

# The Oakwood Times

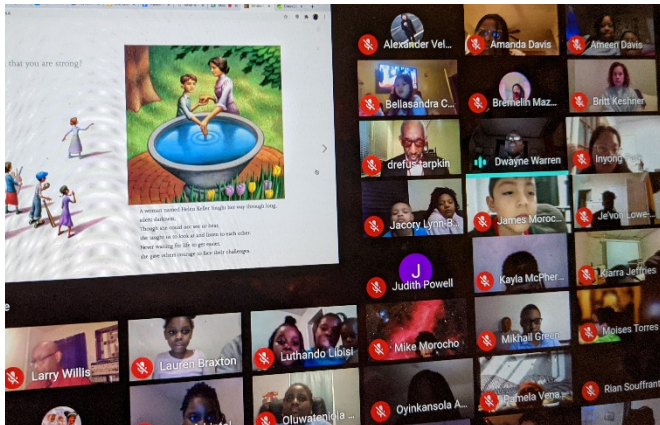


21<sup>st</sup> Century Journalists • Reporting the News... VIRTUALLY! • January Edition

## The New Year - How it Started Written by Tobi Ndubuisi

Oakwood Avenue Community School rings in 2021 the right way with exciting news! The virtual world has not put a stop to the Oakwood family. Principal Gaines has been supportive of the staff and their creative ideas to keep families involved in school events.

The first event that was held virtually at Oakwood Avenue Community School was the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Assembly. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a great civil rights champion who fought for equality. His legacy and vision continue to have a great impact on our world today. He was remembered at Oakwood Avenue Community School with a school-wide assembly on January 25. Students honored Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by completing various activities such as poems, essays, songs, and drawings. Students used inspiration from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life to write a message that they would send to the world to make a change.



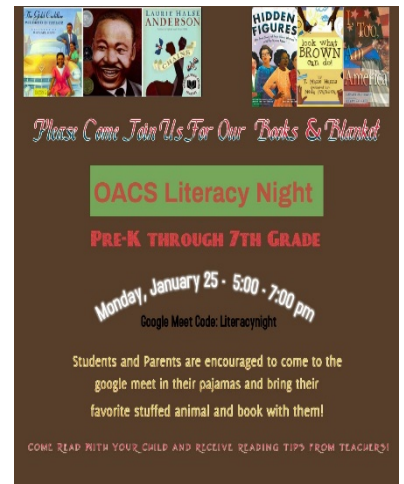
The next event was Literacy Night, which was also held on January 25. The theme of the night was African American authors. Students, parents, administration, and staff listened on as Mr. Gaines and Dr. Morrisroe spoke about the importance of literacy and all its facets.

The festivities began with our Spotlight Reader, the honorable Mayor Dwayne D. Warren. He read the infamous book, "Of Thee I Sing" written by former President Barack Obama. Mayor Warren read beautifully and captured everyone's attention. Next, a video was played of former President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama reading a book written by an African American author. Then, a video was played from Kid President showcasing the importance of literacy.

Finally, as a tribute to African American authors and Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, kids recited the "I Have a Dream" speech.

From there, staff invited families to visit their grade level break out rooms. In the breakout rooms, staff read books by African American authors and reviewed different reading strategies. Families participated in fun activities, such as, video clips, Kahoot, Padlet, and hangman to promote literacy. Eighteen happy students won Barnes & Noble gift cards for their participation. The night ended with a reminder of how important literacy is and to keep reading! Fun was had by all!

The January events were a huge success. The Oakwood family was proud of all the students who presented their Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. projects and for their participation in Literacy Night. It is true; teamwork makes the dreamwork and Oakwood truly represents teamwork. We look forward to future events held at Oakwood Avenue Community School; in particular, Math Night is scheduled for February 25. We hope to see you soon.



