



# Orange Township Public Schools

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



May 12, 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.

**Community Event held at Rosa Parks:** On May 9th, at the NJ FamilyCare Enrollment Event and Resource Fair, presented by Orange Public Schools in collaboration with La Casa De Don Pedro and community partners, families were able to apply for health coverage and receive other health-related resources, as follows:

- 117 Children enrolled for NJ FamilyCare coverage!
- 26 Adults signed up for Newark Community Healthcare Center healthcare insurance coverage. The organization provides healthcare insurance for adults on a sliding scale basis.
- 15 people received a COVID-19 vaccination.

Thank you to all involved in making this such a successful event and meeting our school community's needs.

**May is Mental Health Awareness Month:** Since 1949, May has been designated Mental Health Awareness Month, and the Orange Public School District joins the nation in prioritizing mental wellness.



**Our Early Learning Educators Present on the State Level:** On May 5th at the 2023 Annual NJ Association for the Education of Young Children, Ms. Brenda Andress (Instructional Coach), Ms. Carol Gough-DaSilva (Teacher), and Ms. Susan Morales (Teacher) presented during two sessions: Building Early Learning Latiné Educators (BELLE), Creating a Leadership Pipeline to Support Dual Language Learners and Implementing the Self-Evaluation of Supports for Emergent Bilingual Acquisition. Presenters were able to share their work from being in the BELLE Project over the last two years. So proud of them and this accomplishment!!

**MEND Farmer's Market:** Families at the John Robert Lewis Early Childhood Center received free produce, part of a monthly farmer's market for those with children attending the school, thanks to MEND (Meeting Essential Needs with Dignity). The young students helped to select fruits and vegetables to take home. Thank you, MEND!



**Pre-K STEM Family Workshop Virtual:** The Office of Early Learning and the Annual School Plan STEM Committee will host a virtual STEM Pre-K Family Workshop on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 6 PM. Join the session for an informative discussion. The Zoom link will be shared via ClassDojo. See the flyer for details.



**Orange High School Student Honored for their Artistic Abilities within Essex County:** Congratulations to Orange High School sophomore Otoniel Garcia for participating in the Essex County Teen Arts Festival and having artwork titled 'Punto Ciego' selected to go on to the State level, where it will be displayed in Trenton through the first week of June. For more information about the festival, visit <https://essexcountyteenartsfestival.org/>. Well done, Otoniel!



**Orange Week Reminder:** Save the Date: The Orange Township Public School District is proud to announce Orange Week 2023! Saturday, June 3, 2023 - Saturday, June 10, 2023. Orange Week, now in its fifth year, celebrates community pride and highlights neighborhood activities, businesses, and nonprofits in Orange, NJ. The annual theme for Orange Week is "Are you in?".

"OrangeWeek2023!" is launching on June 3, 2023, with our District Spelling Bee and District Tennis Tournament in collaboration with the USTA Eastern, NJ Symphony, Orange Recreation, and the Althea Gibson Foundation at Central Playground (351 Central Avenue, Orange, NJ) at 10:00am.

On Saturday, June 10, 2023, during the "OrangeWEEK2023! Color Festival" at Monte Irvin Orange Park, starting at 9:00 am, two special events are being featured: 1) 5K Color Run/Walk/Roll and Bike Rodeo, and 2) District STEM Festival. In addition to the featured events, there will be Music, Bouncy Houses, Arts & Crafts, Health Screenings, Vendors, Food Trucks, and more. Please follow our district social media for updates including school and district events that will take place during our week-long celebration. To register and participate in our 5K Color Run/Walk/Roll event, use the QR code on the flier or link at: <http://bit.ly/448TT1u>. To learn more about OrangeWeek2023!

**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 [reopeningofschoools@orange.k12.nj.us](mailto:reopeningofschoools@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>.

**Middle School Debate Tournament:** The Fifth Annual Orange Public Schools Middle School Debate Tournament Championship took place on Saturday, May 6th. The debaters tackled "Resolved: The United States Federal Government should substantially increase its cooperation with North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the area of Artificial Intelligence." The coveted Middle School Debate trophy came down to the final two teams from Orange Preparatory Academy of Inquiry and Innovation and a hybrid team from Cleveland Street and Heywood Avenue: Dana Gomez (Cleveland - Coach Mr. Bishof) and Thonyson Vitalen (Heywood - Coach Ms. Toscano). In a close decision, the tournament winners and this year's champions, Orange Preparatory Academy of Inquiry and Innovation's Lena Fullwood and Evelyn Williamson, coached by Amanda Ressler.

The Executive Director of the Office of Humanities, Ms. Harris, thanks all who participated in and supported the Middle School Debate Tournaments this year. A special thanks to the coaches, administrators, Ms. David, the debate coordinator, and Ms. Abreu, the debate organizer, for their work to ensure that our students had an outlet for their curiosity and talents. Thanks also to Maxwell Smith, Esq. of the Machado Law Group, for judging the final round. Superintendent Dr. Fitzhugh and district administrators were present to celebrate the achievements of students and staff. **Congratulations** to all!



**Preparation for NJSLA-Pep Rally:** Rosa Parks Community School held a Pep Rally for the 6th and 7th-grade students to encourage and help ease their nerves before they take the NJSLA this week. The Pep Rally included helpful testing tips followed by a tug-of-war match between students. The RPCS band and the RPCS cheerleading squad performed as well. The students, and the teachers, were excited and pumped at the pep rally.



**Reminder: Parent University Sign Up:** Orange School Community: It's not too late to register for the May 2023 Academic Academy and Visual and Performing Arts Academy offerings and take advantage of this week's classes: Title: Supporting Mathematics Learning at Home and Art Classes. For more information and to register for Parent University courses, visit <https://bit.ly/3JhalF4>.



**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, June 14, 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 Virtual Committee Meeting-Wednesday, June 7, 2023, at 4:00 PM. This meeting will take place virtually where community and staff members can view on the district's Facebook page as well as COMCAST Channel 36.

### **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 [reopeningofschools@orange.k12.nj.us](mailto:reopeningofschools@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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Superintendent of Schools