

The Lotus Lowdown

December 4, 2022



Maria Francisco, Principal

Renaissance Middle School Annual Toy Drive:

We are hoping to collect **350** total gifts **by December 8, 2021**. We are also accepting donations of wrapping paper and tape. Collected donations are for various community organizations identified below.

ALL GIFTS ARE TO BE DROPPED OFF TO MR. STULBAUM AT RENAISSANCE MIDDLE SCHOOL WHERE WE WILL WRAP THEM AND THEN TRANSPORT TO LOCATIONS

Montclair Child Development Center (MCDC)

272 Baldwin St.,
Glen Ridge off of Glen Ridge Parkway

Friday, December 16th, 11:00 am 5 - 10 students will walk to MCDC to hand out gifts
100 gifts ages 3 – 5 are needed

Park House - 49 Maple Ave

Montclair

Saturday, December 17, 12:00-2:00 PM Volunteers welcomed to help hand out gifts at that time. 100 gifts needed: ages 1 - 18 – (gift cards: smashburger, pizza hut, etc) for 15 - 18-year-olds All gifts are to be dropped off at Renaissance Middle School (Room G2-Mr. Stulbaum)

Renaissance hosts Hip Hop House Party and Family Night

In 2021, Congress proclaimed the month of November as National Hip Hop History Month. This November at Renaissance Middle School, students spent time exploring the many facets of hip hop culture within their dance curriculum led by Ms. Nina Lorusso. Students learned elements of breaking and a number of social/party dances from the 80's-2000's as well as street styles such as voguing, waacking, and tutting. Students were taught about the 5 elements of Hip Hop Culture: *MCing, DJing, Graffiti, Breaking, and Knowledge of Self*. Class always began or ended in a cypher (or cipher) where students took turns freestyling in the center.

As a culminating activity, Renaissance hosted a Hip Hop House Party on Friday, December 2 giving students an opportunity to test out their newly developed skills in a social setting. Mr. Colon (also known as DJ PaP) performed on the turntables, while Ms. Lorusso orchestrated a large group cipher for all of the students and their family members that were in attendance. Students were also treated to a surprise performance by Renaissance alumnus, Irie Williams, who is currently pursuing a career as a hip hop

artist. It was a wonderful night of great music, fun dancing, and coming together for the Renaissance family. Long live hip hop! [Hip Hop Party Pictures](#)



Student Council Elections Held

On Monday, November 28, 2022, Renaissance students running for student council delivered their speeches in hopes of being elected to various student council positions. All of the students who participated should be commended for their work and creativity as it relates to each of their campaigns. **We are very proud of everyone and would like to congratulate our newly elected student council president, Rayan Nasir, secretary Dusty Leo and Treasurer, Miles Ekroth.** We look forward to the work we will accomplish throughout the remainder of the year.

Renaissance to host Ugly Winter Sweater Contest: Donations needed

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.

We are asking families for apparel decoration supplies. This would include fabric markers, patches, iron ons etc.

Donations can be dropped off at Main Office for Mrs. Pastor and Mr. Gazzillo

Music:

- **Winter Concert**
When: December 14, 2022 at 7:00PM.
Where: Montclair High School Auditorium.
- **Groups performing:**
8th Grade Band
7th Grade Band
Rock Band
- ***Rehearsals Schedule:**
December 12th - 12:00 - 3:00 PM
December 13th - 12:00 - 3:00 PM

Concert attire: It is traditional for students to be asked to wear black and white attire. However, here at Renaissance we like to do things a little differently.

Here's what I tell our students...

'Wear your favorite exciting outfit. Something you'd wear out to a nice dinner. This means avoiding hoodies and old sneakers. Feel free to wear funky hats, bright colored shirts, and sunglasses. Dress like a performer. Have fun!'

Renaissance staff to receive Governor's Educator of the Year honors

The Governor's Educator of the Year Program is designed to highlight educational innovation, student achievement, the rewards of teaching, and important services outside the classroom environment that lead to student success. This program recognizes our state's best teachers and educational services professionals (ESP).

Renaissance's teacher of the year this year is Mr. Colon and our educational services professional of the year is Ms. Sonia Ayscue. Congratulations to both staff members.

(For more information on the selection process, please visit <https://www.nj.gov/education/recognition/educators/geoy/>.)

Renaissance is Responding to recent use of hateful/bias language:

As a result of interactions between students that included hateful/biased language, Renaissance shifted the focus of our morning advisories in November to ensure we continue to develop relationships and provide space for students to talk about their relationships and issues. We believe we have made some progress and will continue to work as a school community to address these behaviors.

I am asking the parents to also take the time to speak to students about this at home. ***I want to be clear that there will be consequences (in accordance with the MPS Student code of conduct) that will be given for students who continue to engage in using hateful language.*** This will be a tiered approach, since we do implement the Restorative Justice philosophy. Our first approach was to address relationships and discuss the

problem. Now that we have done that, the consequences will be a bit more serious as we want to ensure this behavior does not continue. **We will need the efforts of everyone in order to interrupt these behaviors.**

[Offensive Language Morning Minutes](#)

[Talking to children about racism](#)

6th Grade:

Social Studies:

In Social Studies this week, students finished presenting their Mesopotamia Choice Board projects and then we started learning about ancient Egypt by watching a short video clip called "Pharaoh". Then as a class, we did an Investigation Analysis by viewing and discussing primary source quotes and images regarding the geography, economy, social classes, religion, government and achievements of the ancient Egyptians. Students were to list what they saw, describe what they saw, and then make an inference, conclusion or prediction about that topic. We will continue our study of Egypt throughout the next couple of weeks.

7th Grade:

Please contact Ms. Cullen (ecullen@montclair.k12.nj.us) if you would like to schedule a parent conference. We have limited openings for next week, but will continue to meet with families on a weekly basis.

Please have your student bring in their 3 permission slips for the December/January field trips on Monday, December 5.

8th Grade:

Cell Phones

We are noticing students using their cell phones 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.

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.

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). We can meet on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 2 pm via Zoom or in person.

Math

Math update was sent out earlier in the week. Please let me know if you did not receive it.

Science

Moving beyond the periodic table itself, during this marking period we start learning about what happens when elements begin to interact and form bonds. Students this week have learned the process of naming ionic compounds. Students this week also learned why fireworks display brilliant colors and their relation to visible light. For our flame test lab, students learned how salt compounds can produce beautiful colors. We continue learning about how electrons are the star of all chemical interactions.

Social Studies

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

ELA

Students are wrapping up their Dinner Party narratives. We are moving toward Unit 2 and will soon start reading our second novel: *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines.

Important Upcoming Dates:

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| ● December 7, 2022 | Parent Conferences 6-8pm |
| ● December 8, 2022 | Parent Conferences 1:45-3:00pm 1:25 Dismissal |
| ● December 9, 2022 | Parent Conferences 1:45-3:00pm 1:25 Dismissal |
| ● December 15, 2022 | Thurs., curriculum meetings 1:25 Dismissal |