

**The Lotus Lowdown  
December 16, 2022**



**Maria Francisco, Principal**

**Important information regarding CELL PHONES.**

We are experiencing disruptions to instruction caused by students *constantly* using their cell phones in school (during classes). We really need our parents to assist us with this. 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. Please note that the policy includes lunchtime and recess as well.

**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 and every time thereafter.**

**Winter Concert:**

Renaissance students performed in style with a fabulous performance on Dec. 14, 2022.

Our Rock Band played five tunes, capped by *Don't Stop Believing (Journey)*, to start the show. Seventh grade band followed with *Rocking Around the Christmas tree*, featuring solo performances by multiple students. Eighth Grade started with a performance of *Paint it Black (Mick Jagger + Keith Richards)* with instrumental solos by several students as well. Our wonderful Renaissance Singers eloquently sang *Snowman (Sia)*.

A special thank you to Ms. Spagnoulo for always doing a tremendous job working with our students and planning our concerts. Ms. Spagnoulo's love of music is so influential and students of all backgrounds and abilities benefit from being part of her classes/programs. Both Ms. Spagnoulo and our students should be commended for a job well done. Congratulations to all.

[2022 Winter Concert Pictures](#)

**Renaissance Continues with Spirit week:**

December 19-December 23, 2022. See flyers below for more details.

[Week Two](#)

**Renaissance students participate in Model Congress**

The annual Model Congress was held at Montclair High School on Tuesday, December 13. Renaissance students had a great experience at the Middle School Model Congress and brought home with 2 Honorable Mentions (Altan Yildiz and Spencer Johnson), 1 Second Place (Sarah Mifan) and one 1st Place (Henry Heivly).  
Congratulations to the entire Model Congress team:

- 1 - Ian Samuels - 8
- 2 - Nina Fauth - 8
- 3 - Henry Heivly - 7

- 4 - Spencer Johnson - 7
- 5 - Willow Tahirali (?) - 7
- 6 - Altan Yildiz - 7
- 7 - Sarah Mifan - 7
- 8 - Evie Brackenbury - 7
- 9 - Sadie Gritsch - 7
- 10 - Zaid Mifan - 6
- 11 - Tabby Bergen - 6
- 12 - Noe Foster - 6

### **Renaissance Students participate in Math League Competition:**

Math League is a Math competition for elementary, middle and high school students. MathLeague.org releases several middle school Contest problems sets each year. These are then administered at local qualifying contests, and students who score well enough are invited to State, National, or International Championships.

Congratulations to the following students that participated this past weekend.

- Oliver Brackenbury
- Miles Ekroth
- Victoria Luna
- Zayla Mcadoo

For additional information regarding Math League and how to register, please click [here](#).

### **Renaissance Middle Collecting toys for Reaching Out: Dates revised 12/19 on.**

[Click here to Donate](#)

### **Volunteer Opportunity for students at the Montclair Public Library:**

[Click here for information](#)

### **Renaissance to host Ugly Winter Sweater Contest: Thank you to all who donated!**

On 12/23 Renaissance will be having our annual "**Ugly Winter Sweater Contest**". Students will decorate "Ugly Winter Sweaters" for different staff members, ending with a whole school assembly displaying the student-made "Ugly Winter Sweater" in a runway style contest on December 23rd, 2022.

### **Nurse Kaplan Updates:**

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: PARENTS>FORMS>ORTHOPEDIC CLEARANCE FORM.

Wearing appropriate shoes is important for P.E. Please send the students wearing sneakers on days they have PE. They can also bring it and keep it in the locker.

Field Trips - This is a reminder that for students to be allowed on Field Trips, Action Plans (Asthma, Life Threatening Allergy), along with the appropriate medication, will need to be submitted to the Health Office. Forms can be found on the district website. Parents>Forms and then click on the appropriate one. If your child has a change in their medical history and no longer requires medication in school, a note from a doctor is required. Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

### **Community Service:**

This week, our 8th grade students went to Toni's Kitchen and the Playhouse in West Orange, volunteering their time and their energy. It is wonderful to have the students on site, once again! A special shout out to Mr. Prasarn, Ms. Peters and Mr. Bousel for their creativity in guiding the program, getting us back on site after the pandemic, and consistently staying true to the roots of Renaissance, always being a school of giving! Click [HERE](#) to see our students in action.

