

Elysian Charter School Weekly Newsletter

April 16, 2012 Vol. 7 Issue 29

Please note that the school newsletter is sent out on Mondays. When Monday is a holiday, the newsletter is sent the following day. If you have news, please send it to lynneshapiro@rocketmail.com by 3:00 PM on Mondays.

Harry's Corner

From **The New York Times**

Education Life Section, Sunday, April 15, 2012

How to Be a Better Test-Taker

By ANNIE MURPHY PAUL

THE REALITY

Many capable, hard-working students perform poorly on exams because they've overtaxed their "working memory" — the mental scratchpad on which we combine information from our long-term memory with the specifics of the problem in front of us, in the service of finding a solution.

THE PROBLEM

"When students are anxious about how they'll do on an exam," says Sian Beilock, a professor of psychology at the University of Chicago, "their worries use up some of their working memory capacity, leaving less of this cognitive horsepower to apply to the task at hand."

HOW TO

Dr. Beilock, the author of "Choke: What the Secrets of the Brain Reveal About Getting It Right When You Have To," offers two interventions that can free up working memory in students caught in the grip of test anxiety.

The first involves shifting how they interpret their bodies' cues. Faced with a high-stakes situation, almost everyone has some physical symptoms of stress: sweaty palms, a racing heartbeat. But people interpret these cues differently, with important consequences for their performance.

In a study published last year in the journal *Emotion*, Dr. Beilock and four co-authors found that with students anxious about math, the more stress hormone they produced, the worse they did on a test; students with low math anxiety did better the more cortisol they produced. "The first group," she said, "felt the rising anxiety in their bodies and reacted

by thinking, 'I'm really nervous about this test. I'm afraid I'll fail.' ” They choked. “The second group told themselves something like, 'I'm really psyched up for this test! I'm ready to go!' ” Dr. Beilock recommends consciously adopting positive self-talk. Remind yourself that damp palms and a pounding heart accompany all kinds of enjoyable experiences: riding a roller coaster, winning a sports match, talking to someone you have a crush on.

A second approach involves a simple exercise just before a test. For 10 minutes, write about your feelings regarding the exam to clear your mind of test-related concerns, freeing working memory that can be applied to the exam. In a study published last year in the journal *Science*, Dr. Beilock and her co-author, Gerardo Ramirez, said the technique worked both in the lab and in classrooms. Used by a group of ninth graders facing a biology final, the expressive writing task effectively eliminated the relationship between test anxiety and poor test performance: even highly anxious students performed just as well as non-anxious classmates.

PLAN B

Cognitive scientists have not yet settled on how to expand working memory, but there are ways to make it more efficient. We can hold only about four facts or ideas at a time in working memory, but we can pack more information into those four slots by engaging in chunking, linking multiple pieces of information into a few meaningful groups. Phone numbers are a common example of chunking: 3-9-8-1-2-3-4 is easier to retain as two chunks, 398-1234.

More room can also be created in working memory by making mental operations automatic. Practicing a necessary skill until it's second nature — say, memorizing a set of basic equations — relieves the working memory of the need to perform yet one more task during testing. You may know this as studying.

Elysian Wins \$5000 and is on CBS

Check us out!

<http://news.yahoo.com/video/newyorkcbs2-15751042/hoboken-charter-school-wins-viral-video-contest-28848946.html>

The Spring Track Season Is Upon Us!

If you had previously registered for fall track, you are also registered for spring track! If you haven't registered at all, you can stop by the office and pick up a form! Practice for ALL GRADES will be held on Wednesdays at Pier A, 4pm – 5pm...please bring a water bottle! Practice ends promptly at 5pm, please be on time for pick-up! Track meets will be held on Saturdays through Memorial Day weekend, more information will follow! Any questions? Contact John in the Rue office.

Please Print Out and Return - Let Us Know Your Plans for Next Year

We are in the midst of planning for the next school year and need to know your plans as soon as possible.

All Elysian students are guaranteed a spot next year, as are any siblings (space permitting).

If you tell us there's a chance you might not return, we'll hold your child's place until you make a final decision. This information is useful because it enables us to encourage wait-listed families to "hang on" since there's a chance a space might open up.

In this way, you can help us achieve full enrollment for the next school year.

We appreciate your answering in an honest and timely fashion.

Complete the form, below, and return it to your child's teacher by Monday, April 16.

If you have more than one child, please fill out and return one form only - including any in-coming siblings - to any one of your children's teachers!
Any questions, please call Lynne Shapiro, Enrollment Coordinator, 201 876-0102.

ARE YOU RETURNING?

My child/children (please print name/names clearly):

name current teacher

name current teacher

name current teacher

Will be attending Elysian for the 2012 - 13 school year.

Will not be returning to Elysian for the 2012 - 13 school year.

I am not sure what my plans are for the 2012 - 13 school year. Save my place...I'll be sure to let you know as soon as we decide!

Parent Signature

_____ Date _____

News From The Friends of Elysian
2011-2012 Annual Appeal

Thank you to these friends of Elysian who have shown their support for 2011-2012 Annual Appeal during the past week:

Vicki and Ted Mauseth
Diane Murray
Nancy Carnevale
Kathy Mone

These generous donors have joined a long list of supporters and are helping us move closer to our goal of 100% participation from the entire Elysian community.

Remember it only takes \$1 to join the 2011-2012 Annual Appeal. Please consider making your gift today by sending in your pledge cards or by making an on-line donation via our secure web site: www.friendsofelysian.org.

The Annual Appeal closes on May 15, 2012.

Food Drive a Success!

