Principal’s Bulletin
April 22nd, 2023

Buzz Aldrin Mission Statement:
We believe that all students can learn, achieve, and grow, in a safe and secure environment.

- **Arab American Heritage Month:** On Thursday, our students participated in an advisory for Arab American Heritage Month. They learned about the origination of the month, various facts and statistics regarding Arab Americans, the culture, contributions, and traditions of Arab Americans. Conversation starters to use at home:
  - What is the difference between Arabic and Muslim?
  - Where does the greatest population of Arab Americans live?
  - When did Arab American Heritage Month become recognized in the United States?

- **Frozen Jr. Musical Production:** Our Buzz Aldrin students did a phenomenal job with their Frozen Jr. performances on both Wednesday and Thursday night. Both performances were amazing, and I am so proud of our wonderful students and staff! From the sets to the stage crew, to the singing and acting, our students did a wonderful job. Many thanks to Ms. Karen-Ann Panico for directing and coordinating the entire show. The staff and students who participated in the production and preparation for the shows have demonstrated hard work, dedication, and commitment in putting together a wonderful final product. Thank you to Mr. Fritz Reissig and Mr. Dave Buonocore for leading our Stage Crew/AV students. Finally, thank you to all our wonderful parents for your support and assistance. Special thanks go to the parent volunteers who’ve donated countless hours to help ensure this production was a success. Fantastic job everyone!

- **Anderson Park Short Story Contest:** Many students districtwide participated in the Anderson Park Short Story Contest. One of our Buzz Aldrin students, Aaria Shah was awarded the winner of the Olmsted Oak Award, which means the judges find the story to be exceptional and place it into a category of its own. This award is not awarded every year, but rather when a piece stands out. Congratulations to Aaria Shah for this tremendous accomplishment! We are so proud of you and we cannot wait to see what future writing pieces you come up with.
• **Buzz Aldrin Model UN News:** On Thursday, April 20th, the following members of the Buzz Aldrin Middle School Model UN participated in a series of district-wide debates at Montclair High School.

  - Ronan Vanc, Or Vainsencher, Sheehan Jeydel, Max Carruth, Calvin Shiao, Tej Bakaya, Nola Kim, Ben Cohen-Vigder, and Arinze Okaro

Students have been preparing for the past several weeks and all of their hard work paid off! They debated topics including but not limited to abolishing the death penalty, national insolvency, human rights violations in Afghanistan, and creating an international court of human rights. Our students debated with Model UN members from Renaissance and Glenfield and were recognized for several individual awards. We are so proud to announce that the following students were recognized for individual awards:

  - First Place: Sheehan Jeydel
  - First Place: Max Carruth

All Model UN students that attended the debate on Thursday should be very proud of themselves for their hard work and for representing BAMS so well. Next Tuesday, April 25th, Model UN will meet to celebrate and discuss our next steps. Starting on May 16th, Mr. Turner will run a debate club that will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All students are encouraged to participate and future meetings will be listed in the bulletin. Thank you so much to Mr. Joseph Turner for all your hard work and dedication in working with our Model UN students.

• **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
- 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, Brookdale Park Conservancy, and the Township of Montclair. https://neearth.org/events/2112/

- **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, 4, and 5, Ms. Kinnas, Ms. McDonald, Ms. Bernheim, Ms. Orlando 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!

- **National Junior Honor Society:** The NJHS Induction Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, May 3 from 6-7 pm. This ceremony is only for current NJHS students who’ve completed the requirements for induction and their families. There will be a rehearsal for students during extended homeroom on Friday, April 28th. Students should check the NJHS Google Classroom for more details. Please email the NJHS advisors, Kate Megdanis (kmegdanis@mpsdnj.us) and Christin Joseph (cjoseph@mpsdnj.us), if you have any questions.

- **Peer Mentor Applications:** Applications to be Peer Mentors for next school year are currently being accepted at the link below. Peer Mentors are 8th graders who, after participating in training sessions during the 7th grade, help incoming 6th graders acclimate to Buzz Aldrin Middle School and assist with
various schoolwide events. As representatives of the school, Peer Mentors must model courteous, friendly, and thoughtful behavior and positive attitudes towards their peers. Peer Mentors must be socially mature, conscientious students who are willing to devote some of their lunch & recess to training sessions, and who are comfortable participating in selected 6th grade advisories. Applications must be received by Friday, May 5th, 2023. Counselors will review the applications and consulting with administration and staff members to identify which best fit the requirements of being a peer mentor. The application link is listed below.

- **Peer Mentor Application Form:**
  [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdXgkwepEsoliXVz1oPZnaVfWA5FqYT2_9b7K1K8Vv9ndRxBw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdXgkwepEsoliXVz1oPZnaVfWA5FqYT2_9b7K1K8Vv9ndRxBw/viewform)

- **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!
  - **Sign Up Link:** [https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0e45aaab22a5fc1-montclair#](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0e45aaab22a5fc1-montclair#)

- **Eid al-Fitr:** As you know, our district was closed on Friday, April 21st in honor of Eid al-Fitr. Eid al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan, the holy month in which Muslim people fast from sunrise to sunset each day. It was celebrated on the evening of April 21st. Eid Mubarak to all those who celebrate this holiday!

- **Earth Day:** April 22nd is Earth Day, a holiday celebrated globally. Earth day is a day in which we all should take time to think about ways we can protect and preserve our earth from pollution and further damage, as well as come up with creative ways to create a cleaner environment for all. Happy Earth Day to all!
Next Week’s Schedule of Days
- Monday, April 24th – A Day
- Tuesday, April 25th – B Day
- Wednesday, April 26th – C Day
- Thursday, April 27th – D Day
- Friday, April 28th – E Day

Please mark your calendars:
- Thursday, April 27th – Curriculum Thursday, Abbreviated Day Schedule
- Monday, May 29th – Memorial Day, District Closed

"Keep your face always toward the sunshine, and shadows will fall behind you."
—Walt Whitman

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."
—Winston Churchill