### **6th Grade:**

Students should remember to clean out their lockers before the holiday break.

Please also remember to have students charge their chromebooks if left at school during the break.

### **ELA Update:**

In ELA, we have concluded our Narrative Unit. Students learned the elements of Fiction. Plot, conflicts, and characterization are a few of the skills that they learned. As a culminating activity, they applied the elements of Fiction to their writing through the completion of their "All Summer in a Day" Narratives. They also learned how to closely read and annotate important moments in texts. Close reading allows students to build on their reading comprehension skills.

In our next unit of study, students will learn how to write Literary Analysis Essays and also read our second whole-class novel, *The Outsiders*.

### **Liberty Science Field Trip:**

Our 6th grade students had a blast at Liberty Science Center today. [Pictures](#)

### **7th Grade:**

1. Please have your students check missing work. The progress reporting period ends on January 4 for marking period 2 - that is the day after we return to school.
2. Students will be on field research trips this Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> and Monday the 19<sup>th</sup>. They should bring lunch.

### **Social Studies**

Students who have not turned in Portfolio 2 or have not turned in both pieces of word art received an email home. This is a 30 point project grade in Genesis. If I don't receive it by the 20th, incomplete work will be marked down by 50%.

Students received a take home quiz on Monday, Dec 12 (Thomas/Garzon) and Tuesday (Cullen/Arnette). Part 1 is a paper portion - a crossword puzzle. Part 2 is a set of 4 questions posted in Classroom. Since we have a trip Monday, all classes must turn this in by Tuesday, Dec 20. IT IS A QUIZ SO I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE WORK.

## **Science**

Students are finishing up their work on Waves before we move on to electricity. As stated above, students should make sure their work is completed on Google Classroom and ensure that the grades are accurate on Genesis. If students finish Science work late, they should leave a private comment under the assignment on Google Classroom to alert me they have finished.

## **ELA**

We are reading "I Have Lived a Thousand Years." We are up to page 40 at the moment. It ties into our class trip on Friday.

In addition, two wonderful pieces of Literature are being read and discussed in prep. for Monday: "The Monkey's Paw" and the poem, "My Papa's Waltz" to clarify what the word "ambiguity" means.

## **8th Grade:**

### **Chromebooks**

Students must bring their Chromebooks to class charged and ready to go. Too many students are coming to class with their Chromebooks not charged, or without their chargers. Please make sure to bring your Chromebook charged and ready for classes.

### **Next Field Research Trip**

January 13 St. John the Devine-Geometric and Mathematical Designs-\$10.00per student

### **Parent Conferences**

Any parent/caregiver wishing to meet with the 8th Grade team can make an appointment with Jackson ([rjackson@montclair.k12.nj.us](mailto:rjackson@montclair.k12.nj.us)). We can meet on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 2 pm via Zoom or in person.

### **Math**

There will be a System of Equations math test Wed/Thur (12/21 &12/22). I am available for extra help before school, after school, at lunchtime, and if need be in the evening and over the weekend.

### **Science**

Students are working on proving ionic versus covalent bonding in chemistry.

### **Social Studies**

Students are completing projects on the Indian Removal Act/ Trail of Tears. Next, we will start lessons on the Civil War.

### **ELA**

We are reading our class novel: *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines. We read chapters 1-3 this week and we are watching the film in portions throughout the next couple of weeks. Students are engaged in conversations revolving around the characters, setting, and conflict while connecting it to real world issues such as racism.

**Important Upcoming Dates:**

- December 19, 2022 First Day of Hanukkah
- December 21, 2022 Spanish Spelling Bee (periods 9/10) Students only
- December 23, 2022 Early Dismissal: 1:25pm
- 12/23/22-1/2/23 Holiday Break Schools Closed

*Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas and Happy Kwanzaa to all who celebrate. I hope everyone has an enjoyable break while spending time with families and loved ones. Safe travels to our families who are traveling this holiday season. It seems like just 350 something days ago I was saying this, **but Happy New Year!***

*The next Lotus Lowdown will be sent out the week of January 3, 2023.  
Ms. Francisco, Principal*