

HILLCREST HIGH SCHOOL
A Recognized New York State Blue Ribbon School of Excellence
A Bill and Melinda Gates Small Learning Communities Demonstration Site
National School Change Award Winner
An Educational Partner with New Visions for Public Schools
160-05 Highland Avenue
Jamaica Estates, New York 11432
718-658-5407
Stephen M. Duch, Principal

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Sabrina Garrett, P.A. President

June 2008

From the Principal's Desk:

Dear Parents:

Well, it is amazing but another year of school is nearly over. On June 23, 2008, over 650 students will be graduating from Hillcrest. Of the graduates, 88.3% have been accepted to 4-year colleges and another 10.2% have been accepted to 2-year colleges, with the remaining 1.5% going into the military or the world of work. Amazing data! Also, over 80% of the students who started at Hillcrest as freshmen in September 2004 are graduating on time this June.

Our goal this year was **Hillcrest Where Good becomes GREAT**. This is truer than ever this year.

Along with this information, Hillcrest has recently begun a 12.5 million dollar renovation of the exterior of our building with a new roof, pointing, windows, and ventilation system being done, with a completion date slated for October 2009. Soon you will be seeing our new "forest green" windows that will begin to distinguish us from our neighbor P.S. 86Q.

We are currently embarking on a restoration of the hardwood floor in our main gym. This restoration of nearly \$100,000.00 will allow our sports team to flourish.

We have also received a verbal commitment from our Borough President Helen Marshall for a contribution of \$750,000.00 and from our City Councilman James Gennaro for a contribution of \$500,000.00 for a "reinvention" of the Hillcrest library. The 1.25 million dollars along with funds raised by our PSO New Visions will allow us to totally renovate our library. The completion date should be by February 2010.

In this newsletter, I have enclosed a copy of our "upgraded requirements" that was "**backpacked**" to all parents on May 6, 2008. Please be sure your child participates in all scheduled Regents exams this June.

We will be holding our June Regents Prep Marathon on Saturday, June 14 and Sunday, June 15. Details are being "**backpacked**" to students at the beginning of June.

Summer school begins July 1, 2008 and ends August 12, 2008. Regents will be held on August 13th and August 14th.

Our Summer Intensive Program will begin on July 7, 2008; details will follow.

Again, to all our parents, especially those involved in our Parent Association Executive Board and School Leadership Team, thank you for all you do.

See you in September.

Yours truly,

Stephen M. Duch
Principal

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Deborah Ziozis, A.P. Organization

As summer begins, we would like you to take the time to reflect over the school year. As you review your child's report card, notice the relationship that attendance and grades have had in your child's success. Attendance has been identified as one of the criteria in the determination of promotional standards. Students with poor attendance do not often meet the standards.

This is why we make daily phone calls to you when your child is absent. It is also why we require an absence note for every absence. If we work together, we will ensure that all our students meet the standards and set goals for a productive 2008-2009 school year.

Also, please remind your child to place their POS Identification number in a safe place. They will use this number year after year. This personal number gives them access to the cafeteria and to a nutritious breakfast and lunch.

We hope you and your family have a restful and refreshing summer.

John Michalos, A.P. Pupil Personnel Services

As summer approaches, the guidance department is busy preparing for the Fall term. Counselors have prepared student fall programs based on second marking period grades. Students who fail classes may need to attend summer school.

Summer School begins on July 7th through August 14th. The promotion requirements are as follows:

9th – 10th grade – 8 credits (including 2 English, 2 Social Studies);
10th – 11th grade- 20 credits (including 4 English, 4 Social Studies);
11th – 12th grade – 28 credits (including 6 English, 6 Social Studies)

A minimum of 44 credits and a 65 (minimum) on four Regents exams and a 55 (minimum) on one Regents exam are required to earn a local

diploma for students who entered high school in September 2007. Students entering 9th grade in the fall of 2008 have to earn a 65 on all Regents exams. To earn a Regents endorsed diploma, students must score a 65 or higher on all Regents exams.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call your child's Guidance Counselor at 718-658-5407.

The Guidance Department wishes everyone a happy and healthy summer!

Daniel Scanlon A.P. Social Studies

The end of the year traditionally presents us with an opportunity for assessment, and this is as true for the end of the academic year as it is for the calendar year. As we look back at the school year just ending, then, we can find much of which to be proud.

Throughout this year our first and foremost goal has been to prepare our students for success, both in high school and in their lives after graduation, and the Department has worked closely with our Small Learning Communities to create new courses and strengthen already existing ones so that we may meet the needs and interests of all students. Success can be defined in many ways, but within a school setting it includes fulfilling one's potential as both a student and a person. In the classroom, students have spent the last ten months mastering the skills and content needed to meet and exceed the state requirements for graduation. Outside the classroom our students have been involved in numerous activities. A small sampling includes participation in the New York State Bar Association's Mock Trial Competition, a trip to Albany sponsored by the Queens County Bar Association, induction of students into Council for Unity, several trips to the United Nations, and participation in the Queens County Youth Court.

