

The Lotus Lowdown
September 23, 2022
Maria Francisco, Principal



Renaissance @ Rand Middle School

School Spirit-Week of Respect

- October 3-October 7 (See flyer below for activities)
 - ■ Copy of Spirit Week - Made with PosterMyWall.jpg
 - We will culminate the end of Week of Respect on Friday, 10/7, by participating in a school wide advisory project and a fun lunch with music by DJ Colon! During Friday advisory, students will write one respectful/motivational/encouraging affirmation on a sticky note. Students will then share their affirmations with their school and their community by writing them outside with sidewalk chalk. Grade levels will be dismissed to different areas of the school grounds: (8th grade- Front sidewalk, 7th grade- Blacktop, 6th grade- driveway).
 - **We are in need of Chalk donations so if our families have some lying around and want to share them with Ren's students, we will gladly take them.**

Bake Sale:

- Thank you to our wonderful staff, parents and students who donated to our bake sale. We raised about \$200 to help our Robotics team obtain what they will need in time for the competition in January.

Car Wash:

- Please be sure to purchase a ticket to the car wash that will take place on October 15, 2022. Proceeds from the car wash will go directly to our Robotics Club as well. You may send in \$7 with your child in advance. We will also sell tickets to the car wash at our BTSN, scheduled for September 29, 2022 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Tickets will be \$10 at the car wash on October 15, 2022. Get yours now!!

Back to School Night: September 29, 2022 6:00pm-8:00pm

- Back-to-school night is an important ritual marking the beginning of the new school year. Please note that your child's teachers will explain their goals for the class. They will also share information about their teaching style and methodology, how they grade and general requirements for the class. You'll find out what supplies (if any) your child will need for the year and/or what projects are coming up, along with other important information. Parents are encouraged to ask questions pertaining to

the curriculum, field trips, and grades, but refrain from asking questions specific to a child that won't be useful to other parents. We welcome parents to request an appointment for a conference to discuss child specific concerns one-on-one or with the grade level teams.

PTA News

Click on the link below for information about PTA meetings, activities, and volunteer opportunities. Email Gretchen Devinsky at ptapres@renaissancepta.org with any questions.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/15tKHyeB9OB0fr9Yw42mfZSIscqNL_idfv7y3t6NB6J8/edit?usp=sharing

Yankee Game:

Take (someone) out to the ball game and support Renaissance PTA at the same time!

NY Yankees vs Baltimore Orioles

Saturday, Oct. 1:05PM

\$65 per ticket - includes hot dog, drink, and Yankees backpack

Tickets are in Sec. 414

Please email ptapres@renaissancepta.org by **MONDAY 9/26** to reserve a ticket

Kiwanis Club of Montclair:

- The Kiwanis Club of Montclair is hosting a **"Sneakers for Scholarships Drive"**. Please donate your gently used sneakers/athletic shoes. A donation bin is available in the 1st floor Main hallway.

Nurse's Notes

All 6th graders need Tdap and Menactra vaccines. If you haven't done so, please forward me your child's updated vaccination record. In the very near future, a date will be established, that any child without the above vaccines will be excluded from school.

All students with Asthma or a Life Threatening Allergy, must have Action Plans signed by the doctor and submitted to me with the appropriate medication. The forms can be located on the MPS website:

PARENTS>FORMS>ACTION PLAN.

Please note that if your child suffers an injury and needs an orthopedic appliance (cast, boot, crutches), an Orthopedic Clearance Form, signed by the doctor, must be submitted to the Health Office, prior to your child returning to school. The form can be found on the MPSD website:

Emergency Drill:

- On Wednesday, September 21, 2021-students successfully participated in our first Lock down drill of the year. Teachers have reviewed lock down drill protocols and procedures with students. Students and staff locked down quickly and safely without issue and resumed their schedules soon thereafter.

Renaissance Middle School moves to acknowledge we occupy Lenape Land by conducting a Land Acknowledgement Ceremony on October 7, 2022.

- Renaissance Middle School will have a Land Acknowledgement Ceremony on October 7, 2022 to formally recognize our school sits on the traditional territory of the Lenape people. Our plan is to have a plaque hung in our entrance acknowledging whose land our school is built on. We will also hang a flag (created by students in Mr. Woodward's art class) to honor the Lenni Lenape nation. Both the plaque and flag will permanently hang in the entranceway of Renaissance Middle School. Leading up to the event, students and teachers will engage in lessons on the different Native American Nations that called New Jersey their home.

Picture Day:

- **SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 26, 2022-PICTURE DAY:** More information will be provided as the date approaches.

Community Service:

- Community Service will resume sending some of our students to assist at Toni's Kitchen next Friday. Toni's Kitchen is one of Montclair's great institutions and does so much for the hungry. During this year's Montclair Jazz Festival, Toni's food truck was serving free food while asking only that people consider making a donation, but it was in no way mandatory. We are proud to be working with them!

