



WEEKLY BRIEF

Principal's Message

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Administrative Team

Joan M. Indart-Etienne
Principal

Kate Ames
Ronald Carter
Yelena Geller
Christina McLeod
Susan Salkin
Assistant Principals

District 79 Team

Glenda Esperance
Superintendent

Jerry Brito
Deputy Superintendent



THE TIME IS NOW

"Whatever you do, or
dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius and
power and magic in it."

W. H. MURRAY

The 7 Mindsets create a
common language for all
students, educators, staff,
and families.



Dear ReStart Academy Team,

Welcome to School Year 2026-2027 – proudly our 20th school year! I'm honored to work alongside you, our extraordinary team, to provide the best possible education for some of our city's most vulnerable students. The collage on the right, along with the attached graduation collage, captures highlights from last school year and reminds us of our most worthy goals.

It's hard to put into words what a milestone like this means, so I want to reflect on how far we've come. We started out primarily as a high school equivalency program, offering GED instruction to students in day and residential substance use treatment programs. That work, though smaller today, remains highly successful. We also began with just a few high school sites, offering mostly elective credits. Over the years, we added more required courses, and today our high school students stay on track – many even completing diploma requirements while enrolled at ReStart.

Our most significant shift came when we were asked to develop a middle school program for overage 8th graders. The population, curriculum, and site model were all new to us, but we pivoted to meet the need – and that program is now our largest and is very successful. Our newest innovation, School-Based Virtual Learning, lets students across all our academic tracks complete coursework virtually when they can't attend in person. None of this growth would have happened without a team willing to bring excellence, resilience, and creativity to the classroom every day.

This year, we're excited to welcome 8 new staff members eager to join our team and support our students. We're also looking forward to implementing Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), the reading intervention framework introduced last June. Our focus remains what has always driven our results: social-emotional wellness, targeted academic interventions, and strong college and career pathways for our students.

The Assistant Principals and I are committed to working alongside you this year through regular coaching and professional development centered on our program goals. Please make the most of these opportunities – investing in your growth is one of the clearest ways we invest in our students and in this milestone year.

Warmly,

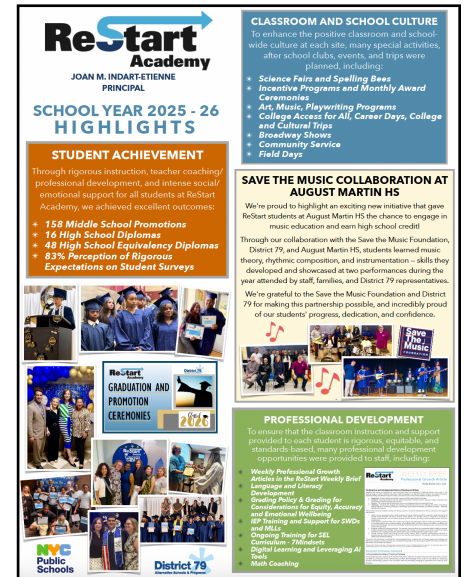
Announcements

1. ReStart Standard Operation Procedures Manual (SOPM)

The ReStart SOPM was created to facilitate efficiency and effectiveness at the ReStart sites and main office. As a ReStart staff member it is your obligation to become familiar with all procedures and protocols in the SOPM. The updated SOPM is posted on the Weekly Brief website. Staff are expected to submit the SOPM Receipt Form by September 11.

2. ReStart Intake Documents

All intake documents must be completed and sent to the main office immediately upon admission of a new student- see attached for a full checklist of requirements. In addition, be sure to provide the parent/guardian with a copy of the updated ReStart Student/Family Handbook (specific to academic track) along with a copy of the Planning Interview Packet.



Connection to Danielson Framework

2a Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

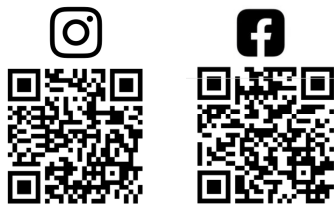
Caring interactions among teachers and students are the hallmark of component 2a.

2b Establishing a Culture for Learning

There are high expectations for all students; the classroom is a place where the teacher and students value learning and hard work. The classroom atmosphere may be vibrant, even joyful, but it is not frivolous.

SEPTEMBER 2026						
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27	28	29	30			
OCTOBER 2026						
				1	2	3
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
NOVEMBER 2026						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Access the full NYCDOE Calendar [here](#)



PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

How to Learn What Matters About Kids at the Start of the School Year

In this article in *The Real Classroom*, veteran middle-school teacher Jennifer Haber says that for years, she did standard first-day activities like icebreakers and going over the syllabus and the rules. Then it hit her: “I was using valuable class time on an activity that did very little to help me understand the students I was about to teach for an entire year.” Over time she developed an alternative that she recommends for grades 4-12. Here’s the outline (for more detail, click the link below):

- Haber reads aloud her own “Take care of me” list of classroom expectations, among them: bringing required materials, listening to her and each other, working hard, contributing, asking for help, being kind, watching out for classmates, and keeping the room clean.
- She then asks students to write 7-10 things “I need to do to take care of you as your teacher – what I need to do to be the best teacher I can be for you.” She gives them a template with more-detailed instructions, reassuring them that what they write is private.
- Before students start writing, Haber shares some sample items that students in previous years have written – for example, a student who doesn’t like writing and one who wants to be called on even if he doesn’t raise his hand.
- While students write, Haber circulates, clarifying the task and helping students who have difficulty getting started. She’s found that while a few students balk or treat the activity as a joke, most really engage and what they write is valuable to her.
- After class, Haber reads every word, takes note of trends across classes, responds in writing where appropriate, and keeps the lists in a secure place.

Haber has found that this activity “gives me more information about the student who wrote it, and together they tell me more about a class, than any diagnostic, survey, or beginning-of-year assessment I have ever given.” Here’s what it gives her:

- A sample of students’ writing “when they are writing to be heard rather than scored”;
- Practical guidance on teaching each student – in their own words;
- A heads-up on student quirks that might otherwise emerge in conflicts down the road.

The first week of school “decides more than we sometimes realize,” Haber concludes. “Students begin figuring out very quickly whether you see them as a roster or as people. This activity gives them a chance to tell you who they are before you have to guess.”

“*The First Week Activity That Shows You Who Your Students Really Are*” by Jennifer Haber in *The Real Classroom*, July 30, 2026, excerpt from Marshall Memo #1150.

IMPORTANT DATES

Staff Report for Chancellor’s Conference Day.....	September 8
Classroom/Site Setup	September 9
First Day of School for Students.....	September 10
MAP Growth Assessment Window.....	September 10- October 23
No School- Yom Kippur.....	September 21
TABE Administration Window.....	September 22- October 9
No School- Italian Heritage/Indigenous Peoples’ Day.....	October 12
TABE Turnaround Report Due.....	October 14
Last Day of T1/MP1.....	October 22
Report Cards Distributed to Students.....	October 29
Regents Practice Exam #1	November 2-6
Election Day- School in Session Remotely.....	November 3
No School- Veterans Day	November 11
Parent Conferences (Evening).....	November 19
Parent Conferences (Afternoon)	November 20