Over the summer we would urge you to encourage your children to stay informed about current events so that they may soon begin to participate in our democracy at the local, state, and national level, as well as to continue to expand their knowledge of the world and its peoples, which continue to have such a dramatic impact on us. History does not just look at the past; it also attempts to use the past to influence the future, and our students can have a major impact.

Have a safe, enjoyable, and restful summer.

Martin Walsh A.P. Science

It is often said that the older you get, the faster time passes. It is also said that time flies when you are having fun. If this school year is any indication, then I must be getting really old or I must have had a lot of fun. It seems like only yesterday I was looking forward to winter break when, in reality, another school year has come to an end.

Perhaps the reason time seemed to pass so quickly is because a great deal of time and effort was spent refining the work begun last year with the creation of our small learning communities. Instruction continued to be strengthened as groups of teachers in their small learning community were provided time to carefully examine student work and plan next steps. Science teachers increased opportunities for Academic Intervention Services for struggling students through tutoring, PM school, and *Saturday's at Hillcrest*. New courses were created to supplement the required Regents subjects. Students were able to earn college credit through *College Now Physics* and *College Now Chemistry* and to test for college credit in *Advanced Placement Environmental Science* and *Advanced Placement Biology*.

Science and Health Careers teachers began to embrace technology in their classroom presentations as well as in communication with parents and students. It was quite common to see PowerPoint® presentations by both teachers and students in a variety of science and health careers courses. Several teachers employed an online gradebook which allowed both students and parents to keep track of student progress. Others set up websites providing assignments and additional resources. Scholarship has consistently exceeded previous benchmarks throughout the year due to the combined efforts of the teachers and students. This school year promises to end on a high note of achievement.

Several of our Health Career students participated in the HOSA Spring Competitive Events Conference in Syracuse this year. Congratulations to Tshara Brown, Wilfredo Gonzalez, Sohaib Hussaini, Tiffany Miller, Dasaret Tillmanand, Naketa Younge who all qualified to compete at the National HOSA Conference in Dallas, TX in June. Congratulations also to HOSA coordinators Lorraine Brink and Tova Zimmer.

On a personal note, I would like to take the opportunity to wish teacher Christine Donley best wishes on her upcoming retirement. Ms. Donley has served the Hillcrest community for many years as a teacher of the Dental Assisting program and as a dean. Ms. Donley also served as Girls' Tennis coach for many years. Her contributions to the Hillcrest community are greatly appreciated and she will be missed.

Also on a personal note, when I joined the Hillcrest community some two and a half years ago, I co-taught a chemistry class with my predecessor. The students in that class welcomed me warmly and I have had the pleasure of getting to know many of them quite well. This June, these students leave Hillcrest as member of the Graduating Class of 2008. I will remember them fondly and wish them only good things for the future.

While I may think the school year goes quickly, I think we can all agree that summer vacation always seems to pass so quickly as well. I encourage you enjoy the long lazy days of this glorious season with your children. It is a great time to relax and rejuvenate in preparation for the start of school in September.

On behalf of the Science and Health Careers faculty, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your support this year and to wish you a happy and safe vacation season. We all look forward to working with you and your children next year.

**David Morrison, A.P.
English, Art & Music**

This year I took a close look at our approach to writing instruction across the content areas. The result of that inquiry will be the creation of a school-wide writing rubric designed to institutionalize consistent practices for writing across the content areas. In addition, a school-wide policy for editing and revising will be developed which memorializes practices linked to improved academic outcomes for the students.

If your child is taking the English Regents here is a helpful site: www.nysedregents.org that offers information and practice exams for all the Regents your child will take. It has been another great year for the Arts at Hillcrest. This year we had our Annual Spring Festival of the Arts where the Visual Arts Department got to shine. This year Ms. Heneffeld showcased her students' talents with hand printed t-shirts and 3D African masks. Mr. Perez' students were hard at work on self-portraits in graphite

and other marvelous drawings. Ms. Saddler added some Science to the arts with her Medical Illustrations along with some Graphic Design work. We had the pleasure of having a visiting professional artist from England, from "Studio in a School" who taught Graphic Design of CD covers with some of Ms. Saddler's classes. They had a successful gallery show in May that can still be seen if you missed it. Mr. Perez worked very hard teaching Concurrent Options to help many of our seniors graduate on time. Thank you Mr. Perez!

