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Opportunity Charter School
A Good Kind of Different



Welcome to Week 13 of Remote Learning! This afternoon, we will host another Town Hall meeting at 5pm, click on the link [here](#) to join. Please find the important dates coming up this month below:

Middle School

- **Middle School End of 4th Quarter:** Wednesday, June 17th
- **Middle School Last Day of School:** Wednesday, June 24th (half day students)
- **Middle School Graduation:** Wednesday, June 24th @ 1:00pm

High School

- **High School End of 4th Quarter:** Friday, June 12th
- **High School Senior Social:** Friday, June 12th @ 3pm
- **High School Last Day of School:** Tuesday, June 16th (for students who passed all classes)
- **High School Last Day of School:** Thursday, June 25th (for students recovering credit)
- **High School Graduation:** Thursday, June 25th @1:00pm

OCS Spotlight



Ms. Zimmer is OCS's Coordinator of Educational Technology. Ms. Zimmer's help has been extremely critical to ensuring remote learning at OCS runs smoothly. From Chromebooks to wifi hotspots, she has made sure all students have the technology they need to learn from home. When it was announced that NYC schools would transition to remote learning, Ms. Zimmer took all the Chromebooks she could carry, brought them to her apartment, and organized their distribution to students.

On top of troubleshooting tech issues and distributing technology, Ms. Zimmer is responsible for teaching all of her classes. She teaches students computer programming, graphic design, Microsoft Office, and more. For her graphic design classes, she recently asked them to create an OCS logo. Ms. Zimmer also helps to train her fellow teachers how to use Google Meet, looks for resources to make online teaching easier, and researches ways to make remote learning more efficient.

At this critical time, we are so lucky to have Ms. Zimmer as a member of the OCS staff!



OUR HERO!

Ms. Rivera is an Emergency Medical Service worker and mother to Kaylin Rodriguez, an OCS 8th grade student. She answers 911 calls for help and dispatches ambulances to the scene. When COVID-19 began in New York, she saw the volume of calls skyrocket from 4,000-5,000 calls to 7,000-8,000 calls per day. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) stepped in to help, as well as volunteers from out of state, to answer these emergency calls. Ms. Rivera had to work overtime to get to every call, sometimes until 4am in the morning. While this is exhausting work, Ms. Rivera uses all of her free time and breaks to help Kaylin with her schoolwork.

This is Kaylin's first year at OCS and Ms. Rivera said this is the first school where Kaylin felt like she truly belonged. Right before COVID-19 hit, Ms. Rivera got a puppy for the family. The dog is 5 months now and, according to Ms. Rivera, Kaylin has done an incredible job training him!

Throughout this process, Ms. Rivera has watched Kaylin learn self discipline. While her mom cannot always be home because of the nature of being a first responder, Kaylin has stayed on top of her class work throughout remote learning. Kaylin has continued to log into her online classes and turn in her school assignments on time. This experience has not been easy, Ms. Rivera admits, but she is proud of her daughter for taking initiative and putting school first.

We applaud Ms. Rivera for everything she does to help keep New Yorkers safe and healthy!



Amazing Middle Schooler!

Mia Santiago is a 7th-grade student at OCS and has been with us for 2 years. Remote learning has allowed Mia to thrive academically. Mia has been able to meet seventh-grade learning standards with efficiency and effort. Her transition to remote learning has been wonderful to watch. Mia's ease and

confidence during this tumultuous time is evidence to her resilience and strength. **The 7th grade would like to salute Mia Santiago!**



Student Support Services Department

The Student Support Services Department is a vital part of OCS. The Department is made up of the Director, Assistant to the Director, Counselors, and Social Workers. This department wears many hats -- helping students with everything from academic success to college planning to mental well-being.

OCS's counselors help high schoolers plan for the future. They typically help facilitate college tours, which they are now organizing virtually. Guidance counselors also help students to understand their options for after graduation, whether their interests lie in the military or a training program. All students apply to CUNYs as well as any additional colleges and universities of their choosing. Counselors help students fill out their applications. Counselors even help students with their FAFSA applications in order to receive student aid for college.

Each grade level has its own social worker who follows the class from grade to grade. OCS's social workers ensure students are supported with group and individual counseling. Since COVID-19 began, the department has continued to hold sessions over Google Meet -- which has been the highlight of many students' weeks as it allows them to see their social worker and feel connected. Social workers are also ensuring students who received free or reduced-price school meals get P-EBT food benefits for the food they would normally get through school. Their support has been especially invaluable as 10% of OCS's students have experienced a loss since COVID-19 and need help dealing with the insurmountable loss the pandemic has caused.

This is an unprecedented time, and we are all experiencing stress from COVID-19 and now, the rash of fatal violence against Black Americans, including George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. The pandemic continues to be deeply challenging for everyone and coupled with these profound losses and the subsequent protests, Opportunity Charter School recognizes that many of our hearts are heavy. We stand with the Black community—our hearts aching in a country that is still so divided by racial injustice, ignorance, and hatred.

It is, and remains to be, our mission to provide education to any student regardless of his/her learning style. It reminds us that any student can learn and contribute to his/her community and deserves to always be respected and maintain a safe living environment no matter what. When we share and learn about others, we learn about ourselves and hopefully find ways to live together, and to embrace and better understand each other.

New York City is often referred to as a melting pot, but it is, in fact a kaleidoscope, where every piece comes together to create a beautiful new whole. Each of us, with all of our different backgrounds, bring new ideas and perspectives on teaching empathy, legacy, and can shine a bright light on where we are not succeeding. When we as a society fail to respect each other, we become inhumane and tragedy often follows. It's essential that we continue educating ourselves and each other about the history of racial injustice in this country. As we learn, we encourage everyone in our community to engage with the struggle for racial equity in the ways that they can. Engagement doesn't look any one way, we all have our role to play when it comes to creating a better society. Please find some recommended resources on Black History below:

- Black History: The History Channel has put together an excellent and thorough timeline of Black History Milestones [here](#). PBS also put together a guide to teach your child about Black History [here](#).
- Podcasts: Listen to [1619](#), a podcast series on “how slavery has transformed America, connecting past and present through the oldest form of storytelling”. The podcast stems from the New York Times’ series [The 1619 Project](#).
- A Teen Read: A powerful book for your teen to read is [The Hate U Give](#), which follows 16 year-old Starr Carter as she navigates her poor neighborhood and the fancy prep school she attends -- all until her childhood friend is fatally shot by a police officer.
- Support Black Businesses: If you order the above book online, please consider supporting a Black bookseller and purchasing them from stores like [Mahogany Books](#), [Semicolon Bookstore](#), or [Eso Won Books](#).

For 16 years, Opportunity Charter School has educated the New York City community. In this difficult moment, we reinforce our mission, and stand with all communities against injustice and racism.

Thank you, and please stay safe.

We're still accepting applications for the 2020/2021 school year! Do you know someone who wants to join the OCS family?

[Apply Now!](#)



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