



Buzz Aldrin Middle School

The STEM Magnet

173 Bellevue Avenue
Montclair, NJ 07043

www.montclair.k12.nj.us



Principal's Bulletin

February 11th, 2024

Buzz Aldrin Mission Statement:

We believe that all students can learn, achieve, and grow, in a safe and secure environment.

- **BAMS STEM Challenges Carnival Night:** On Thursday evening, dozens of families came out to the BAMS gymnasium to play and experience the table-top carnival games that students in STEM Challenges designed and constructed during the fall semester. Many family members commented how much they were impressed with the creativity and engineering that was on display. STEM Challenges proposes a "problem" that students must resolve by creating a physical solution. In this case, students had to design a carnival game of chance that was unfairly rigged in favor of the game operator, but also gave a sense to the player that it was a fair game and that they had a better chance to win than lose. As part of the project, students had to collect win/loss data and calculate this percentage to fine tune their game. In addition, they made a rough draft, peer-reviewed each other's games, and then created and much-improved, final draft. Thank you to Mr. Taylor and his STEM Challenges students for hosting a wonderful Carnival Night on Thursday evening. The students did a really nice job creating and designing games and activities for others to enjoy. Thank you to the student and families who came out to support. Great job to all!
- **Muslim Heritage Month Advisory:** On Thursday/Friday of this week, our students participated in an advisory in honor of Muslim Heritage Month from January. Students learned about various Muslim cultures, traditions, and their religious background. They also researched famous Muslim Americans and discussed the many historic contributions and inventions Muslim people have contributed throughout history. Please see some conversation starters below:
 - *What is one interesting fact that you learned from the Muslim Heritage Month advisory?*
 - *What is one invention or contribution that Muslim people have made that we still use today?*
 - *Name one of the four states that have the highest Muslim populations in the country.*
- **MFEE Thank You:** Thank you to Ms. Dory Hack from the MFEE for coming to speak with our 8th graders about the MFEE's *Life After High School* workshop series. Information was sent home with 8th graders.

- **Buzz Aldrin PTA Fundraiser! We want and need your support!** Please see the attached flyer for our annual big PTA fundraiser. Additionally, hard copies of the flyers were distributed to all students on Friday. Please ask your child for a copy! We appreciate all the support and generosity from our PTA board and our generous parents. We hope to see you there dressed in your best 80s gear!
- **Yearbook Purchasing:**
 - **8th Grade Yearbook Information:** Yearbook Recognition Ads are available!! All orders must be placed by February 16th! Click here to order! [8th Grade Yearbook Recognition Ad- Order by 2/16!](#)
 - Yearbooks are currently available for purchase and are on a first come first served basis. Please visit www.jostensyearbooks.com or call 1-877-767-5217 to order your copy! If you have any questions please contact our Yearbook Advisor, Ms. Eden: jmintz@montclair.k12.nj.us
- **NJHS Souper Bowl Challenge Update:** Thank you so much to everyone who donated to the National Junior Honor Society's "Souper Bowl" this past week! With your help, Buzz Aldrin was able to donate 874 cans of food to the Manna Food Depot to help local families in need. House 1 collected the most cans with a total of 256 items. Great job to all involved! Thank you to Ms. Megdanis for coordinating this food drive! A special thanks goes out to Kaitlyn Moshovos and Claire Washington from House 4 for helping to organize this year's Souper Bowl.
- **MFEE Information:**
 - Help win a \$1,000 grant for Buzz Aldrin! [The Montclair Fund for Educational Excellence \(MFEE\)](#) is our town's local education fund that supports *all* Montclair students, teachers, staff, and caregivers. Buzz Aldrin students receive social/emotional support and innovative teaching tools through MFEE grants, teachers boost their learning through out-of-the-box Professional Development grants and Teacher Learning Communities; and families get resources and support through events like [Life After High School](#) and programs like [Navegadores Escolares](#). Your donations - no matter how small - fuel all of this work! From now until February 28th, any donor who gives \$20 and above will be entered in a lottery to award a \$1,000 grant to their favorite school. Two winners will be chosen! Bradford and Renaissance won \$1,000 last year; it's Buzz Aldrin's turn! Be sure to "credit" [Buzz Aldrin's team page when donating](#). Even better, right now there is a 1:1 match happening on all donations! While you're there, check out all of the ways that your donations boost learning at Buzz Aldrin. Donate here: <https://givebutter.com/c/mfeeforthem2024/members/buzzaldrinmiddleschool1>
 - [The Montclair Fund for Educational Excellence \(MFEE\)](#), in partnership with Montclair High School, is bringing back its award-winning mini-conference, [Life After High School](#). On February 24th from 10am-1pm, 8th-12th graders - and their caregivers - will gather at Montclair High