If your child has not yet taken an Art class at Hillcrest they can see their guidance counselor to sign up for the fall. We may even be offering an AP Art History course in the fall. We also congratulate students Merlinda John, Florence Griffith, and Thalia Morales for winning "The School Art League Medals" this year at a special ceremony at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and student Anjalie Anrude for winning the "Ezra Jack Keates Bookmaking Contest" pin for Hillcrest High School. Her original handmade book was on display in the Donell Library in Manhattan. Have a great summer and enjoy all the great art Museums NYC has to offer.

As we come to the close of another school year, we can all look back at the accomplishments of our students. Our "Grand Finale" was, of course, the Spring Festival of the Arts in late May. While the audience was treated to the enjoyable sounds of the Bands, Strings and Choruses, the real magic occurs on a day-to-day basis in the classrooms. In a performance, you see and hear many parts come together. During the ongoing classroom instruction, the students are exposed to the histories of the music; learn their specific part and work together to balance all parts to function as one. The physical and mental demands to perform are never too challenging for our students and we enjoy every minute of it.

The music department continuously encourages our students to continue on a performance track and hopes that others will consider taking a beginning class in the future. Please check with you guidance counselor to schedule a music class for September.

Lastly, congratulations to the department director, Mr. Lance, who recently received an award from the Music Educators Association of New York City for his many years of contributions to music education for all of NYC.

If you need more information or would like to talk about your child's

English, Art, or Music classes please email me at dmorris4@schools.nyc.gov

**Tarek Ali, A.P.
Health & Physical Ed / Tech**

We are glad to announce that August 25th is the official starting date for our sports Fall season! We are always looking forward to hear from and answer any question on how to contact us to join the teams. Please visit our web site on the WWW.PSAL.gov to check on our teams and results. All students are welcome and encouraged to try out and join any team.

Eligibility to join a team is:

- Parental consent
- A medical examination filed with the specific PSAL medical examination form stamped by a doctor which will be valid for one year
- A minimum of a four (4) credit academic accumulation and one passing gym for every previous term
- 90% or better attendance

Good luck to our teams and coaches. We wish you a very successful and competitive season.

I would like to thank all the parents that completed the immunization requirement for their children. This improved their health status and other students in the school. I urge all parents that did not complete the immunization requirement to comply as soon as possible. We are required by the state law to exclude your child if the requirement is not in full compliance.

Any questions about the health status of your child should be directed to Ms. Williams, the school's health aid at 718-658-5407 ex. 2060.

**Keith Prowell, A.P.
Mathematics**

As of May 1, 2008, 85% of Hillcrest students expected to graduate in June 2008 has met the Regents requirement for graduation.

If you missed the Math Regents in January or June, submit your name for **Wednesday, August 13, 2008 @ 8:30 a.m.** testing through your Guidance Counselor. **Special summer sessions will be held for students needing to meet the Math Regents requirement.**

New York State Requires:

- **At least 6 credits in Mathematics Courses**

- **At least one Math Regents:**
- **Local Diploma Graduation Requirement – 55+**
- **Regents Diploma Qualification – 65+**

Support and involvement is critical in helping students meet the graduation requirement in mathematics:

- **Parents**, provide your child with a quiet place to study. Check to see that students complete their assignments.
- **Students**, own and practice with your scientific calculator at home and in class. Bring it with you to the Regents test.

Note: Students qualifying for a Local Diploma are registered to re-take the test to qualify for the Regents Diploma.

Check with your SLC Institute for further information in meeting Institute requirements.

The format for the **Math A Regents** will be:

- Part I - "Multiple Choice" - 30 questions, 2 credits each –No Partial Credit
- Part II - "Constructed Response" - 6 Partial Credit Questions – 2 credits each, and
- Parts III - "Constructed Response" 2 Partial Credit Questions – 3 credits each, and
- Part IV - "Constructed Response" 2 Partial Credit Questions – 4 credits each

The sampler format for the **Integrated Algebra Regents** shows:

- Part I - "Multiple Choice" - 30 Questions, 2 credits each –No Partial Credit
- Part II - "Constructed Response" 3 Partial Credit Questions – 2 credits each, and
- Parts III - "Constructed Response" 3 Partial Credit Questions – 3 credits each, and
- Part IV - "Constructed Response" 3 Partial Credit Questions – 4 credits each

ONLINE REGENTS HELP - Resources for assignments and test review are available on the Internet.

Links can be accessed through the Department of Education Homepage, www.nycenet.edu, the New York State Education Department, www.nysed.org, and the Ottawa School District Homepage, www.regentsprep.org.

OTHER MATH DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

LAST CHANCE FOR MATH A REGENTS – JANUARY 2009 –

Students who have not yet passed the Math "A" Regents will be registered

for this last chance at the Math A. If missed, students will have to meet the New York State Regents requirement for graduation through Integrated Algebra, Geometry, or Algebra 2. Students will be enrolled in Integrated Algebra in the event they need to take the Integrated Algebra Regents in June 2009.

