



SOURCES OF STRENGTH

Second Quarter Newsletter - January 2020

TIPS TO GET THROUGH REGENTS WEEK

Test anxiety is a very common occurrence in students, and for all the right reasons. However, overcoming test anxiety is all a mental game. As such, you should mentally prepare yourself for what you may encounter during the week, and also clear your head of any unnecessary stress. For one, test anxiety may be rooted from the fear of taking a test with an unfamiliar format, one in which countless hours of studying and review couldn't prepare you for. Thus, the best way of countering this could be to consult your teacher about the test format, and taking past years' Regents exams. Of course, the practice exams may not be wholly accurate to what you'll actually get on the day of the Regents, but you'll at least be more prepared, and less fearful of the test format that you would've been unfamiliar with.

OVERVIEW OF SOS

Sources of Strength is a group of peer leaders dedicated to spreading hope, help, and strength throughout the school and the community. The established group helps advocate and inspire others to raise their voice and do the same for others in need of help. The main aspects that Sources of Strength focuses on includes Mental Health, Family Support, Positive Friends, Mentors, Healthy Activities, Generosity, Spirituality, and Medical Access.

THINGS TO DO BEFORE A TEST

For some students, the Regents can be a series of difficult or stressful tests, due to the innate pressure of having to pass or get excellent grades riding on taking them. Before Regents Week, it would be best to take a few minutes out of each day to simply review your material, but only focus on what you're most unfamiliar with. There's no real point nor purpose to continuously reviewing material that you're already familiar with. If you really are baffled or need additional aid in going over or understanding a concept, try to make time to talk and get help from a teacher. You and your peers can only do so much, and getting help from your peers doesn't give you much room for independent thoughts.

TIPS TO GET THROUGH REGENTS WEEK (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

Teachers can help too, that's their job after all! Don't be afraid to ask questions about the Regents to your teachers, they could give you useful test-taking skills and ways of coping with stress from the tests. Now, on the day of the actual test, take a moment to simply relax and remind yourself of one thing: do the best that you can. You can only do as much as you can possibly do, by psyching yourself out, both positively or negatively, you'll only afflict yourself with more unnecessary stress. Do as much as you can do by putting in your 100% effort; not 90, or 10 percent, do everything in your best effort.

- Sage Armstrong

THINGS TO DO BEFORE A TEST (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

As said before, reviewing and practicing material in small ranges of time per day is extremely helpful. Our brains often forget something we learn if we aren't feeding it consistently. Rather than cramming to review multiple subjects, take 15-30 minutes a day to go over each subject. Taking practice exams, if available, are also very helpful, that way you're directly getting used to a similar format that you may encounter during the week. You can find practice exams at www.nysedregents.org. Additionally, make sure you're treating your body right, your brain may not fully be able to function without eating prior to the test, and not getting enough sleep. Take advantage of the week-long break, but also don't completely procrastinate on your time off, be sure to maintain your academic responsibilities as well.

- Sage Armstrong

PERSONAL STORY: The first experience I had with Sources of Strength was very different than what I had anticipated. I was afraid that I would not fit in as well as most of the other kids during our field trip to the training course. But once I got a feel for everyone and how it went, I realized that it was not as tough as it seemed. After that, I vowed to try and help Sources of Strength create a better school environment for everybody. Through our different campaigns in the past few months, we have been able to do just that. And now since then, we have been able to get our ideas out to the whole school! This year as my big goal, I hope to grow more socially and emotionally. That way it will be easier for me to help others who need it more than me.

- Anna Roberts



NEW YEAR'S GOALS

My New Year's resolution is to keep up in school and turn everything in on time. Also, a goal of mine is to ask for help when I need it the most. I am not going to lose confidence even when everything goes wrong. I am going to try to stick to a schedule after school so I get a good amount of sleep considering I don't go to bed until late. But for the most part, I'm going to keep my grades up and make sure I reach out for help when I need it. Instead of just sitting back and struggling with stress, I will instead ask for help.

- Dana Kozlowski

PERSONAL STORY

Sources of Strength has been a positive experience for me. Our meetings and campaigns allow me to connect with many different people and they have all influenced me with leadership skills. Each meeting inspires me to pay attention to myself and the people around me to find ways to help our school and our community. The positive environment teaches me how to be united with others, how to listen and be heard, and how to reach out to everyone. I am grateful to help improve our school and together it can be done!

- Naadjama Kpobi

PERSONAL STORIES

My experience as a Sources of Strength leader has been so rewarding and will forever be treasured and cherished. I feel so fortunate to continue my Sources of Strength journey this school year. During my first year in the group, I was uncertain of what awaited me, but I was willing to embrace new challenges with an open mind. I created strong bonds, made memories, and acquired new leadership and life skills. Sources of Strength has allowed me to disconnect from the stress of school and experience an unknown environment full of new opportunities. My goals for this year are to work on my self-discovery, help others, add to my personal growth, and adapt to change.

- Jeremy Dickinson

My first experience with Sources of Strength was different for me. At first, I only did it because Ms. LaLuna asked me to and I thought it would be an easy way out of school. When we went on our training field trip, we played icebreaker games, talked about what our Sources of Strength are and what Sources of Strength means to us. Also, I met 3 people who are the sweetest humans ever. I remember on the bus back to the school, I was like, "I have never in my life had a feeling like that." I feel everyone there understands me and has open arms to whatever I have to say and won't judge me for how I feel, like a lot of others might. It feels like a second family with a bunch of people who get what you go through with school, drama, family stuff, etc. So all in all, in my opinion, Sources of Strength is one of the best decisions I have ever made. I can't wait to see what is in store.

- Nevaeh Holland

REGENTS EXAM SCHEDULE:

Monday, 1/20 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No School)

Tuesday, 1/21 - English (8:00) and Living Environment (12:00)

Wednesday, 1/22 - U.S. History and Geometry (8:00)

Algebra I and Physics (12:00)

Thursday, 1/23 - Transition Global Exam (8:00)

Global History & Geography II Framework (8:00)

Algebra II (12:00)

Friday, 1/24 - Earth Science and Chemistry (8:00)

RECAP OF GRATITUDE CAMPAIGNS

We had a great turn out at our Gratefulness Gathering in December! There were a large number of students that participated in our Gratefulness Chain. The purpose of the chain was to write something you are grateful for on a strip of paper and attach it to a long chain of loops. The chain is currently being displayed on the bulletin boards outside of the FDR Cafeterias. Everyone enjoyed the hot cocoa bar, the photo booth, hanging out with friends, and reflecting on the things they are grateful for.

Another project we worked on, facilitated by our school psychologists, was our annual "Thankfulness Tree." Students were asked to anonymously write something that they are thankful for on a leaf. The leaves were collected and are displayed on our Thankfulness Tree in the Main Lobby.

Lastly, our team collected photos from FDR students and staff. These photos represented something they are grateful for. Senior Sandra Ksar and Sophomore Sarah MacEntee then spent time working together after school to create a display that not only displayed gratitude, but also focused on the foundations of the Sources of Strength program: Family Support, Positive Friends, Mentors, Healthy Activities, Generosity, Spirituality, Medical Access, and Mental Health.



OUR NEXT CAMPAIGN

Our next campaign is focused around setting goals to better ourselves in 2020. As Regents exams and graduation are right around the corner, we encourage all students to take some time to reflect on what they hope to achieve in the new year. Stay tuned for more details!

Thank you to the following students for creating this newsletter!
Jeremy Dickinson, Dana Kozlowski, Anna Roberts, Sage Armstrong,
Nevaeh Holland, and Naadjama Kpobi

GRATEFULNESS GATHERING PHOTOS