## Using Online Educational Programs Written by Kenny Abatti

Entering the virtual world has become the reality for so many people these days. For example, conducting virtual meetings for work, teaching, learning, or other tasks we now do from home. We have made a lot of adjustments this year. As a result, there were concerns that jobs may not get done as efficiently as in person. One of the biggest concerns for teachers and students was student success. How could students be successful while learning virtually? One solution seemed simple, online educational programs.

You know how your teachers are always telling you and your classmates to, “make sure you complete Reading Plus, iReady, Zearn,” or other online educational programs,” for 20 minutes or more.” Well, all these programs have something in common, they help you learn.



For students, these websites allow extra practice, re-teach lessons and enrichment activities. You might be wondering what makes these programs so educational and fun for students? Well, you are in luck because we know all about them.



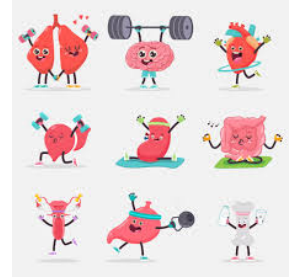
Let us start with Reading Plus. While on ReadingPlus students can practice vocabulary acquisition and word recognition. Another feature of ReadingPlus are the See Reader lessons. Here, readers can engage in books while answering questions to practice comprehension skills. Another online program is iReady. Before students can begin lessons, they must take a diagnostic test. Based off the data from the test, the program creates an individual learning path for each student. While in their path, students practice skills they struggled with on the test. The online program, Zearn, provides students extra practice by working on teacher assigned lessons.

In addition to helping students, these programs can also help teachers. For example, lessons can be assigned to specific students based off their individual needs. If a student is struggling with a lesson in class, the teacher can assign extra practice in that skill. (Continued p.3, Resources)

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Big News Written by Tomiwa Mary Abodunrin

The 21st Century Program has always been known for its after-school fun. Being virtual has not altered that image at all. Students in the 21st Century Program are taking part in great educational opportunities. If you want to know what has been happening in the 21st Century Program, well this is the article you might want to read.

First up, we have the 21st Century Fitness Class taught by Coach Vicki Wright. Of course, the name of this class is very telling because the students in Fitness Class are participating in movement activities and learning about how to stay in shape. In addition to fitness, Coach Vicki Wright has expanded this class to include her students' other interests, which in this case is gaming. One of the highlights of Fitness Class so far this year was when the students were given an opportunity to listen to a presentation by actual gamers. Future's First Gamers Inc. taught students how to be their own entrepreneurs and how to open their own company. This event was very informative, and the students had a lot of fun asking the gamers questions about their industry.



Next, we have the 21st Century Bridge Class taught by Ms. Venable. I did not even know what Bridge was when I first heard about this class. In case you do not know what Bridge is either, I will tell you. Bridge is a competitive card game where you follow different rules and use different strategies to defeat your opponent. The Bridge Class has been learning the rules of the game and strategies to become stronger competitors. Ms. Venable organized a tournament with another school within



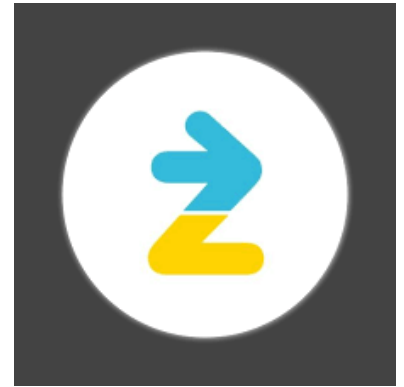
district. The purpose was to provide students practice in a real game setting. Students enjoyed themselves and will hopefully plan another tournament soon.

(Continued p. 3, Big News)

### Resources Continued...

These programs can also help teachers monitor student progress. ReadingPlus notifies teachers when a student passes a lesson or reaches a new reading level. iReady shows student scores on each of their individual learning path lessons. Teachers are saying, “by being able to see which skills students are struggling with, teachers can create their small group activities in order to enhance student success.”

It is important for teachers, students, and parents to know that there are resources available to them during these times. All these programs can assist students when they need extra practice or enrichment with curriculum topics.