NEW REGENTS COURSE – "GEOMETRY" – Sophomores will be taking the new course to qualify them to take the Geometry Regents in June 2009

ST. JOHN'S HIGH SCHOOL EXTENSION PROGRAM –Seniors will be eligible to earn college credit for Precalculus, Biology and Biology Lab, and Foundations of Education (HBT8). These courses will cover content of St. John's credit classes. Students must meet criteria for St. John's University admissions - a combined score of at least 1000 on the PSAT's or SAT's. In the Fall 2008 students will pay \$200 for each course and can earn 3 college credits for each course; 4 credits for Biology w/Lab.

CONCURRENT OPTIONS IN MATH – This past spring independent study packets, "Math A- Algebra Applied" and "Discrete Math" helped students to earn graduation credit. Students were required to complete an academic portfolio that included textbook readings and exercises, research, take-home and in-class tests, individualized projects, a museum visit, and regular consultation with a Concurrent Option Student Advisor. Seniors were able to earn credits for graduation through an alternative, challenging approach.

Have a Happy, Healthful, and Restful summer. Great things are in store for you this Fall at Hillcrest.

Eliot Finkelstein, A.P. Security & Student Life

This school year, we have made great strides in enhancing safety and security at Hillcrest High School. Many safety procedures have been revised along with the addition of state of the art Scanning machines. It is our goal for the upcoming year to continue to provide a safe and orderly school environment, to make Hillcrest High School a wonderful place for Teaching and learning. It is also our goal to maintain our status as a New York State Blue Ribbon School of Excellence and the safest large high school in Queens. When you return in the Fall, I want you to keep in mind that school is also a place where students with common interests can come together and have a great time! I would like to encourage our students

to participate in one of our many clubs, teams, or after-school activities. Please go to Room 332 to obtain more information on these available activities.

Have a great summer!

Justin A. Follyga, A.P. Foreign Language/ESL

The Foreign Language Department is welcoming the summer after a busy and arduous spring. During the spring semester the students performed in the International Festival and it was a tremendous success. The students performed a variety of their very best cultural dances such as the Latino dances, the Desi dances, and the African-Caribbean Diaspora dances.

We have administered the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) in May, and the results would become available in the summer and they may help us place the ELL students according to their proficiency levels in the fall. Finally, Ms. Boghosian and a few Hillcrest students will be traveling to China early July. We are anticipating that they are going to have an extraordinary journey.

The Foreign Language Department is looking forward to a productive end of academic year and wishes everyone a safe and healthy summer.

Amar Nepal, A.P. Data / Business

As this school year comes to a close, it is time to analyze our data and reflect on areas we should celebrate as well as areas we need to focus for improvements. As you may already know, Hillcrest High School is one of the few large schools in Queens that has been recognized by the New York State Education Department as a "School in Good Standing." We invite you to join in our celebration of success. This is due to a never ending cycle of assessment of programs to enhance the learning of your child. These programs are constantly being monitored, tweaked, and evaluated so that all students meet with success. We are always looking at our programs from many different perspectives to so that no stone is left unturned. Aside from being recognized as a School in Good Standing, we have met other significant data milestones. For instance, we have the highest graduation rate last year in the history of our school. We are hoping to break this record this year and

continue to increase the amount of graduates year after year.

Our data shows the high quality of teaching and learning that occurs at our school. We pride ourselves in having the finest certified teachers and the best course offerings of any high school in the city. We boast the largest College Now program in the city. This year we expanded once more with a partnership with York College. We have brought aboard 7 additional college courses. Students who enroll in these courses can gain up to 8 college credits in just one semester. These courses are all free. They enhance your child's college application, and may save you thousands of dollars in college tuition. Students may enroll in courses taught at the school or courses taught on the York College campus. By taking courses at the college we hope students to get assimilated in the college environment. Research shows this increases the likelihood of student success in the first year of college. Course instructors are hired by York College and are highly qualified. These courses include:

Environmental Science taught by Mr. Rashid. This class explores the science behind the environmental issues that we hear about on the daily news. Students are taught the complexities of the science as well as the political aspects.

Medical Anthropology is instructed by Mr. Nepal. This course explores various cultural and folk methods of curing illnesses. Students research and explore the actual science behind it.

Cultural Diversity is instructed by Ms. Abramowitz. In this course students will explore different cultures of the world. The course incorporates tolerance into every lesson. Participants carry out extensive research and report on their own cultures.

Health Professions is complementary to our Medical Lab Techniques program. This laboratory based course teaches skills and techniques used by various health professions. We have two sections of these courses taught by Mr. Brijram and Mrs. Pillai.