School's George Inness Annex for this free, one-of-a-kind opportunity to connect and learn. Unlike a traditional college or job fair, Life After High School looks to leverage Montclair's amazing community members and alumni to share "wisdom nuggets" or small takeaways that will inspire adolescents through high school and beyond. There will be over 10 workshops on topics such as how to lean into your interests, how relationships can guide you through tough times, how to put yourself out there when you don't think you can, how to harness your superpowers (like ADHD) to lead you to success and being okay with uncertainty. Caregivers can take a separate track of workshops geared towards creating connection and supporting their teens. Read about the speakers and register today: <https://www.mfee.org/lahs>.

- **Buzz Aldrin Restorative Justice (RJ) Parent Night:** Please save the date and RSVP for Buzz Aldrin's Restorative Justice (RJ) Parent Night. RJ Parent Night will be held on Thursday, February 29th from 6-8 pm. This event is for parents only, and it is a great opportunity for the Buzz parent to experience the power of RJ circles. Please see the attached flyer for more details and to RSVP. We hope to see you there!
- **Buzz Aldrin Mural Painting Debut:** Our Semester 1 Mural Painting students just finished an ocean-themed mural at the Montclair Public Library Bellevue Branch! Students walked over with teacher, Lauren Cirrito, to meet with Children's Librarian Kristen Comeaux to see the space. They had the opportunity to hear Ms. Comeaux's thoughts for the project, learn about the library, and to measure the actual wall. After brainstorming ideas with students, an ocean-themed mural was decided on. Working with an actual-size section of the wall space in the classroom, students first painted the underwater background in sections, with acrylic paint on mural cloth. Next, they researched the sea creature they chose to paint, and got to work drawing, cutting out, and painting those as well. The last week of the semester, the mural was installed at the library, and students were able to put their own sea creatures up on the underwater wall. This project was a great example of a STEAM mix of art & science in action at Buzz! An adjacent section of library wall will be painted with the same ocean theme by the Semester 2 Mural Painting class. It was such an honor to be asked to paint this by MPL, and students appreciate the significance of being able to create public art in our community. A ceremony will be held in early June to officially unveil the mural to our school community and to the public. Please see the attached photo of their beautiful display!
- **Buzz Aldrin PTA Updates:**
 - **Throwback 80s Party Spring Fundraiser: *Purchase your Early Bird tickets before 2/19!*** Break out those legwarmers and tease up your hair! The Buzz Aldrin's PTA Spring Fundraiser Is going back to the 80's. Join Buzz parents and teachers for a totally radical night of drinks, dinner, and dancing to support our STEAM magnet. This is our biggest fundraiser

of the year and our goal is to raise \$15,000 and we want to raise half the money by February 19. We need your support!

