



Quarter 1 2025-2026 Newsletter

1416 Maine St • Quincy IL 62301 • ph: 217/228-7175 • fax: 217/222-2794
www.qps.org/academy

A message from Ms. Wells, Director:

Dear Families,

The Academy family has grown this year to include ten new students during the first quarter. We will be welcoming four additional new families to our school on October 20th, to begin quarter 2. As we continue to expand our student population, we are reminded how important it is to provide consistency for our students and staff. We appreciate everyone's early attention to attending our AEP meetings, Curriculum Night, IEP meetings, and future Parent-Teacher Conferences. We can only succeed by continuing to work together.

We have spent much time assisting students in proper regulation when entering the school property, building, and classrooms. Each of us has our own set of experiences that bring us to The Academy, so it is very important to understand that without continued focus on self-regulation we cannot help individuals reach his or her ultimate goals for school success. Please contact your child's Student Champion Team (SCT) teacher, SSFL, Dean, or Administrator for more specific information regarding what your child has learned about self-regulation this quarter.

This visual illustrates a highly emotional example of dysregulation, however, we continue to see more and more students with low regulation due to poor sleeping habits, overuse of screen time, and use of illegal substances before entering school. Unfortunately, dysregulation makes it very difficult to gain classroom instruction, maintain positive peer relationships, or successfully complete school requirements. If you notice your child needs assistance outside of school for any of these mentioned barriers, please never hesitate to contact me or someone else on your child's SCT.

Understanding dysregulation: How to Support a Highly Emotional Child

Dysregulation occurs when the brain responds to sensory input in a manner that triggers the alarm state.

When a child is dysregulated, it is harder to listen, comprehend, and cope.

Remember the Three "R"s

Regulate
focus on soothing your child. Make them feel calm, safe, and loved.

Relate
Validate their feelings with your words and tone of voice. "I know you're upset right now." "This is very hard". Focus on connecting with your child.

Reason
Once your child is calm, now it is time to talk about alternatives to behaviors while reinforcing limits you set before. You can reassure them you love them but that the behavior they're exhibiting is not ok.

Until a child is regulated, they are unlikely to be related to you (feel connected & comfortable). And until a child is related, they are unlikely to have the mental capacity to reason with you.

<http://www.thinkkids.org/regulate-relate-reason/> <https://jessicalangtherapy.com/blog/regulate-relate-reason-brain-state/>

We graduated our first student for the school year on October 1st. We believe every child has the ability to earn a high school diploma. We are very proud to serve your child and all our Academy families. Thank you for this honor.



One of our greatest joys is when previous graduates come back to visit us to share their current milestones. Below we have a young man who is currently serving our country in the United States Army and a young man who is attending school in Wyoming to become a certified diesel mechanic. Both gentlemen had the opportunity to thank former staff while sharing some of their past obstacles on the way to success with our current student body.



Never Quit!

A message from Ms. Leebold, Assistant Director:

7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th graders completed the Fall session of MAP testing in August. Areas tested were Reading, Math and Language Arts. In January they will take the Winter session. After this session of testing, we can see student growth and areas of need. This test is a measure of their individual growth. They will complete the Spring session in May. You will receive your Student's Progress Report at Parent/Teacher Conference along with a Parent Guide to Understanding Scores. If you have any questions regarding your students report you can contact Ms. Leebold at 228-7175 ext. 2307.

Students and teachers have had multiple opportunities to practice safety drills. At The Academy, above all else, is the safety of your child. We follow the Standard Response Protocol for all drills as established by The "I Love You Guys" Foundation. Below is a summary of these procedures for your reference. If you would like more details you can visit their website at www.iloveyouguys.org.

IN AN EMERGENCY TAKE ACTION



HOLD! In your room or area. Clear the halls.

STUDENTS

Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Close and lock the door
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors.

STUDENTS

Return to inside of building
Do business as usual

TEACHERS

Bring everyone indoors
Lock outside doors
Increase situational awareness
Do business as usual
Take attendance



LOCKDOWN! Locks, lights, out of sight.

STUDENTS

Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door

ADULTS

Recover students from hallway if possible
Lock the classroom door
Turn out the lights
Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door
Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE! (A location may be specified)

STUDENTS

Leave stuff behind if required to
If possible, bring your phone
Follow instructions

ADULTS

Lead students to Evacuation location
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults



SHELTER! Hazard and safety strategy.

STUDENTS

Use appropriate safety strategy for the hazard

Hazard

Tornado
Hazmat
Earthquake
Tsunami

Safety Strategy

Evacuate to shelter area
Seal the room
Drop, cover and hold
Get to high ground

ADULTS

Lead safety strategy
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults

A message from Mr. Lewton, Dean of Students:

As we wrap up Quarter 1, I want to thank all of our students and families for their continued effort and support. It's been a great start to the year, and I'm proud of the hard work our students have shown in and out of the classroom.

Please remember that all students need to arrive at The Academy by 7:50 a.m. so they have enough time to eat breakfast and get to class prepared for the day. No late arrivals will be allowed to enter the school without a parent present. If your student will be absent, please make sure to call the school by 8:00 a.m. to report the absence.

As we move into the next quarter, let's keep working hard, staying focused, and following expectations every day. Together, we can make sure all students continue to grow and succeed at The Academy.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and commitment.

A message from Mr. John and Mr. Magallon, Student Support/Family Liaison:

If the student brings a refillable bottle, make sure that it is empty upon arrival. We also can sell students bottles of water for \$0.25 at the front office. The student just needs to see Mrs. Ayo and she will give you a water bottle voucher. They are able to redeem them in the morning or at lunch by asking an SSFL or administrator.