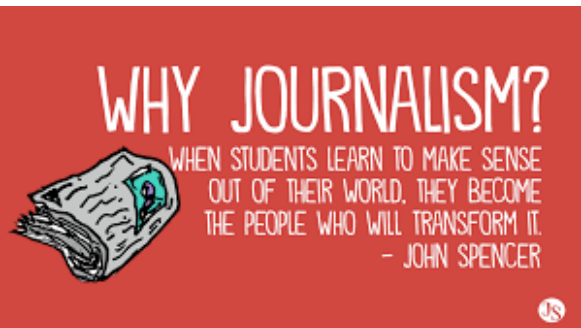


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### Big News Continued...

Our last 21st Century Program to highlight is *The Oakwood Times* taught by Miss Hrabar, publisher. In this club, students practice journalism skills by writing articles about events happening at Oakwood Avenue Community School. After the journalists write their articles, they revise and edit their work. The end process to create *The Oakwood Times* consists of inserting their articles, choosing images, and editing the format before going out to press.

In addition to the writing process, *The Oakwood Times*, journalists have also learned how to include interview quotes and survey results into their articles. Our journalists have even been fortunate to conduct interviews with both Mayor Dwayne D. Warren and Superintendent Dr. Gerald Fitzhugh, II regarding district wide news alerts. *The Oakwood Times* is the first ever newspaper at Oakwood Avenue Community School. I would say that is a huge accomplishment for our journalists!



As you can see, being virtual has not stopped the 21st Century Program! This program is cruising with new ideas for students and constantly giving them opportunities to shine. Read our next edition to find out what is next for the 21st Century Program. We would like to thank the 21st Century Program directors and all other staff who make this program possible.

**School Re-Opening**  
**Written by Taiwo Abatti**

All around the country, students and teachers are excited to hear the three magic words, “schools are opening!” Although we are all excited for school to reopen, we need to remember that it is going to be a slow process to get back into the buildings safely. Experts are saying that, “if we open too quickly, we won’t be able to stay open.” Now that is something to think about!



From day one, Superintendent, Dr. Gerald Fitzhugh, II and task force have been doing just that... thinking. This team has been working extremely hard to ensure the safest re-entry plan by gathering resources and working with health officials, the Board of Education, and the Mayor’s Administration. They have continuously kept themselves and the community abreast on *Considerations for Schools* protocols to carefully consider how they will protect the health, safety, and well-being of students, teachers, staff, their families, and the community.

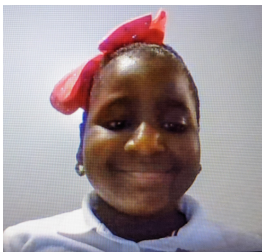
When students eventually begin to return to school, there will be some big changes to Oakwood Avenue Community School. Before re-entry into the building, schools must be able to; promote behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19, maintain a healthy environment and healthy operations, and have a plan for when someone gets ill.

What we do know is, teachers and students will be happy to go back to school. It will be exciting to see the Oakwood family back together. It will also be exciting to greet new members of the Oakwood family with big smiles under their masks. There will be many new students and staff to meet and greet. Students will get to know each other better and there will also be more time for learning and having fun. Hopefully, everything will be back to normal soon!

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**The Oakwood Times Staff**

We would like to thank our journalists who are working tirelessly to report the news at Oakwood Avenue Community School. We are extremely excited to release another fabulous edition of The Oakwood Times! We look forward to providing fact-based reporting all school year on the best stories at Oakwood Avenue Community School.

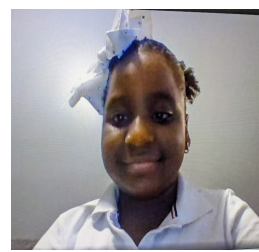


**Taiwo Abatti**

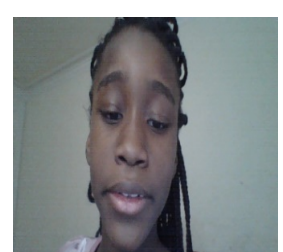
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