Welcome back from Spring Break! I hope you all enjoyed a lovely spring break this year.

**Weston Award Nominations Requested!** The deadline for Weston teacher award nominations is tomorrow! Please consider taking time to nominate a teacher for the Judy Weston Awards for Inspired Teaching! This spring, sixteen teachers from throughout Montclair Public Schools will be selected to receive individual cash awards of $2,000, including one award designated specifically for a teacher at Buzz Aldrin, thanks to the generosity of the Weston family. Recipients will be selected based on personal stories and nominations from parents/guardians and students illustrating how a teacher is creative, talented, supportive, and inspiring. Nominations will be accepted until Sunday, April 16th: [https://www.mfee.org/weston-awards](https://www.mfee.org/weston-awards).

**Autism Acceptance Month at Buzz Aldrin:** This week, our staff and students celebrated Autism Acceptance month by conducting a two-day advisory. All students learned about Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), facts and statistics about autism, discussed neurodiversity, and covered the difference between Autism acceptance versus awareness as well as how to promote acceptance both individually and as a collective community. They also learned that the symbol for Autism acceptance is the infinity symbol. The two-day advisory ended with students decorating infinity symbols along with writing a statement for how they plan to celebrate and embrace neurodiversity at Buzz Aldrin. Additionally, our staff members purchased Autism Acceptance t-shirts to show support and celebrate the month. See the attached picture! Please see the conversation starters below:

- What is the difference between acceptance and awareness?
- Why is acceptance more inclusive than awareness?
- What is neurodiversity?
- What is one goal that you have for how you plan to celebrate and embrace neurodiversity?
- **General Spring Updates:** Please see the general reminders and announcements below and review this information with your child.
  - All grades will have their behavior contracts by the end of this week. These contracts relay the requirements for students to participate in end of the year activities/field trips. Attendance, grades, and behavior are three critical components.
  - We’ve recently had many students who are consistently late to school. It is important that your child arrives to school on time.
  - Please remind your child to bring a water bottle to school. We have water refilling stations available for all staff and students.
  - Please remind your child to dress appropriately for school, including all school activities such as physical education and recess. Pajama pants, slides, and clogs are not appropriate school attire. Additionally, please ensure that you are checking the messaging written on the clothing your child wears to school, and that it is middle school appropriate. Please review Page 4 of the Student Planner with your child so he/she/they understands the dress code in more detail.

- **Community Service Project:** One of our 8th graders, Sareena Sabharwal, is working on her Silver Award Project for Girl Scouts and is focusing on cleaning up litter for the benefit of the community (Buzz and Montclair) and the environment. She is coordinating two events and we are hoping that our students will be able to participate and spread the word. Community Service hours are available.
  - There will be a Buzz Aldrin Middle School clean up with Mr. Taylor, our forensics and greenhouse teacher, on Saturday, April 29th from 9am to 12pm. Sign up here to participate.
    - Google Form: [https://forms.gle/DLdnjmWktmWivGxc7](https://forms.gle/DLdnjmWktmWivGxc7)
  - The Northeast Earth Coalition annual Earth Day Celebration is on Saturday, April 22, from 9:30am to 2:00pm at Crane Park and welcomes anyone that wants to volunteer. There will be a park cleanup (coordinated by Sareena), planting of native plants, and a pollinator garden tour. Celebration cosponsors include the NJ Sierra Club, Montclair Climate Action, Bike and Walk Montclair, NJ Rockland [350.org](https://350.org), Brookdale Park Conservancy, and the Township of Montclair. [https://neearth.org/events/2112/](https://neearth.org/events/2112/)

- **8th Grade Parent Information:** On Monday and Tuesday, Montclair High School staff members will come to Buzz Aldrin to schedule our 8th graders for their elective classes. Please ensure that your child brings a copy of their elective choices with them on both days. We will call the students down by homeroom.

- **Frozen Junior Musical Production:** We are excited to announce the opening of our Spring Musical production of Frozen Jr. Please join us in supporting the performing arts at Buzz! Please see the attached flyer!
  - Where: Buzz Aldrin Middle School
  - When: Wednesday, April 19th & Thursday, April 20th @ 7 pm, Doors open @ 6:30 pm
• **Admission:** Adults $10, Students $6, Children 6 years and under $3

If you have any additional questions, please contact Ms. Panico at kpanico@montclair.k12.nj.us.