Reminder: With the weather changing, winter coats will be hung up in the vestibule area when arriving at school. Coats and bookbags will continue to be searched by staff. No coats or blankets will be allowed through our security check point.

Upcoming Quarter 2 Key Dates:

October 30 - Half day School-Parent/Teacher Conference

October 31—No School—Parent/Teacher Conference

November 26-28—No School—Thanksgiving Break

December 22—January 2—No School—Winter Break

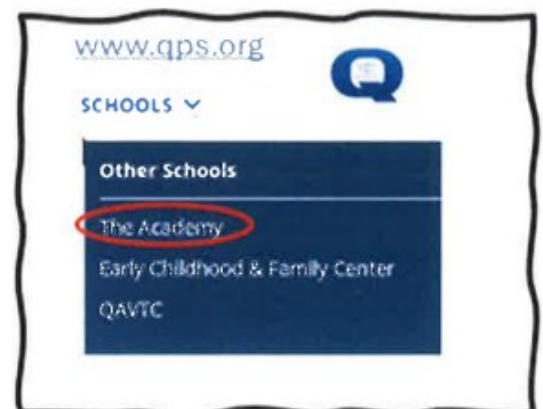
January 6—School Resumes for Students



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

Join The Academy Group

1. From your feed click **Groups** in the left menu.
2. In the search bar at the top, enter the name of the group you're searching.
3. Select the group and then click **+ Join Group** below the cover photo.



A message from Mrs. Brigman, Social Worker:

5th Hour Advisory Update – School Social Worker Mrs. Brigman

The Academy Junior High Students have been hard at work learning how to apply new social emotional skills during social emotional lessons taught during 5th Hour Advisory three days a week. School Social Worker Sarah Brigman and Classroom Teacher Eryn Armbruster have been Coteaching Students mini lessons on Regulation Skills and Teaching about the Zones of Regulation. Students have learned that Zones provide a way of communicating their emotions and behavior. Lessons have included learning about Self-Awareness and recognition of the signs and triggers of their own emotions and energy levels. Students have been building their own personalized “toolbox” of strategies for managing difficult feelings that will assist them in returning to a calm and regulated state. The Zones of Regulation framework encourages reflection and problem-solving during calm moments to address triggers and improve future responses. Students have been able to expand their ability to identify and label emotions in themselves and others.

The Zones of Regulation framework uses four colors to help middle schoolers identify and manage their feelings and energy levels, with the Green Zone representing a calm, focused state optimal for learning. Strategies for each zone include Blue Zone strategies like rest and water for low-energy feelings such as sadness or tiredness, and Yellow Zone strategies like breaks and deep breathing for feelings like frustration or excitement. The Red Zone involves intense emotions like anger, requiring grounding techniques, communication with a safe adult, and problem-solving once calm

ZONES OF REGULATION



-PARENTS-

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD'S USE OF THE ZONES OF REGULATION?

- Model and identify your own feelings using Zones Language in front of your child.
- Observe your child's behavior and identify when they are showing signs of being in the Yellow Zone and try to catch it before they move to the Red Zone.
- Practice calming strategies when your child is in the Green Zone.
- Talk about the tools you will use, in particular Zones.
- Utilize books and films to discuss which Zone characters might be in.
- Share how their behavior affects your Zone.
- Put up and reference the Zones visuals in your home and check in with this.
- Praise and encourage your child when they are in their Zone.
- Monitor your language (less is best)

TIPS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD TO REGULATE

- Know yourself and how you react in difficult situations before dealing with your child's behavior.
- Know your child's triggers.
- Be consistent in managing your child's behavior
- Empathize with your child and validate what they are feeling.
- Have clear boundaries/ routines and always follow through.
- Do not deal with an angry, upset child when you are not yet calm yourself.
- Discuss strategies for the next time when you are in a similar situation.
- Remember to ask your child how their choices made you feel (empathy).
- Praise your child for using strategies.
- Create a regulation area at home your child can access when needing a break

Teen Mental Health | from Teens Themselves



A recent survey by NAMI asked teens age 12-17 about their own mental health

Teens are facing mental health struggles

64% feel the world is more stressful now than when parents were their age

64%

About 1 in 6 report experiencing specific negative emotions all the time or often

1 in 6

1 in 4 have been diagnosed with a mental health condition

1 in 4

Teens are comfortable talking about mental health, but often don't start the conversation

Two-thirds say they're open to talking, but only 48% talk with parents about their mental health and only 22% talk with friends

48%

34% seek mental health information from parents, 18% from friends, 7% from teachers or trusted adults outside their family, and 6% from social media

34%

Among those who have sought information about mental health, 95% trust their parents often, 80% trust their teachers and other adults at their school and 78% trust their friends

95%

Teens want schools to play a big role in their mental health, and they trust the information they get there, and are open to receiving information at school

More than 2 in 3 agree schools should teach about what mental health is, including where and how to seek treatment

2 in 3

56% say their school thinks that mental health matters

56%

67% think schools should offer days off for mental health

67%

Parents can help their teens by starting the conversation about mental health, checking-in regularly and taking the NAMI Basics course to gain a better understanding of mental health conditions. Schools can help teens by providing mental health education, such as by offering the NAMI Ending the Silence presentation and allowing mental health days when teens are struggling.

Check out our wealth of resources for kids, teens and young adults at nami.org/youth

nami.org/poll-of-teens-mh