

# Central Queens Academy Elementary School



At CQA Elementary School, scholars learn to read. Then, read to learn. Then, love to learn.

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## Welcome!

Since opening our doors in 2012, Central Queens Academy Charter School has become the highest performing independent middle school in all of Queens. Our commitment to meet each scholar's needs and closely partnering with our families has paid off. This August, we will open the doors of Central Queens Elementary School.

We are delighted to share our first issue of the Central Queens Academy Elementary School Newsletter (CQA ES) with you. Enjoy!



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# With Ms. Feirman

BY MICHELLE FEIRMAN

Hi! I am Michelle Feirman, the principal of Central Queens Academy Elementary School, opening in August 2021. It is my pleasure to welcome you into our community. I am so excited to be building this school in Queens with each of you.

My journey as an educator began in East Harlem twelve years ago. I taught first grade and I worked with an amazing teacher, Ms. Li. I loved getting to know each and every one of my students. We had one student who was struggling. A lot. She was not excited about school and was already repeating a grade. We tried many things to engage Armani in her school work and build her confidence. Nothing seemed to work. After school one day, Ms. Li and I decided to talk to Armani's previous teacher to ask her for some tips to help Armani. The teacher looked us squarely in the eyes and said, "I don't know why you are trying so hard. Armani will never be able to do it."

My heart broke in that instant. How could an adult give up on a child so easily? How can a teacher decide that this girl, at the age of six, was incapable?

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Ms. Feirman with her first students. To the far right, is her former student Armani.

I decided right then and there to dedicate my teaching career to working in and creating schools where no adult would ever say or think that about a child - a school where everyone believes that all students can and *will* be successful.

At CQA Elementary School, our students will fall in love with learning. They will feel empowered to make their voices heard. Each child will receive the support that she/he/they needs. They will know their potential and work hard to reach it. Every teacher will look at every student and think, "Wow! I cannot wait to see what they can do." Our scholars will grow up to be the next generation of leaders in our community. We cannot wait to get started!



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# Fostering a Love of Reading: Tips from a Teacher-Parent

BY JESSICA MAGNUSSON

As a teacher, it has sometimes been difficult to motivate my students to read over the years.

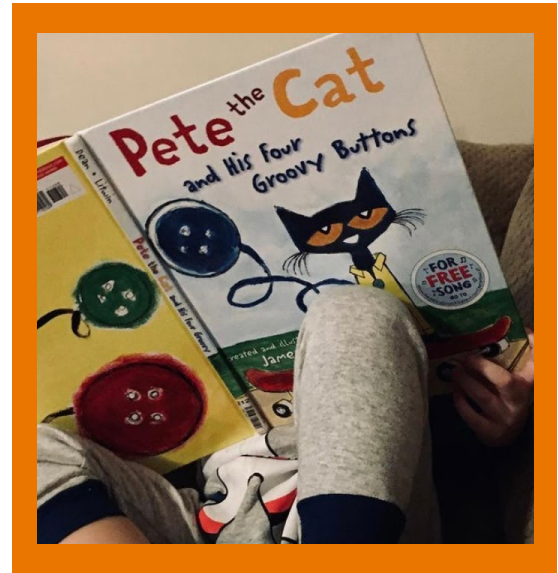
As a first-time mom, it has felt downright overwhelming to convince my son to sit down to read - *let alone* love it. Here are three tips I have used to build my son's interest in reading.

## Make it About Time with You

Perhaps the most important piece of advice is to make it about time with you! Set aside twenty minutes per day to read together! Just having the routine and that one-to-one time to look forward to with you, your little one will be excited! Whatever time is convenient for you will make a huge difference if you can do it consistently every day. With my schedule, I like to make it part of the bedtime routine. Every night we put on our pajamas and go to the “book club” (any designated reading spot) to read together before bed. This will make your child look forward to reading.

## Engage with the Pictures

Even if your little one isn't ready to start reading on their own, they can still interact with the book to get engaged. Narrate and ask questions about what is happening in the pictures. I like to look at the pictures and share the things I notice on the page and ask questions. For example, "hey I see a baby polar bear! Can you point to the baby polar bear?" Or you can point to and label the pictures to build their knowledge.



Ms. Magnusson's son reading his favorite book.

Circle back to the same book again and see what they remember. This will build your little one's confidence around reading.

## Have Fun!

Your little one will mirror your enthusiasm if you show them you are enjoying reading together. Be silly! Make funny voices for the characters. You can even sit down and start reading aloud from your child's book...they will likely drop what they are doing and run over to see what you are reading. If they seem bored by the words in the story, change the story to make it more interesting to them based on what you know will make them smile. Most importantly, this can make reading something your child enjoys.

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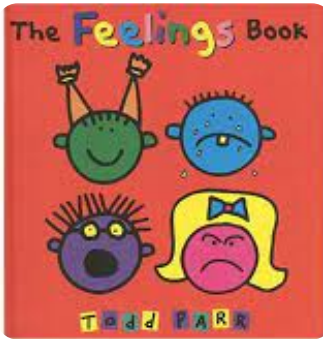


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# Reader's Spotlight



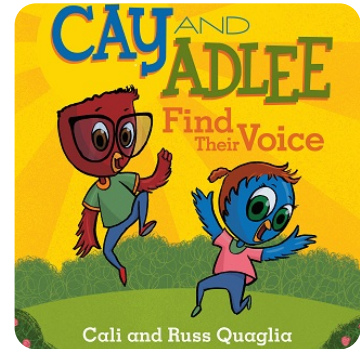
Not sure what to read next? Take a look at these picks. All of these books are available at your local library.



***The Feelings Book*** by  
Todd Parr



***Many Shapes of Clay:  
A Story of Healing*** by  
Kenesha Snead



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## Why I Choose CQA Elementary School



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**"As a parent and part of the CQA community, I can testify to the level of quality of the education that the scholars receive. For that same reason, more than anything, I want my son to be part of this community"**

- Ms. Arias is the Bilingual School Counselor for Grade 5 & 6

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