

Dear John F. Kennedy Community,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 School year. My name is Dr. Ronaldo Fisher, and I am the new principal of John F. Kennedy.

I am excited to entering my first year as the principal of John F. Kennedy High School. As this year begins, we continue to hope that students and staff will be able to re-engage with school and social circles with the help of the supports and systems we put into place over the last two years after returning from online learning. Our teachers use the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model to meet as collaborative teams and plan for the best possible scenarios for our students. We have considered the possibilities of learning gaps and a focus on building community while still ensuring that all students have access and exposure to grade level content.

This year, we are entering our tenth year as a Title I school. As part of this process, **every family** is required to click on this link [JFKHS Titan Compact](#) in order to complete and digitally confirm agreement with the Titan Compact as part of the electronic Maze Day procedure. The *Titan Compact is a 3 – Way – Pledge* between parents, students, and staff which clarifies the roles and commitments we are willing to make in order to ensure that our students succeed.

The *Titan Compact* is based on our recently adopted Essential Behaviors, (P.R.I.D.E)

- Prepared for Learning:** All Titans (students and staff) are prepared for learning to take place. This means that we arrive on time and are free from distractions that impede our ability to learn.
- Respect for All:** All Titans (students and staff) respect each other and themselves. This will be accomplished through self-regulation (language) and development of empathy and community building.
- Impact** “What kind of *impact* will I have on the school? On others? On my own success? On my future? We will be developing “I Statements” which help us all to reflect and create positive impacts on each other.
- Discipline:** Discipline (in the positive sense) is applying *grit* to overcome distractions and obstacles in order to stay on course. We will succeed through setting goals and holding ourselves accountable to those goals.
- Explore:** All Titans can go beyond what they know (comfort) and will develop a growth mindset to explore new opportunities for success / problem solving. This will be summarized by the question, “What is my plus?”

Kennedy High School has been named a National Model PLC (Professional Learning Community) School due to our efforts to use data and informed practices to better serve our students. We will continue our process of building Professional Learning Communities for the purpose of school-wide Response to Intervention (RTI) initiatives, or known at Kennedy as ‘Titan Up’.

At the core of this philosophy are the Four Essential Questions that drive our work here at JFK:

- 1. What do we expect students to learn?** The teachers are establishing 7-10 essential standards for each course which identify what students *need to know* in order to be successful at the next level. This has been done through many hours of discussion and debate by each department.
- 2. How do we know when each student has learned it?** The staff is in the process of creating common assessments (tests) and ways to truly check for understanding during units in order to ensure our students are learning, and more importantly, how to identify students who need

intervention and follow up on material and concepts *before* they fail. Our staff has set the goal of getting through these first two steps this year with the support of ongoing professional development.

- 3. How will we respond when some students do not learn it?** The intervention piece is an integral part of the PLC process. The Titan staff has agreed that the best approach to intervention is immediate support and intervention during the school day. This is a monumental task that our staff is working towards developing toward the end of this school year and throughout next school year. In short, our staff is committed to serving our students in a way that helps them to succeed with immediate and very calculated support, without students having to come before and after school.
- 4. How will we respond when some already know it?** It is just as important for our staff to develop *enrichment* opportunities that further challenge our students when they understand concepts. Every lesson and activity will have components attached which will increase levels of depth and rigor as students begin to master concepts.

The staff has continued to incorporate Claims Evidence Reasoning (CER) and three common strategies into lessons which have proven to help our students access higher level thinking skills. These strategies are referred to as "The Big Three". When applied in the classroom and at home, these strategies help students better analyze and process what they are learning. They are (1) Annotation, (2) Cornell Notes, and (3) Compare and Contrast.

This past year our campus embarked on a modernization project that will last until the 2025-2026 school year. As our site is undergoing construction, there will be disruptions on different areas of our campus, but rest assured that safety of our students, teachers and community are the first priority. We are doing our best to ensure that no instruction is disrupted, but please be aware that all of our classes and rooms will be going through modernization during the next few years.

Over the past seventeen years, I have had the pleasure to meet with many parents and students who are proud to be Titans. As a science teacher, then Assistant Principal and now the Principal of JFK, I have always been encouraged and excited about the display of grit from our students and community through the rough times. I look forward to a continuation of our community's support and overall engagement with helping our students to build on their confidence, in order to accomplish their life aspirations and desired legacy. As always, I continue to encourage all members of this community to get involved and be as active as possible. Make an effort to attend parent conferences, Title I Parent Night, college nights, student extracurricular performances and athletic events to help support their legacy growth. Take every opportunity to join us and become a member of this Titan family.

## Go Titans!

Dr. Ronaldo Fisher  
Principal, John F. Kennedy High School.



*Inspire **Competence** for all students to build **Confidence** to **Accomplish** their desired **Legacy***