Our genetics course is taught at York College's campus. It is usually taken by upperclassmen and is a good pre-requisite for any student taking AP Biology or interested in taking advanced Biology courses in college.

Sociology takes a look at different theories of society. This course takes place at the York College campus.

Psychology is an introductory course which explores the different theories of how the human mind works. This course is also instructed at the York College campus.

The pre-requisite for all York College Now courses requires your child to take and score 75% or higher on their English Regent. If your child meets this requirement and has an interest in taking any of these courses they can see their guidance counselor, director, or me in room 487.

Felicia Batkin
ISS Coordinator

The school year has come and gone and there were great strides made in the Instructional Support Service Department. Over the year we have enhanced our collaborative team teaching classes to ensure all students are receiving the correct level of support. We continuously look to promote students to the least restrictive environment to ensure that students are being challenged properly. We want all of our students to be prepared for their future.

Some students find that keeping up with reading and writing is difficult with the summer break. Make sure your child is constantly reading and stimulating his/her mind with new and creative ideas.

As always the ISS department strives to ensure that all students are performing at their maximum potential by focusing on their individual educational needs.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to email me at fbatkin@schools.nyc.gov

Humanities College
Preparatory Institute
Robin Lauzon, Director

The Humanities SLC has just finished its second year and we are excited to spend the summer planning to make our SLC even better next year. The most important thing we have accomplished in our two years is creating a strong sense of community. Our focus from the beginning was to establish a place where the students felt safe, respected and challenged academically. We think we've done that. Attendance at clubs continues to rise and even more students spend their lunch period in the Humanities area talking with peers or teachers or participating in events.

Many of our students have achieved personal goals this semester. One

junior is interning with Councilman James Gennaro. A sophomore received a prestigious leadership award that will have her traveling throughout Europe this summer. A senior received a generous financial aid package to Dickinson College in Pennsylvania. Our seniors have been accepted at almost every CUNY school, Sarah Lawrence, University of Hartford, and Monroe College, to name a few.

We visited the Frick to participate in their annual writing contest and have fingers crossed that one of our students will place in the top three. The students visit the Frick Collection, tour the galleries and then choose a painting to creatively write about. Winners receive a cash prize and publication.

We also headed to the International Center of Photography for our Saturdays in Manhattan program. Students got to take their own "art" home with them in the form of a poster.

Our resource area mural project is continuing. A group of students will be responsible for painting Da Vinci's Vitruvian man on the wall, and replicas of famous paintings on the tables. The painting is well under way and students spend their free time working on the *Birth of Venus* and *Starry, Starry Night*. The hope is that both will be done by the start of summer. We also introduced a student gallery in one section, where students will be able to display their original artwork.

Ping Pong continues to be the club to attend, as over 20 students and teachers stay after school and during 6th period to try their hands at the table. The knitting club received yet another grant so that supplies will be available. Students dyed their own yarn with Kool-Aid and food coloring at the last meeting. Next year we hope to continue our clubs with even more offerings.

Every day we come up with new ideas and projects, so be sure to ask your children what we have coming up next. Have a great summer, and we're looking forward to next year!

The Pre-Teaching Institute
John Binet, Director

Congratulations to all of the 2008 graduates. We wish them all great success in their future endeavors. It is with great confidence and pride that we send into the world a plethora of pupils that exhibit such a myriad of talents developed in their experiences at Pre-Teaching. It is our hope that

the rest of the student body will be inspired by our large number of graduates this year and to strive for such success. Please encourage your children to complete their Summer Projects and to always try and take time throughout their summer days to read a little. Hope you have a wonderful summer and look forward to the upcoming school year.

Future Academy
David Ricaurte, Director

As the 2007-2008 school year ends, the Future Academy at Hillcrest High School had a prosperous third year as a small learning community. The Future Academy staff worked together to help make this year successful.

The teachers made connections with students to motivate and inspire them. This provided an environment where students can become involved in extra-curricular activities. There were many student-athletes in Future Academy this year that participated in junior varsity and varsity teams for Hillcrest High School.

Students received individual attention and were challenged to reach their maximum potential. Staff members assisted students in tutoring. As the school year ends, all Future Academy students know what four year small learning community they will be part of next year. Future Academy students will also participate in taking the Living Environment and Algebra regents.

Theatre Institute
Amy Morrison, Director

The Theatre Institute has had quite an exciting 2007-2008 school year! The Institute wishes its seniors all the best in their future endeavors. This charismatic group will surely be missed.

All the teachers in our Small Learning Community continue to be committed to providing the best possible education to all the students in the Theatre Institute; our tutoring program is progressing nicely and most students in the Institute are taking advantage of the extra help offered by the teachers. The International Thespian Society continued their charity work this year with Broadway Cares and UNICEF. This fall the Thespians raised over \$150 for UNICEF. In the Spring the Senior Theatre classes raised money for the ASPCA, under the lead of our guidance counselor, Ms. Perlman. They then turned their philanthropy on to BROADWAY CARES and rose over \$100. In May the whole

Institute raised money for the AIDS Walk in which over 200 of our students participated in.

