



Inaija Butler delicately nibbles on a chicken tender at the Girls with Pearls Tea on Sunday at the Blu 47 restaurant in Bronzeville. | SCOTT STEWART-SUN-TIMES

'Bringing the Gold Coast to the brown coast'

Girls learn to be young ladies at Sunday tea in Bronzeville

BY CHERYL V. JACKSON
Staff Reporter

There was so much more on the menu than tea at the Girls with Pearls Tea Sunday at Blu 47 in Bronzeville.

About 30 little misses, decked out in hats, ribbons and party dresses, learned about etiquette, networking and leadership at the back-to-school event at Blu 47, 4655 S. King Drive

It is the first in a series of The Invitation Lounge youth-focused events — including a Halloween party and Santa breakfast — by A'Vents by August.

"I live in Bronzeville and we don't have a lot of different signature events for young ladies," said Alicia August-Wright, founder of A'Vents by August (*AventsByAugust.com*). "It's kind of bringing the Gold Coast to the brown coast."

Offered for consumption: chicken lady fingers, pasta salad, fruit, cupcakes, punch and, of course, tea, along with presentations from those in fields of education, medicine, law and culinary arts.

Among tips: making eye contact and greeting with a firm handshake are dos; talk-

ing with your mouth full and chewing gum at meal time are don'ts.

"It was my first tea party and I learned how to be more ladylike and how to make introductions to friends," said Imani Walker, 10, wearing a fuchsia Chinese pantsuit. "Mostly people just stick with people they know. But you should open up to meet new people."

Parents looked on, had lunch and picked up a tip or two, as well.

MORE ONLINE

Photo gallery of tea time at: suntimes.com/lifestyles

Juan Gonzalez watched his daughter, Kamille, 5, take in the lessons and goodies.

"I'm a curious person," he said, "so I wanted to see what a tea party was like — other than the ones we have at home."

Comment at suntimes.com.

INSTANT MESSAGES

Readers responded to Rosalind Rossi and Art Golab's Watchdog Report that 1 in 5 Chicago Public high school teachers say they felt pressure to change grades last school year:

I have been teaching for 24 years and in the past 3 years I have been pressured to change students grades and because I have failed many of them I have not been looked at very positively by the administration. In the past 3 years I have been moved from the 8th grade to the 5th grade because I gave too many failing grades. Many of the students do not want to do high quality work and expect to get

high grades. . . . What I have found out is that many of the teachers in the west-side schools do not have high expectations for the students, therefore it has been a common practice to give pleasing grades and not achieving grades and this can explain why so many children are not prepared for the real world.

This happens at practically every cps school/h.s. and elementary. Unfortunately, the board pressures principals and principals pressure teachers to pass kids on to the next grade. It's all about raising scores/funding/etc., resulting in kids who graduate h.s. who can only function on 6th grade level. And the amazing and most sad part of it all is how do you attract would be great teachers to a system such as this? who would ever want to be a cps teacher, especially if they knew the real truth about teaching these days? . . . from september thru march

it is all about practicing for the ISAT. kids are learning how to pass tests . . . they are not being educated.

This is nothing new if you work for CPS. Teachers in CPS can not give F's. It is plain and simple. Gone are the days of failing students because they have more than 18 absences or because they do not do a darn thing in the classroom. Teachers get pressured in passing the students. You are damned if you do and damned if you don't. Remember that CPS is not run by educators. They feel that education is a business and are only worried about data. Someday they will look at the transcripts of students and see how some have over 40 absences in a semester and are passing their classes with A's and B's (and we are not talking about students with a legitimate . . . absences because of a medical condition).

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