

# MONTCLAIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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PHONE: 973-509-4010



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### Superintendent of Schools

*Community Message SY 21-22 No. 18*

**Jonathan Ponds, Ed.D.**

April 1, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff,

At the Special Board Meeting on March 28, the Facilities and Finance Committee presented a proposal for a community investment that will address our infrastructure and facilities needs along with structural enhancements that will impact instruction. We highly value and respect your opinions and feedback at all times and especially, when it comes to this investment, which is not only for our schools but a true community investment. Please see the [Bond Referendum page](#) on the website and complete the [google form](#) to submit questions. You can also view a [video](#) of the March 28 presentation on this page.

Please know that the Facilities and Finance Committee will be holding its last meeting on April 4 to develop the final proposal to be presented to the Board for approval on Wednesday, April 6. This proposal was developed with input from our administrators, MEA, PTAC, MFEE, SEPAC, NAACP, African American Clergy Association, Interfaith Association, and Sports Boosters. We are eager to hear from as many of our families as we can, and if you do not wish to complete the google form, please feel free to call my office at 973-509-4010 before Wednesday to leave your input or ask a question. This has been a long process in analyzing the vast needs of our antiquated buildings and making the best judgements possible in ranking priorities. As we progress in the process, we will continue to provide informational documents on the website including an FAQ being developed now.

Tonight begins the start of **Ramadan**, a holy month in the Islamic Calendar. Muslims refrain from eating and drinking, from sunrise to sunset. This month is a time to focus on faith and perform generous acts of charity. People raise money and donate supplies to help others in need. The fast is also a reminder about those in the world who don't have enough to eat, and to be grateful for their blessings while giving back to the community.

After the last day of Ramadan, a three-day festival is held. Families and friends gather to make the holiday prayer and celebrate. This holiday is called the Holiday of Breaking Fasts (Eid Ul Fitr). This will be the first year the district will be closed to observe this holiday. Our school calendar for 21-22 originally had this holiday recognized on May 3; however, as Ramadan follows the Lunar calendar, we are recommending to the Board at its April 6 meeting that this holiday be observed on Monday, May 2. Ramadan Mubarak!

Please remember that our COVID-10 guidelines have changed with respect to unvaccinated individuals according to the [Test to Stay](#) guidance released by the CDC and NJDOH.

*We have much to be thankful for, and I am always encouraged by the engagement of our families. We really are a community that believes all children can learn and all children are special, and we are making progress in creating educational environments that will allow everyone to succeed. I wish to acknowledge that this month is Autism Acceptance Month, and we celebrate everyone's differences and unique abilities and talents.*

Sincerely,  
Dr. Jonathan Ponds  
Superintendent