Every last Monday of the month the Thespians hosted a Poetry Afternoon for all Hillcrest students and staff to share their poetry with one another.

In regards to performances we are proud of our Thespian Troupe and their outstanding performance of Love, Shakespeare, a collection of love scenes and sonnets by Will. The show went so well that it was taken on the road to various festivals throughout the NYC area. The Senior Production OUR TOWN was another huge success enjoyed by the Hillcrest community. The Junior classes had a magnificent Junior Theatre Showcase and in an effort to give all actors time on stage-the sophomores also had a showcase of their talent in May! Students from all SLCs were seen in the Spring Musical Once on This Island in May.

The Theatre Institute will continue its partnerships with LEAP/Fidelity, Manhattan Theatre Club, Primary Stages, and Youth Onstage to bring its students numerous opportunities to advance their creativity. We hope you and your child have a wonderful summer. Please encourage your child to see some performances this summer! New York City is filled with all different kinds of theatrical shows for reasonable prices. If you have any questions, or if you would like more information please call the Theatre Office at 658-5407 Ext. 2081.

BizTek Institute
Jose Rios, Director

How quickly the end of the year has arrived. It seems as if only yesterday we started our Small Learning Community journey together – now, 2 years into this journey, the fruit of our labor continues to be seen. We are graduating our second class of seniors, and it will be my great pleasure to be with all of them on-stage, at graduation, calling out their names during the presentation of diplomas. It is a big change for me personally – only a few years ago I was receiving my Masters degrees – now, I am helping present diplomas to graduates who have their whole lives ahead of them. What a change!!!

As for our current crop of juniors (would-be seniors), the continued evolution of the BIZTEK program promises and even better learning experience for our business students. The renovation of the Virtual Learning room / office, and the integration of new software, technology and curriculum into the class bodes well

for our business students. Also, with the revamping of our entrepreneurship curriculum, we hope that students will have an even better understanding of business principles so that, if they should choose, they can create and run their own companies or firms in the future.

The technology students will continue to avail themselves of our newer programs – the roll out of three new technology certification programs to join our current Cisco certification – A+, Panduit, and IT Essentials. These certifications are being introduced with the express hope that our students will be able to be ready for either work opportunities or college opportunities when they graduate. Sophomores and even freshmen will have the opportunity to accrue one certification each year until they graduate, thereby leaving Hillcrest much better prepared to face the challenges of the world than when they entered our school.

Furthermore, BIZTEK has a new and exciting Engineering initiative for Fall 2008. In its initial phase the program will focus on Computer Aided Design (CAD) and on the completion of engineering projects. The goal is for students to be able to design and building model bridges, motors, rockets and other scaled assignments. We are very excited to have this program in BIZTEK and look forward to its implementation in the fall.

BIZTEK continues to reward students for high academic achievement through the publication of the Honor Roll, Achievement List, and the BIZTEK All Star List. This year BIZTEK instituted the Professionalism and Citizenship Awards to reward student for professional behavior, conduct attitudes and effort in the classroom and throughout the school. While each of these lists has its own set of requirements, the goal is still the same: to reward students for academic achievement in the classroom, to reward outstanding effort, as well, that leads to passing classes on a consistent basis, and to reward professionalism. BIZTEK, after all, wants to graduate professional students for tomorrow's workplace and world.

Finally, we have also worked on maintaining contact with parents and students during common time, offering lunchtime tutoring in math, English, and social studies, and holding periodic meetings to highlight student work in BIZTEK, expanded our Regents preparation program, and addressed instructional issues by holding professional development of lesson planning and focusing on the bigger picture. The goal remains the

same: we want BIZTEK students to be professionals, inside and outside the classroom, and to leave Hillcrest well prepared with skills and knowledge that will help them in their business and technology careers, and to face the challenges of the ever-changing world.

**The Academy of
Public Service & Law
Salima Khan and Pedro Cubero
Directors**

The Academy of Public Service & Law has had an extremely successful 2007-2008 academic year. Our teachers have significantly raised the educational standards of our students in every single subject area. Through the use of available data, these dedicated teachers have changed their pattern of instruction to target the academic needs of all students and have even managed to change many students' attitude to school.

Literacy was infused in all content areas to help our students understand important academic language and to develop essential language skills. Five of our teachers were specially trained to work with our students who lacked essential English literacy skills. During this year, these teachers tutored students who needed extra help in their regular scheduled English classes. Intensive tutoring was also offered to all students who sat for the June regents exams in all subject areas.

