



# Orange Township Public Schools

Gerald Fitzhugh, II, Ed.D.  
Office of the Superintendent



April 28, 2023

Good Day Orange School District Families and Staff,

I hope this communication finds you well. We had yet another exciting week within the Orange Public School District. As a reminder, continue to visit our district website [www.orange.k12.nj.us](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us) under latest news and information as well as our social media handles to get the most up to date district updates. As promised, we will continue to provide information in real time, so you are always in the know.

**Instructional Spotlight of the Week:** This week's Instructional Spotlight is from Forest Street Community School. On April 21<sup>st</sup>, FSCS celebrated Earth Day. Principal, Dr. Loftin-Cooke, designated the day as "Forest Beautification Day." Students applied what they had been learning in science and made connections to Earth Day activities. They planted seeds around our greenhouse and designed an investigation to observe seed growth using different soil mixtures. The first mixture consisted of the compost that was developed in class mixed with potting soil. The second mixture consisted of only potting soil. Their goal is to investigate if the sunflower seeds and watermelon seeds planted in their garden will grow differently. Students have written their claims and will be collecting evidence through the end of the school year... and beyond!

In Dr. Swinford's 5<sup>th</sup> grade Science classes, students are exploring the essential question, "How does matter and energy move through ecosystems of the biosphere?" Their focus question is "What happens when compost worms interact with organic litter?" For their investigation, students made redworm habitats to create compost. Students were curious about how worms eat, and how to prepare kitchen scraps that are easy for them to digest. They researched and discovered that worms eat apple and pear cores. As such, they made sure their worm habitats were properly equipped and their worms received the proper nutrition. The soil mix resulting from this experiment mimicked the rich environment found in a typical worm composting system, and it made our students feel great about their investigation.

In addition, each grade level chose to do a grounds project around our school; seventh grade students added mulch and topsoil in the front of the school to create a beautiful landscape, third grade students laid ground cover and mulch around our Forest letters in front of the school. Kindergarten through fourth grade potted seeds in the class planters located in the garden area, preschool decorated tire planters with flowers and placed flower windmills in their area. Our science classes worked in the greenhouse, weeded the garden, and planted fruit and vegetable seeds. We even had staff and students that made "Keep Off the Grass Signs." Our parents donated potted flowers and one family that always provides us with any support needed donated truckloads of topsoil and mulch.

Attached are photos of students creating their habitats, and students planting seeds on Earth Day.



## **District Special Appreciation Highlights**

**Principals' Appreciation Day May 1<sup>st</sup>:** Principals are visionaries who work hard to build a progressive learning environment. They set the academic foundation to create the best educational framework for students. Janet Dellaria founded School Principals' Day as a day to recognize the principals of all schools, from elementary schools to high schools. Join me in wishing all of our 14 principals in the Orange School District a great Principal's Appreciation Day. Thank you for leading and providing all that enter your doors with support on a daily basis. You are appreciated!

**Teachers' Appreciation Week:** May 7<sup>th</sup> through May 12<sup>th</sup> is Teachers' Appreciation Week nationally. National Teacher Day was celebrated on March 7<sup>th</sup> until 1984, when it was moved to May. Behind the move was the National Parent Teacher Association and, instead of just one day, they named the entire first week of May to be Teacher Appreciation Week. The NEA followed suit the next year and held National Teacher Appreciation Day on the Tuesday of the week. Join me in wishing all of our teachers in the Orange School District a fantastic week. Further, we are appreciative of their continued tenacity and driven nature to provide our schools with an optimal educational process on a daily basis. Thank you for all you do!

**Nurse Appreciation Month begins on May 1<sup>st</sup>: School Nurse's Day is Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>.**

The entire month of May is also designated by the American Nurses Association as National Nurses Month, with each week in the month dedicated to a different theme: self-care, recognition, professional development, and community engagement. Join me in celebrating our stellar school nurses within our district. They provide a level of care to staff, students, and families. Thank you to our school nurses for all you do, we appreciate you.

**Reminder: Kindergarten Orientation Meetings:** Please mark your calendars. As shared via our social media handles as well as the district website, the time has come to open our doors for Kindergarten Orientation. The teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators are working diligently to create a great program for you. Come with your walking shoes as well as burning questions that you may have. The Orange School District team is ready and excited for our prospective parents to walk our classrooms and engage with the academia as well as social emotional supports that we have in place.

School	Date and Time During the Day In-Person
Heywood	1:30 PM Wednesday, May 3rd
Forest	9:30 AM Friday, May 5th
Lincoln	9:00 AM Tuesday, May 2nd
Central	10:00 am on May 4th
Oakwood	2:00 PM on May 4th
Park	2:00pm on Friday May 5th
Cleveland (Located at Our Lady of the Valley)	9:00 AM on Wednesday May 3rd

**District Calendar:** Families and staff, as you plan your days and weeks, the following link (<https://www.orange.k12.nj.us/Page/31659>.) to the district calendar approved by the Board of Education in February 2022. The calendar can assist you by knowing all days in session and off session. Should you have any questions, you are encouraged to email [reopeningofschools@orange.k12.nj.us](mailto:reopeningofschools@orange.k12.nj.us). Please find the district calendar for SY 23-24 using the following link: <https://www.orange.k12.nj.us/Page/32723>.