• **7th Grade Fundraiser for NAC:** Each year, 7th grade ELA classes read the novel, *They Cage the Animals at night* by Jennings Michael Burch. This autobiography, set in the late 1940’s/early 1950’s, highlights a young boy’s experiences in various orphanages and foster homes from ages 8 -11. This story also emphasizes the courage this young boy gained to find love. Prior to reading the book, students learn the process of fostering and adopting children. They also become aware of various agencies which help foster children in our area. This year, the 7th grade students have chosen to donate to New Alternatives for Children (NAC) in Bronx, NY. This organization works not only with children who need foster care placement, but they also specialize in helping children with medical and mental health needs. These separate programs within this facility, set NAC apart as one of the only agencies in New York City to exclusively provide these two special services. Houses 2, 3, and 5, Ms. Kinnas, Ms. McDonald, Ms. Bernheim and their seventh graders will collect money beginning on Wednesday, April 19th thru Friday, May 5th to donate to NAC on behalf of Buzz Aldrin. We are collecting cash or checks. Students can bring their donations to their seventh-grade homeroom teachers. All checks should be made out to: Buzz Aldrin Middle School. Thank you so much for your anticipated support of the children! We plan to donate the money to the facility next month, as May is National Foster care month!

• **Mural Painting Update:** The Montclair Emergency Medical Services approached Buzz Aldrin Middle School in the fall asking if the Mural Painting students could create two murals to go over the doorways in their newly renovated headquarters lobby on Walnut Street. Two classes of first semester Mural Painting students voted on the designs, and created the designs which were recently installed. One of the selected murals is a Montclair landscape designed by 8th grade artist, Vivian James. Come out to see the murals on Sunday May 7th, from 11-4pm as the EMS celebrates its 70th Anniversary with a birthday party at the Walnut Street Fair. The event is sponsored by the Junior League Montclair-Newark and will feature food trucks, retail vendors, as well as arts/craft vendors, and will stretch from Grove Street to Forest Street. Mark your calendar to celebrate with the EMS, check out the murals, and enjoy a fun Montclair afternoon!

• **Community Service Opportunity:** All Montclair elementary schools are hosting a STEM festival for K-5 students and families at Edgemont Park on Sunday, April 30th from 3 – 5 pm. There will be hands-on activities and stations for kids to participate in and we are asking for help from our students to run these activities! In fact, we are counting on our middle school and high school students to help run the show. Please review the time slots below and use the link to sign up. The 2 – 4 pm slots include helping to set up and the 4 – 6 pm include helping to clean up. Thank you in advance for your help!
• Montclair Public Schools Calendar Revision: Please note that the district is closed on Friday, April 21st for Eid al-Fitr. We were made aware of this on Tuesday. We are working with our staff members to rearrange previously scheduled events to accommodate this calendar change. Thank you in advance for your patience and cooperation.

• Holocaust Remembrance Day: Holocaust Remembrance Day, or Yom Hashoah is on Tuesday, April 18th. This day seeks to commemorate the Holocaust, which resulted in the deaths of six million Jewish people who died at the hands of the German Nazis during World War II. This day seeks to honor and remember the millions of victims of the Holocaust.

• Administrative Professionals Day: On Wednesday, April 19th, we celebrate Administrative Professionals Day. Thank you to our two wonderful secretaries, Ms. Cheryl Cottle and Ms. Judy Lehmann for all your hard work. Ms. Cottle and Ms. Lehmann do so much work behind the scenes to ensure our building operates smoothly. Thank you for all you do!

Next Week’s Schedule of Days
• Monday, April 17th – C Day
• Tuesday, April 18th – D Day
• Wednesday, April 19th – E Day
• Thursday, April 20th – F Day
• Friday, April 21st – District Closed

Please mark your calendars:
• Weds, April 19th & Thurs, April 20th @ 7 pm – Frozen Jr. Production
• Friday, April 21st – Eid Al-Fitr, District Closed
• Thursday, April 27th – Curriculum Thursday, Abbreviated Day Schedule

"The most common way people give up their powers is by thinking they don’t have any."
— Alice Walker

"Nothing liberates our greatness like the desire to help, the desire to serve."
— Marianne Williamson