We did rigorous outreach to parents- hundreds of letters and phone calls were made targeting students with truancy, tardiness, academic and behavioral issues. Teachers completed Progress Reports twice per term, which were sent to parents whose children were experiencing academic failure.

It gives us great pleasure to announce that we have been successful in building interdisciplinary connections among all our English, social studies, foreign language, native language and ESL classes. We hope to build a connection between math and science in September. We look forward with much anticipation to an enhancement in student performance at the Regents exams and in regular class courses which these connections will bring.

Another source of satisfaction was our success in infusing the Law theme of our Academy across all our subject areas by transforming our law program. Our students participated in Moot Court, Model Court, mock trials and debate tournaments. On May 1st we celebrated International Law Day with a special program where

prominent legal professionals addressed our students. Students also participated in a Law Poster competition where the winner took home a flash drive. Next year we will be offering a Bridge to Law Program where students will intern at several law firms, and the District Attorney's Office.

We celebrated National Environmental Education Week (April 10-16), which was a week of "educational preparation" for Earth Day 2008. Our students created posters on Global Warming, Pollution and other environmental problems. They also wrote stories, composed poems and created a 'Public Service Goes Green' display wall. Teachers used the Environmental Awareness theme to create lessons across all content areas, which demonstrated the interdisciplinary connections we uphold in our institute. Our students distributed thousands of Earth Day lollipops to the entire school. We also started the process of recycling the cans and paper used by students by placing recycling decals and bins around the classrooms.

This term 25 students had the honor of being inducted into Council for Unity for their entire lifetime. Students celebrated Council for Unity week with a trip to the Metropolitan Museum, a bowling tournament and a trip to Alley Pond Park. Some of our students went on skiing, hiking and ice skating trips. Many had an opportunity to visit the circus for the first time and dozens joined in a Muscular Sclerosis Walk sponsored by a prominent Queens group. We also had a Memorial Day Tribute where veterans employed at our school addressed a gathering of more than two hundred students in the theatre.

In May our students staged Custodial Appreciation and Teacher Appreciation Days. We celebrated Women's History month in March and Black History Month in February by honoring women and African Americans who contributed much to science, mathematics, history, writing, poetry, law, government and those who were involved in public service. Some students wrote poems and essays honoring special women in their lives. We rewarded our students who did well in class, by electing Students of the Month in all the subject areas. Honor Rolls and Perfect Attendance lists were generated at the end of each marking period and displayed throughout the Academy. In January we had an Achievement Party where we honored our top achievers and those who had improved considerably. Our students received Certificates of Achievement and were feted with

many delicacies. On June 12th we hosted a gala Graduation/Honor Roll ceremony. Students were addressed by the principal Mr. Duch, who also did us the honor of presenting prizes and certificates. We would like to wish our graduates every success in their future lives and invite them to visit us regularly while they continue to reach for the stars. We hope that the entire Hillcrest community has a safe and enjoyable summer.

**Health Careers Institute
Stacie Sugarman
and Shirley Labardy, Directors**

The Health Careers Small Learning Community (SLC) has lots of exciting news to end our second year. Each of the four programs, Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Dental Assistant, and Medical Assistant have a great deal to be proud of. As June nears, we are embarking on our second annual Health Careers Commencement and Nurse Capping Ceremony as an SLC. This is an exciting time of year for all of us.

Our senior nurses are preparing for their graduation from the LPN program and are also preparing to take their state boards this summer. EMT students are busy completing their volunteer hours at Shea Stadium, while our Medical and Dental Assistants continue to be active in their clinical experiences.

This semester we are proud to report that under the direction of Ms. Brink, Health Careers students competed in the annual HOSA competition and won five awards. We won one first place, three second place, and two third place awards.

Specialty teachers are busy making a few changes regarding our LPN program. It has been determined that a New York State Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) program will be offered in place of the LPN program. It is our hope that this change will allow a greater number of students to enter and meet with success in the completion of this program.

As this second year comes to a close as an SLC, students and staff continue to work together as a community in order to create new opportunities for expansion and growth of our SLC. We look forward to the coming year and our renewed connection to our surrounding community. We congratulate our seniors and wish them well in their future endeavors.

Newcomers Institute Bibi Ramjan, Director

Newcomers Institute has had another successful and exciting year. Approximately 80% of our students who are moving on to other Small Learning Communities have acquired the 10 credits that are required of them during their sophomore year. Congratulations to all of you and continue the good work. While it is sad to see our students go, they know that our doors will forever be open to them.

All of us in Newcomers have worked hard over the year to provide students with support in all academic areas as well as in their personal lives. Together, we have managed to create a small family of caring individuals who assist each other whenever necessary. We encourage students to appreciate our unique and diverse community and to build on each other's strengths. Students have grown to accept that we are a support system for each other. We stress "no fighting" among ourselves and that if one of us is hurt then all of us should feel the pain. With this idea in mind, students, teachers and guidance counselor work collaboratively for the success of all.