**The Right to Read Panel, Saturday, April 29, 2023:** Is reading a right? If it is, who is responsible to ensure all have access to it? Or to protect everyone's right to it? The film Right to Read explores these questions and attempts to provide answers. Directly following the film, there will be a panel discussion with representatives from education (preschool thru higher education), health care, legal authorities, and community organizers. Come see this groundbreaking documentary and how the local community is responding. Viewing and panel discussion to be held at Orange Preparatory Academy of Inquiry and Innovation, located at 400 Central Avenue, Orange, NJ (in the auditorium) on Saturday, April 29th, from 9:00 am to 11:30 am. Giveaways to the first 50 participants. Childcare and snacks are available.



**Autism Awareness Program at Park Avenue:** In celebration of Autism Awareness Month, Park Avenue School hosted an awesome Autism Awareness Day, on Saturday, April 22, 2023, from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Team Park Avenue provided a time that was received well by all.



**What a Great Performance: Freaky Friday:** The musical is a thrilling adventure about a mother and her teenage daughter who accidentally switch bodies and are forced to navigate each other's lives while preparing for a wedding and coping with the trials of high school. It's a performance you'll be sure to love, laugh at, and tweet about! Congratulations to the cast and crew of Freaky Friday, what a great job!



**Earth Day Celebration at Orange High School:** The Science Department hosted an all-day event celebrating Earth Day. Science classes cleaned up and planted greenery around the school grounds, doing their part to "invest in our planet." Great job, students, and staff! Orange High School certainly began Earth Day district wide in the right direction.



**Reminder: Parent University Sign Up:** Orange School Community: It's not too late to register for the April-May 2023 Adult Learning & Parenting Academy Virtual Course Offerings and take advantage of this week's classes: Parenting Adverse Childhood Experiences, Basics of Investing, and Empowering Yourself and Family. For more information and to register for Parent University courses, visit <https://bit.ly/3JhalF4> or scan the QR code on the flyer.



**Coming to an End: Orange Page Turners Competition:** The Orange Page Turners Reading Challenge concludes on Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. If you have not completed your latest readings, please make sure that you do as such. Time is ticking so quickly. Students, staff, parents, employees, city residents, and local businesses can help promote literacy throughout the City of Orange Township by joining our quest to read 1.5 million pages from Thanksgiving to May Day (May 1<sup>st</sup>). Visit [www.orange.k12.nj.us/PageTurners](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us/PageTurners) for more information, a promotional video, and to sign-up for the challenge. We can make it when everyone joins in to participate. The question is, have you signed up for the challenge? Encourage your neighbor, friend, and/or peer to be part of the challenge!

**Elementary and Secondary Breakfast as well as Lunch Menus for the Month of May 2023:** Each month, the district through Mr. Tyrone Dorsey's Office (Manager of Food Services) provides all families (pre-kindergarten, elementary and secondary) with robust breakfast and lunch menus. Yes, the district in collaboration with our food services provider Chartwells have created a pre-kindergarten menu as well. All menus are evident on the district and school websites under latest news and information. Please find the link to view all the food choices for the Month of May:

Pre-K: <https://www.orange.k12.nj.us/cms/lib/NJ01000601/Centricity/Domain/1/May%20Preschool%20Menus.pdf>.

Elementary: <https://www.orange.k12.nj.us/cms/lib/NJ01000601/Centricity/Domain/1/May%20Elementary%20Menus.pdf>.

Secondary: <https://www.orange.k12.nj.us/cms/lib/NJ01000601/Centricity/Domain/1/May%20Secondary%20Menus.pdf>.

**Board Meeting Dates:** The Board of Education voted to change their monthly meetings from Tuesday to Wednesday evenings at the Reorganization Meeting. Kindly review the new dates for SY 22-23.

#### **2023 Board of Education Business Meeting Schedule**

Wednesday, May 10, 2023

Wednesday, June 14, 2023

Wednesday, July 12, 2023 (This meeting per the BOE will be cancelled)



Wednesday, August 9, 2023  
Wednesday, September 13, 2023  
Wednesday, October 11, 2023  
Wednesday, November 15, 2023  
Wednesday, December 13, 2023  
**\*Wednesday, January 3, 2024 - Organization Meeting**

**Upcoming Committee/Board Meetings (Public)**

- Orange Board Education Public Board Meeting - Wednesday, May 10, 2023, at 7:30p.m., held at Orange Preparatory Academy of Inquiry and Innovation, 400 Central Avenue, Orange, NJ, 07050. Will Recess until 6:45pm, but no later than 7:30pm
- Public Relations Committee Meeting: Lived Streamed on Channel 36 and on the District's Facebook Page 4:00 PM on Wednesday, May 3, 2023.

**District Goals and the Strategic Plan Reminders**

As we continue to Move into Greatness, I want our families and staff to continue to engage with the strategic plan and district goals. The following link is for the District Goals: <https://www.orange.k12.nj.us/Page/30018>. The following link is for the Strategic Plan: <https://www.orange.k12.nj.us/domain/3344>.

Throughout the course of this year, the [reopeningofschoools@orange.k12.nj.us](mailto:reopeningofschoools@orange.k12.nj.us) email has remained intact in order to answer questions that you may have. While email responses are often returned within hours of receipt, please allow 24-48 hours for an email response. The district wants you to hear from us with all questions that you have. It is very important to keeping staff and families informed, particularly during these times but more importantly for you to get your questions answered directly from district personnel.

As always, I thank you for your continued support and belief in our school district. I extend to each of you a great weekend.

Educationally yours,

*Gerald Fitzhugh, II, Ed.D.*

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