have on file are used for mailings and the phone numbers are used for our automatic calling system as well as for emergency purposes. At the start of the school year, all families are asked to complete and return Student Emergency Forms.

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## Junior/Senior Class Fundraiser

The Junior and Senior classes will be sponsoring the SaveAround Coupon Book sale as a fundraiser. This is a local coupon book that offers hundreds of Buy-One-Get-One Free discounts, along with many other coupon offers. The cost of the book is \$20.00 and each student that participates will receive \$8.00 from each book that they sale. The monies raised will go towards the following: Obligations, Senior Fees, Prom Tickets.

The fundraiser will begin Monday, September 28th through Tuesday, October 21st. Each student who participates will receive a sample book on September 28th to show as they sell. If your student would like to participate, they may come to the main office to sign up.

If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Bowman-Porter in the main office.

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## SciTech Student Pictures

Please find the dates below for SciTech student pictures. Order forms and other information has been distributed to students in school.

- Grades 6-11 - October 8<sup>th</sup>
- Senior Pictures - October 16th and October 19th (Ms. Marshall will be distributing the schedule to students listing their date)
- Make ups - October 16th



## Goodwill Donation Drive

SciTech will once again be hosting a Goodwill Donation Drive Fundraiser. For every pound of donations received SciTech will receive money towards the senior class. The donation drive will be from October 5th through October 16th. Students can bring items directly to school and their will be donation bins on each floor. Please check out the SciTech website for a list of acceptable items.



## End of Year Trips

Deposits for the High School Niagara Falls and Middle School Cincinnati & Kings Island Trips will be accepted once per week every Thursday until October 15, 2015. Students who wish to make this deposit will be called to the office Thursday's only.

### **April 28th and 29th (Please note the date change due to AP testing)**

High School (9-12)  
Niagara Falls

### **May 12th and 13th**

Middle School (6-8)  
Cincinnati & Kings Island

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## Project Bundle Up– Winter Coats

Is your student in need of a winter coat?

Last year, SciTech held a very successful coat drive and we were able to help many families with gently used coats for the winter. This year, our Interact Club has teamed up with Project Bundle Up to help students in need get vouchers for BRAND NEW winter coats!

If your student needs a coat, please call 412-446-1640. This number will go to voicemail. Please leave your name, callback number and the zip code where you live. You will receive a call back with information on how to apply for a voucher and which locations are nearest to your home. Once you apply, you will receive a voucher to use at Walmart, Kmart or Burlington.

PLEASE ACT FAST! This program is first come, first served.

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## SciTech Website

Did you know that SciTech has their own website separate from the PPS one? There is a great deal of information for our families and students such as information about SciTech course offerings, PSCC meetings, student opportunities and much more. Check it out today!

[www.pittsburghscitech.com](http://www.pittsburghscitech.com)

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## SciTech Weekly Emails

Every Monday we send an email that helps inform our families about what is going on at SciTech. There is a great deal of information communicated each week. If you don't already get these weekly emails, please sign-up today!

<http://tinyurl.com/scitechemaillist>

