

MONTCLAIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Superintendent of Schools

Weekly Community Message No. 23

Jonathan Ponds, Ed.D.

June 4, 2021

Dear Families, Caregivers and Staff,

All grade levels have begun in-person instruction with smooth transitions at all schools. Our elementary students are enjoying some playground time and the weather is cooperating as well. We are happy to announce that all schools will be having in-person celebrations (see details below). This is an exciting time and we are grateful for every step that brings us closer to a more normal school environment.

Please note that June 8 is Election Day and our schools are used as polling places. This year, because we are using gym spaces as classrooms in some buildings and other spacing issues, **all students will have remote/virtual learning on June 8**. The DLC is not used as a polling place and will be open for in-person instruction.

This month, the District recognizes **PRIDE**, as June marks the 51st celebration, a time when people come together in support of the LGBTQ+ community. We publicly affirm our support and value the contributions of the LGBTQ+ community and all people. So much more is accomplished when we work together as a district and society that respects all and all are welcome.

Five-Day Instruction Elementary School Survey

The administration along with the principals will be reviewing the results of the survey, and we will have information to report next week.

Moving Up Ceremonies and Graduation

Dates and rain dates are set and principals will be sending details in their weekly newsletters. Please note the following particulars for **all** schools:

- Location: Woodman Field
- 4 tickets per family
- Masks are required for all

- Seating will be using three feet of distancing between families

K-5 Summer Hike (Academic Summer Program)

The District is offering an optional academic summer program from **June 28 through July 22 (no school July 5), Mondays to Thursdays, from 8:15 to 11:30 AM.**

This program is open to all students except those invited to Step Up for targeted support. Students will engage in ELA and math activities that continue and extend learning from this past school year to help combat any interrupted learning experienced this year. Students are expected to attend for the entire daily time as well as all weeks of the session.

MHS Summer Enrichment Program

Also available for Montclair High School students (incoming 9th graders through 12th grade) are a variety of enrichment courses, running from June 28 through July 22 (no school July 5). Sessions run for one hour each and are from 8:15 AM to 1 PM. See [Course Catalog](#) for class descriptions and registration information and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more details.

District Equity Team (DET)

The first meeting of the DET will take place on June 16. The first priority will be to review policies and regulations and most importantly, finalizing the Anti-Racism regulation. Once finalized, it will go before the Board of Education for adoption. Thank you to the many stakeholders who have been involved in this work.

Summer Camps

The Montclair School District is once again offering [Summer Enrichment Camps](#). You will find many of your favorite camps and some new ones as well. We are excited about servicing the community by providing affordable programs of excellence. The health and welfare of our campers and staff are paramount. Rest assured that safety guidelines will be followed. Camps run for six weeks, June 28 - August 6 (Monday - Friday). Register online at www.myschoolbucks.com. We are looking forward to a healthy, happy, and safe summer!

Watchung Field and Playground

The District will be renovating the existing Watchung Field located on No. Fullerton Ave. across from Watchung School to make it safe and regulation size for high school athletes. Our number one concern is safety, and we will also be constructing a new playground for the elementary students at Watchung School. The District has been working with the Watchung parents, and will continue to seek their input about design and equipment for the playground. A fact sheet with relevant information will be posted to the website.

Technology Office - Device Collection

Bulldog Students

We will be collecting Chromebook and Chromebook chargers at each elementary and middle school on June 24 for Bulldog students. Please come to school on June 24 with your assigned Chromebook and Chromebook charger. **Students attending summer school may keep their devices.** Arrangements will be made for device collection towards the end of our summer programs for those students.

Mountie and Virtual Students

We will be collecting devices and hot spots starting on **June 25** at the **Hillside School** entrance door A on Orange Road from **9 AM to 12 PM** and from **1 to 3 PM**. All students attending summer school/summer programs may keep their devices.

We will also be collecting devices and hot spots from June 28 through July 2 at Hillside School entrance door A on Orange Road from 9 AM to 12 PM, 1 to 3 PM and 5 to 7 PM (Tuesday through Thursday only). Please bring your child's device along with the charging cables.

Please be advised that all devices and hot spots that are not returned by the last collection date (July 2) will be turned off. Once again, this excludes all summer school students.

Please utilize our technology support hotline (*301-259-1510*) throughout next week if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and continued support.

Important Information from Nursing Services

National CPR and AED Awareness Week

June 1-7 is National CPR and AED Awareness Week. Please view the [video](#) for a 90-second tutorial highlighting Hands Only CPR that can help save lives. Every second counts!

COVID Vaccines

While not a requirement at this time, please send your school nurse a copy of your child's COVID vaccination record.

District and Community Highlights

Vaccination Clinics

Essex County will be holding a [vaccination clinic at the Turtle Back Zoo](#) (Pfizer for people 12+ and J&J for 18+) on Saturday, June 5, 10 AM-2PM. Visitors getting their first dose will receive free admission to the Zoo, valid through Sept 1.

MFEE will be hosting a [Pfizer vaccination clinic](#) for children 12 years and up and adults at the Wally Choice Community Center, Sunday, June 6, 9 AM-1 PM. Pre-registration is preferred but walk-ins are welcome.

PTA at Montclair High School

Through the collaboration of the District and High School Administration and teachers, the PTA Council, NAACP, and SEPAC, I am delighted to announce that the High School will have an official PTA. The kickoff meeting was held June 1 and there was a great turnout of more than 75 families and teachers attending the event. Current 8th grade families were also invited and attended. There was such an enthusiastic response to begin this new think tank for the High School that will involve the entire MHS community. The New Jersey PTA organization provided direction for next steps on protocols, leadership, organization, structure, and format. Thank you to the PTA Council for its effort in bringing the stakeholders together including our High School administration and teachers, NAACP and SEPAC. We are thrilled to see this effort come to fruition. Everyone was involved and engaged and it is through these efforts that we can best advocate for all children.

*Coming later this month, the District will be closed on June 18 in remembrance and recognition of **Juneteenth**, the 155-year old holiday celebrating the emancipation of African Americans from slavery in the U.S. The official day of celebration is June 19 to commemorate June 19, 1865, when a Union general rode into Galveston, Texas to announce that the Civil War had ended and slaves were freed. **Teachers Undoing Racism Now!** is offering an opportunity for our staff members to expand their knowledge of Juneteenth with classes and discussion forums June 1-9. The Montclair Education Association 8:46 Project along with other community organizations are having its first [Juneteenth Celebration](#), June 19, 12-6 PM. Students and community members are invited to perform poetry, music, dancing, singing, and acting. Schools will be celebrating as well, and we will be sure to include their festivities and performances on our website.*

Sincerely,
Dr. Jonathan Ponds
Superintendent