During the Spring semester, we held a Spelling Bee that was so much enjoyed by the students that they requested another. In May, Newcomers had another Spelling Bee and we had our first Math Challenge. The Math Challenge was based on some aspects of the "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" show. Each participant had three lifelines—a selected list of talented students who were considered Math experts of their clan. We look forward to these events where students have an opportunity to compete while at the same time share in the learning process. Our year culminated with an award ceremony in the auditorium where parents attended to support their children. We had a day of sports on the Great Lawn where students worked together as units or teams to compete in novelty events.

In addition to providing strong academic challenges to our students this year, Newcomers' students had the opportunity to visit the Jewish Museum, Bronx Zoo, Metropolitan Museum of Art, participate in ice-skating in Central Park, and view Manhattan from the Circle Line cruise ship. We also had a Family Fun Night where parents, grandparents, and siblings of students came to play games and enjoy good food and ethnic music. As always, we are thankful to our parents for all their

support and participation in helping our students to succeed. We pledge to continue supporting you so that *our* students will have the best possible education and an enlightening Newcomers' experience.

The teachers, guidance counselor and director of Newcomers would like to wish all our students success on the upcoming Regents exams and we would like to encourage you to use every available opportunity to attend tutoring. We look forward to another great school year as we expand and serve more students in the fall.

Pre Med Institute Mr. Brijram and Ms. Cuéllar Directors

Four of our juniors (Ramirez, Cleidis; Uddin, Kaki M.D.; Begum, Momotaz; and Miah, Tania) have been accepted to the Bridge to Medicine program. In addition, a Pre-Med senior Sewanan Lorenzo had been honored by Quest Bridge and was given the opportunity to visit Korea as part of the Korea Society of International Leadership Initiative Program. Sewanan Lorenzo spent a week in Korea representing Hillcrest High School's Pre-Med SLC.

In order to encourage and boost Small Learning Community spirit, Pre-Med students and staff held their annual picnic in May at Flushing Meadow Park. We are constantly working to improve our academic program and make them meaningful. To enhance these programs, we are invite former students to address our current juniors and seniors about life after high school and how well Pre-Med had prepared them for these challenges. We are constantly monitoring, nurturing, and encouraging our students to maximize their opportunities. With College Now courses and AP courses, our students can earn college credits and are better prepared for college. The Pre-Med staff takes pride in encouraging, nurturing and preparing students to be leaders of tomorrow.

College Office News

Your child is a Hillcrest student and that means they are going to college!

Whether your child is entering 10th, 11th, or 12th grade, summer is prime time to research and visit colleges. Here are some simple steps to make summer 2008 work for you:

(1) Make sure your child has completed a free profile on <http://www.fastweb.com> and on <http://www.collegeboard.com>.

(2) These websites will greatly help your child focus their interests and narrow down their selection of schools.

(3) Make sure your child reviews the entry requirements (grades, SAT scores) for their dream schools. Discuss these choices with your child.

(4) Call and visit as many of the schools as you can. Seeing a school is the best way for you and your child to decide if it's a "good fit".

(5) Be sure to apply for a PIN number for your child and for you for financial aid by going to:
<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>

(6) If your child is entering 10th or 11th grade, they will be taking the PSAT test in October. Visit <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/prep.html> for more information about this important test.

(7) If your child will be graduating in 2008, they will take or re-take the SAT. Preparation is needed and a good place to start is at:
<http://www.collegeboard.com/parents>

The College Office looks forward to working with you to ensure your child's success. Thank you for choosing Hillcrest.

Message from Parent Coordinator

Dear Parents:

As summer approaches, I would like to take the time out to remind you that summer school begins July 1, 2008 and ends August 12, 2008. Regents will be held on August 13th and August 14th. For more information on classes and times, you may contact your child's guidance counselor or myself at 718-658-5407 ext. 4902. As we bring another school year to an end, I would like to wish each and everyone a safe, healthy, and happy summer.

Cynthia Saunders
Parent Coordinator

Important Dates

Graduation @ Hofstra University
Monday, June 23, 2008
4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Distribution of Report Cards
Thursday, June 26, 2008

Summer School
Tuesday, July 1, 2008 to Tuesday, August 12, 2008

Freshman Orientation
Wednesday, August 27, 2008
6:00 P.M.

Freshman Ice Cream Social
Thursday, August 28, 2008
12:00 Noon

Pick Up 2008-2009 Program Cards (ALL Students)
Friday, August 29, 2008
9:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon

Hillcrest High School
160-05 Highland Avenue
Queens, New York 11432