Art: (Mr. Woodward)

Cave Art at Renaissance!

Sixth grade drawing students try their hand at cave drawing to explore the origins of art and the reasons people create art. The students were given primitive drawing tools and a wall to draw on and here are the results.



So why did early humans draw animals on cave walls? If you ask my 6th grade drawing students they will tell you that no one knows, but maybe they just did it because it is fun.

On a related matter I am planning to teach photomontage to my 6th grade media class, but I will need magazine pictures for that. If you have any old magazines you were getting rid of that are school appropriate, please send them in with your students. Thank you. (Mr. Woodward)

Technology: (Mr. Prasarn) Donations Needed!

The Renaissance Technology Department was thrilled to kick off our new 8th grade elective Computer Hardware Class. The goal is to make technology fluency accessible, and reduce technology intimidation by letting kids get hands on with computer building. We have had a great start, but we can use the help of our community.

YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP!

If you have old, broken, or outdated pc desktops that you would like to donate, we would be so grateful. The more computers we can get, the better the experience will be for the kids. Thanks so much!

Spanish: (Mr. Anagnostis)

Over the next few weeks, students in Spanish will be preparing for the annual Spelling Bee. The contest will first take place in individual classes and then we will have a school wide Bee after our Thanksgiving break. This year, our students will also take part in an International Spelling Bee. The top winners from Renaissance will challenge students in Sevilla, Spain. Stay tuned for updates!

6th Grade:

Students should bring their own water bottles and headphones to school regularly.

Students should also charge their Chromebooks every night.

When completing assignments on Google Classroom, please remember to hit "Submit" or "Turn In".

Science/Sandy Hook Recap:

This past Friday, the Sixth Grade enjoyed some beach time down at Sandy Hook while doing their science field research. Students spent half of their time on the ocean side of Sandy Hook and half of their time on the bay side. While on each side, students collected many different specimens that showed evidence of life and then,

using our newly acquired scientific method skills, compared how they were different and/or the same from each side of the Hook. We found shells from several different crab species, clam species, slipper shells, scallop shells, mussels, drill snails, jingles, water chestnut seed pods, skeletal remains and feathers from waterfowl, several species of seaweed, dune grass, pear cactus, sand fleas (crabs), jellyfish, coquinas, pieces of nacre, horseshoe crabs, and LOTS of living and dead spotted lantern flies! We also found a praying mantis living inside of a vending machine! For students (or adults) who want to learn more about various shell species and the habits of beach critters, I strongly recommend following the YouTube channel called SWF Beach Life. The woman who created the channel lives in Sanibel Island Florida (one of the best shelling spots in the world!), but also spent time living in Northern NJ. Surprisingly, the two states have a lot of similar sea critters, so there is lots to learn that would apply to NJ shore life. It was a gorgeous day for the beach and a GREAT time was had by all!

[Sandy Hook Pictures](#)

7th Grade:

Back to School Night ~ We hope to see you, if possible, at Back to School Night. We have lots to tell you about how well your students have adjusted to being 7th graders and what is in store for the coming year.

Genesis ~ graded assignments are being posted. The interim period for Marking Period 1 is mid-October.

Agendas ~ The school has given your students agendas to use for keeping track of assignments. If your student prefers, they can use an online resource or a notebook to keep a running list of assignments. In school, we have been encouraging those who want to use an online resource to use Google Keep, which is available in their Google library of apps (available through the Google Cube). Students can use 1 running list or break it down by class. They can also color code their assignment by class. They can also create a table in Google Docs. The most important item to note is the **due date** of items.

For **Social Studies**, every week a running list of all graded assignments is posted for each marking period. It is called **Marking Period 1 Check Off Sheet**.

Field Research: Field Research trips will begin in late October. A packet will be given to students with permission slips for the entire first semester. The packet will not be sent out until all trips are approved at the October 17 Board of Ed meeting.

Social Studies: Textbooks went home with your students this week. They should remain at home all year. Students will only use it for occasional homework. This week, we investigated how historians use source documents, vs. textbooks to do research and practiced analyzing a source document in class. In Friday class, we are

discussing Hispanic Heritage topics. Please check Genesis to see if your student has all of their graded assignments turned in.

Algebra: In Algebra this week we continued learning about ratios and proportional relationships. We learned that proportions or equivalent fractions are related vertically, horizontally and diagonally. We also learned when tables are and are not proportional.

Next Friday, September 30th we will have our first quiz on lessons 1-1 to 1-3 from our books. Notebook checks will also be done very soon. Please be reminded that notebook checks are worth a quiz grade.

Next week, we will continue learning about proportional relations and will understand how they relate to a graph. Have a great long weekend!

Science: Students have finished their first lab complete with graphs and questions.