Shareeza's fourth grade class would like to thank everyone for their donations - your participation was greatly appreciated by those in the community who need it most. We were able to collect a lot of food and toiletries. Each student carried a bag or two with items for the shelter. When we arrived, about ten people were having breakfast. They were very grateful for the items we donated. Students had the opportunity to ask questions, many of which were very poignant.

8th Grade Improve a Life Project

Bake Sale This Thursday!

On Thursday, April 19, the 8th graders who are supporting the Fistula Foundation are holding a bake sale in the Elysian courtyard at the beginning and end of the day. We had a bake sale in January, and in March we spoke at the community meeting and set up a table collecting donations. So far we have raised \$300. We are getting close to our goal of \$450, which will provide surgery for a women suffering from obstetric fistula, a devastating childbirth injury. We hope you can make it to our bake sale!

Spirit Day This Friday - Wear a Favorite Sports Jersey

As you know, this year the eighth grade is doing a project called Improve A-Life. Our goal is to help improve the life of someone less fortunate. For this project I chose the charity FUNDaFIELD. This charity's goal is to raise money to build soccer fields in Africa and make it possible for kids that are not fortunate enough to play soccer. My Spirit Day is on this Friday, April 20, 2012. The theme of this Spirit Day is for students and/or family members to wear a favorite sports jersey to raise awareness. **Please support my charity by bringing in a dollar or bringing in a new or used soccer ball.**

Thank you,
Matthew Delorenzo

Wanted for Art Room

The ART ROOM *desperately* needs:

Baby wipes

sponges

Black Sharpies

Multi-colored sharpies

PTSO Events at a Glance

Upcoming Date Chairpersons and Speakers-Topics

PTSO Meeting 5/2 PTSO Elections! Have a say in who runs events and works with next year's chair.

PTSO Meeting 6/6 Review and plan for next year

End of Year Picnic 6/14 Melissa Kleckner (2012-13 PTSO chair)

Autopay

The school now has the ability to automatically debit your credit card or bank account for regular monthly payments such as afterschool. Please let me know if you would like to go on autopay. We will be able to refund you if you decide not to use a month, or discontinue billing if you drop our services. Please let the Business Administrator (Kathy Mone, 201-876-0102 or office@ecsnj.org) know if you would like to go on autopay. We will be able to refund you if you decide not to use a month, or discontinue billing if you drop our services.

Lunch on Tuesdays

Send in a bag lunch for the Hoboken Shelter. We collect lunches every Tuesday. Contact: Jennifer Giattino, 201.780.6779

Donate By.... Shopping ...or Matching Gift Program!

- A fabulous Target REDcard receives a 5% discount at www.target.com and in stores. [Register and](#) 1% of Target purchases are donated to Elysian.
- Campbell's Labels for Education: A&P doesn't participate, but Shoprite does, [register](#) your participating store card. Each product you purchase earns 1 point for Elysian.
- Amazon: Yes, Virginia, there is a new Amazon widget on our [Donate](#) page and if you use it, up to 10% of each purchase is donated to us.
- [Innisbrook](#) donates an incredible 50%! Use code #120231.
- General Mills Box Tops from your home purchases are gladly received at the office at Rue. www.boxtops4education.com
- iGive.com Shop at 900+ stores on the web or add the new iGive App to donate up

to 26% of each purchase to Elysian.

- **Matching Gift Programs:** Some companies will double, or even triple, individual tax-deductible contributions made by their employees to non-profit organizations. Friends of Elysian Charter School is a 501/C non-profit association whose sole purpose is the support of the Elysian Charter School. All donations to the Friends are tax-deductible. Check with your company's human resources department to find out about your company's program. They can give you a form to fill out and send to the Friends with your contribution.

Thank you for your continued support year round.

April Calendar

Monday, April 16th

- Board of Trustess Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Monday, April 16 - Friday, April 20th

- Parent-Teacher conference week

Tuesday, April 17

- New Victory visit's Diane's 6th grade and the 7th grade for a pre-visit workshop on the play, *BOOK OF EVERYTHING*, which they will see this month.

Wednesday, April 18

- Half-day of school, 12:30 dismissal, for staff development (note: 2nd grade parents, please check with your teacher regarding dismissal details).

Thursday, April 19

- 8th grade "Improve a Life" Bakesale in the AM and PM, Rue Courtyard. Proceeds go to Fistula Foundation.
- New Victory visit's the 8th grade for a pre-visit workshop on the play, *BOOK OF EVERYTHING*, which they will see this month.

Friday, April 20

- 5th grade 50 States Celebration, Rue Gym, 9:00 - 10:00 AM
- Diane's 6th grade goes to New Victory Theater in New York to see *Book of Everything*
- Spirit Day - Wear your favorite Jersey - Bring in a dollar or a new or used soccer

ball.

Monday, April 23

- 7/8th grade ASK Test

Tuesday, April 24

- 7/8th grade ASK Test

Wednesday, April 25

- 7/8th grade ASK Test

Thursday, April 26

- 7/8th grade ASK Test

Friday, April 27

- 7th and 8th grades go to see *Book of Everything* at the New Victory theater in New York.

Monday, April 30 - Thursday, May 3

- 5/6th grade ASK test

301 Garden Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030
Harry Laub, Ph.D., Director | harry.laub@ecsnj.org | Phone:201.876.0102 | Fax:201.876.9576

This email was sent to [% member:email %]. To ensure that you continue receiving our emails, please add us to your address book or safe list.

[manage](#) your preferences | [opt out](#) using TrueRemove®.

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