<https://buzzaldrinpta.memberhub.gives/throwback80sparty>

- **When?** Friday, March 22nd from 7-10pm
- **Where?** St James Church Parish Hall, 581 Valley Road, Montclair
- Featuring 80s tunes from DJ Cotter, Dinner & Drinks, and a Silent Auction. Adults only. 80s costumes encouraged!
- ***Can't make the fundraiser but still want to contribute?*** Please make a donation or buy a ticket for a Buzz teacher!
- ***We would love some help!*** We are in need of silent auction item donations and volunteers to help run the event. Contact Jennifer Escobar or Lauren Moore at the Buzz PTA.
- **After School Enrichment (ASE) Programs:** start February 12 - March 25. Registration is live NOW for Chess, Basketball, Street Art, CPR/First Aid, Babysitting Safety, and Financial Literacy:
<https://buzzaldrinpta.memberhub.com/store?limit=21&live=true>
- ***We need parent volunteers to help ASE!*** Parent volunteers are needed to help assist instructors. No experience needed. Contact Jennifer Escobar at jen.escobar3@gmail.com if you can assist on any of our ASE days.
- **Funds2Orgs Fundraiser:** Wow! Thank you for the amazing response to our fundraiser. Buzz students collected so many shoes! More details upcoming about how students can volunteer to distribute them to Funds2Orgs and how much money we are able to raise.
- **Buzz Family Ice Skating Event:** March 9th from 5:15 pm - 6:45 pm at Clary Anderson Arena. Free for Buzz students! Sign up before 3/8!
<https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/1011829654068/true#/invitation>
- **General Reminders:**
 - **Cell Phone Use:** Students are not permitted to use their cell phones throughout the school day. This is stated in the school's code of conduct. Consequences will be issued for those who violate this rule.
 - **Dress Appropriately for Weather:** Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the winter weather conditions, particularly outdoor recess.
 - **Attendance Information:** Student attendance and tardiness is an issue with some of students. Students with ten tardies will receive an afterschool detention will be issued. Additionally, attendance records affect your child's ability to attend/participate in end of the year events/field trips.
 - **Student Attire:** We continue to have serious concerns over students dressing appropriately for middle school, especially with footwear. Slides, Crocs, flip flops, and any shoes without a backing are not permitted, as they do not have a back to the shoes. Referrals will be issued for inappropriate footwear, as indicated in the Code of Conduct.

- Set Design Painting & Prop Club - Mary Poppins Jr. ~ The Musical**
 Our evening Set Design Painting / Prop Club sessions are quickly approaching. We are now accepting sign-ups and space is limited. Semester 1 is coming to an end soon after we return from break! Ms. Rodriguez and our Set Design elective class will be ready to pass our beautiful rendering designs to the stage. We will begin to make each of them come alive in color and 3D beginning in February 2024. All participants will receive community service hours. This is also a great way for parents to join us and their child as part of the Buzz Aldrin Musical Theatre Family! Break out your painting clothes and come join the fun! **FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DATES & TO REGISTER your student for an email invite to our google classroom:** Please email Karen-Ann Kaelin-Panico Theatrical Producing Director / Set Design Director kpanico@montclair.k12.nj.us Thank you for supporting the BAMS Theater Department!
- Lunar New Year:** On Saturday, February 10th, many people celebrated Lunar New Year! Happy Lunar New Year to all those who celebrate! Lunar New Year, which lasts from February 10th thru 25th is also known as Spring Festival. The holiday calls for reflection on the past year and well wishes for good fortune in the upcoming year. The holiday is celebrated by traditional rituals which include exchanging gifts, special feasts, and the use of red decorations and attire for luck. Each year is paired with one of the twelve Chinese Zodiac animals, and this year is year of the dragon! Dragons are associated with strength, luck, and good fortune.
- Super Bowl:** I hope everyone enjoys a safe, festive, and fun-filled Super Bowl evening tonight!
- Ash Wednesday:** Ash Wednesday marks the commencement of Lent, a 40-day period of prayer, penance, and fasting leading up to Easter for Christians around the world. During the service, worshippers receive ashes on their foreheads in the shape of a cross. This act serves as a visible symbol of human mortality and penance, thus reminding individuals of their need for repentance and forgiveness.
- Valentine's Day!** On Wednesday, Happy Valentine's Day to all those who celebrate. Please take a moment to express love and gratitude to all your loved ones.

Next Week's Schedule of Days

- Monday, February 12th - A Day
- Tuesday, February 13th - B Day
- Wednesday, February 14th - C Day
- Thursday, February 15th - D Day
- Friday, February 16th - E Day

Please mark your calendars:

- Monday, February 19th – Presidents’ Day, District Closed
- Thursday, February 22nd – Curriculum Thursday, Abbreviated Day Schedule
- Thursday, February 29th – RJ Parent Circle Night @ 6 pm

“I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.”

— **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

— **Nelson Mandela**