All students have logged into CK12 which is our online textbook and completed an assignment there for practice.

We also did an exercise in sending private comments to the teacher on their individual work and class comments for the entire class. If you see some ridiculous comments on Google Classroom, we were just having some fun...no worries!

Classes practiced discussion questions on Google Classroom with an activity for Hispanic Heritage Month. Students viewed two videos and responded to the question, "How do we encourage more Hispanic and Latinx people to choose STEM careers?" Students then responded to each other's comments.

No Homework this weekend, unless you are still working on the labs.

Language Arts: We went over Vocabulary #1 words. While doing this, we learned how to remember and memorize words using pictures and colors. All students should start preparing flashcards in the way demonstrated in class.

They Cage the Animals at Night- Read chapter 6!

Many students are now Reading "Before We Were Free" as an additional assignment for Hispanic Heritage recognition. Good work!

All students signed onto Flip Grid to prepare for future assignments.

We finished Jackson's "The Lottery" with many shocked eyes which led to a deep discussion about conformity and its possible dangers and safety nets.

8th Grade:

We are noticing students are using their cellphones in school (during classes). Please note, the district's policy is that all cell phones must be off and away during school hours. All students have been warned. Please see the Student Handbook for district policy. After the first time a student's phone is confiscated, the parent/s/caregiver/s must pick up the phone from the main office if it is confiscated a second time.

Social Studies

For Latinx History Month, our Friday classes will be dedicated to the viewing and discussion of the film "Walkout". The film is about young Mexican-American students in the Los Angeles public school system fighting to end decades-long discriminatory practices directed against Mexican-Americans. We will end the month learning about the Young Lords Party and its fight to provide social justice, health care, and educational resources to Latinx communities around the country.

ELA

Our Hispanic Heritage Month project is due on September 30th. We will begin group presentations the following week. Looking ahead, I will soon assign their first ELA novel of the year: *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros. Please note that I will provide copies of the novel for the students.

Math

There will be a quiz next Friday on the review material that we have covered to date. This includes solving for a variable, working with absolute values, and intercepts. We will begin covering the Algebra curriculum this coming week.

Yogi Berra

Friday the 8th graders went to the Yogi Berra Museum to see an exhibit titled "Billie Jean King - Champion, Advocate, Legend." It centers on King's lifelong advocacy for equity and social justice is visually documented in this first-ever exhibition about her life. The Museum is offering the exhibit in conjunction with the New York Historical Society. Please review the article below that includes an interview with our very own Mr. Stulbaum

<https://www.nj.com/yankees/2022/09/a-yankees-legend-and-jersey-guy-leaves-a-l-egacy-that-goes-beyond-pinstripes.html>

Science

This past week students worked on a STEM team-building challenge as we begin our journey in science this year in 8th grade. Groups were assigned the same materials and constraints. The goal was to design the longest paper chain possible. We took measurements, compared our class data, and analyzed our results on a bar graph. We discussed the importance of calculating the mean, median, range, and mode for data. We discussed our design methods and reflected on our original ideas. Why did some groups have longer chains than others even though we all had the same materials? Every classroom had a winner (thus earned bragging rights. I am proud to announce that the longest paper chain from the 8th grade came from 3 students in Ms. Noori's homeroom at 1258 cm. This was designed by Devin Archer, Tahlia Bender, and Lillian Carter. Well done 8th graders!

- **Bagel Sales**

We started with **bagel** sales last Friday morning. Mr. Stulbaum will follow up with parents who reached out to "sponsor" a week. Others looking to sponsor a week please email Mr. Stulbaum (mstulbaum@montclair.k12.nj.us).

It involves sending in \$60, I know I originally said \$50 (a good lesson on inflation), and some juice boxes. I will speak about it again on Back-To-School Night for those that missed my prior mentioning of it. Thank you in advance for volunteering. Mr. Stulbaum

- **Important Upcoming Dates:**

- **September 26-27, 2022** Rosh Hashanah **(District Closed)**
- **September 29, 2022** Back to School Night (In Person) 6-8pm
- **October 3-7, 2022** School Spirit-Week of Respect
- **October 5, 2022** Yom Kippur **(District Closed)**
- **October 7, 2022** Land Acknowledgement Ceremony **(students only)**
- **October 10, 2022** Indigenous People's Day **(School Closed for Students)**

Rosh Hashanah

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, is one of Judaism's holiest days. Meaning "head of the year" or "first of the year," the festival begins on the first day of Tishrei, the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar, which falls during September or October. Rosh Hashanah commemorates the creation of the world and marks the beginning of the Days of Awe, a 10-day period of introspection and repentance that culminates in the Yom Kippur holiday, also known as the Day of Atonement. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are the two "High Holy Days" in the Jewish religion.

Shanah Tovah to all who celebrate!