

Queens Charter School Celebrates International Pi Day

Students compete in Pi Day contest and Demonstrate their Memorization Skills

Astoria, Queens- An ambitious group of Elementary School students at Our World Neighborhood Charter School (OWNCS) participated in the school's 3rd Annual Pi Day competition on Monday, March 14th, which is celebrated as International Pi Day (3/14). Participants of the competition recited digits of Pi in an exhibition of memory and learning strategy.



The school's Curriculum

Developer, Dorothy Bukantz, and the Elementary School Assistant Principal, Dr. Richard Welles, started the competition after they noticed increasing student fascination with Ms. Bukantz's Pi digit T-shirt. The competition evolved into a week-long series with March 14th as the culminating event. This year, students from grades 2 through 5 signed up for the contest the first week of March. Teachers integrated facts and activities about Pi and circles into their lessons the week leading up to March 14th. On Pi Day, students recited their memorized Pi digits before a panel of student judges led by Ms. Bukantz. Ms. Bukantz states, "The first Pi Day celebration was held at the San Francisco Exploratorium in 1998. Today Pi Day is celebrated in educational institutions around the world."

Last school year, a fifth grader named Anna memorized 228 digits of Pi correctly. This year, Henry, a fifth grader in Mr. Leahy's class, recited 275 digits accurately, the most digits recited in the school's Pi Day competition history. Henry had taken second place to Anna last year, reciting 213 digits and was determined to take first place this year. He confidently recited the 275 digits in 2 minutes and 15 seconds. The second place winner, Alvi, recited 216 digits, third place winner, Victoria, 186 digits, and 10 other students recited at least 100 digits. 91 students in total participated in the Pi Day contest this year.

The Pi Day competition has prompted students from all learning levels and competencies to dedicate time and effort to developing memorization strategies. The winning students have even built up positive reputations based on their extraordinary memorization skills. The winners' skills inspire students in younger grades to sign up for the competition. The Pi Day competition is just one example of the school's educational ideology of student-centered learning, bringing the school's vision to life.



Our World Neighborhood Charter School was founded in 2002 and is located in Astoria, Queens. It is the mission of Our World Neighborhood Charter School to educate its students to become independent thinkers and lifelong learners. The school is committed to an educational philosophy based on inquiry, active and experiential learning, and social justice.