

Renaissance Update

Renaissance Academy Charter School

February 2008

COMING EVENTS

Montessori Nights

February 4th, Monday

6:00 – 7:00 PM

~ Copernicus Class 4-6

~ Alberti Class 1-3

~ Assigned Kindergarteners

February 7th, Thursday

6:00 – 7:00 PM

~ Bellini Class 1-3

~ Descartes Class 6-8

~ Assigned Kindergarteners

Open Houses

In coordination with Montessori
Nights 6:00 – 7:30 PM

February 4th, Monday

February 7th, Thursday

R Parents Association

February 6, Wed., 5:00 pm

All parents are invited.

Saturday School –

Great Minds Day

February 9, Saturday

School Day for All Students

Renaissance Classes 9:30-12

or Chess Tournament 8:45-11

Field Trips

February 11, Monday

~ Copernicus Class 4-6

February 12, Tuesday

~ Descartes Class 6-8

Board Meetings

February 14, Thur., 6:30 pm

February 26, Tues., 6:30 pm

~ Annual Meeting ~

MONTESSORI PRESENTATION NIGHTS

A Highlight of the Year

On these special nights, Renaissance students take on the role of teachers and present the extraordinary Montessori materials. All students participate; all parents and guests are invited to come learn from the “student-teachers”. Adults will move through the class gaining insight into the fascinating Renaissance Academy classroom learning experience.

Monday, February 4th & Thursday, February 7th 6:00-7:00 pm.

Renaissance Open Houses

Open Houses are offered in coordination with Montessori Nights, 6:00-7:30pm. Visitors are invited to join school parents viewing Montessori presentations. Following the student led sessions, prospective parents are invited to stay to learn more and have a question and answer period with School Director Kieran McHugh.

Saturday School – Gifted Minds

Our next scheduled Saturday School is February 9, 2008, and we have two choices for Renaissance Charter Students:

Option 1 – Educational Workshops at school, 9:30am -12:00noon

Every student may participate in 2 workshops of their choice from the list that will be sent home. Classes will cover a variety of subjects including science, art, paper-making, and writing, and last just over an hour each.

Option 2 – Chess Tournament at New Buffalo Middle School, 9:00am until approximately 12:00noon.

Any students who can play chess (yes, even beginners) may join this tournament. It is a great opportunity to gain tournament experience in a relaxed, low-key atmosphere. The area tournaments are generally very small and almost all the players enjoy chess as just one of many hobbies.

Families - return Saturday School forms to reserve places in programs of your choice and ensure students receive full credit.

Basketball Games (Girls)

February 5, Tuesday - 4:00 pm
St. Mary's New Buffalo

February 21, Thur. - 4:30 pm
Resurrection Lutheran S.B.

Basketball Games (Boys)**6th – 8th Grade Lions**

February 11, Monday - 4:00 pm
St. Mary's New Buffalo

February 19, Tues. - 5:00 pm
St. Paul's Michigan City

2nd – 3rd Grade Lions

February 8, Friday - 2:00 pm
St. Mary's New Buffalo

2nd – 6th Grade Lions

February 21, Thur. - 5:30 pm
Resurrection Lutheran S.B.

Parent Conferences –**Student Half Days**

February 13th, Wednesday

February 14th, Thursday

Presidents Weekend –**No School**

February 15th, Friday

February 18th, Monday

Renaissance Academy**Charter School**

4093 West US 20
La Porte, Indiana 46350

219-878-8711

www.rschool.net

Class Times:

8:15 - 11:15am AM 3-6 Class

8:15 - 11:15am AM Kindergarten

8:15am - 2:45pm Full Day 3-6 Class

8:30am - 3:00pm Early Ren. (1st - 3rd)

8:45am - 3:15pm Upper Ren. (4th - 8th)

Daily Extras:

7:00 - 8:30am Before School Camp

11:15 - 11:45am Lunch Time Fun

2:45 - 5:30pm After School Camp

Sports News**Basketball Season Party – Everyone Invited!****Renaissance Kids vs. Grown-ups Basketball Game**

The first annual Renaissance Kids vs. Grown-ups Basketball Game will take place at the Armory on Thursday, February 28, 2008.

Along with the basketball game will be an all-school party to celebrate our first season of interscholastic basketball. We'll have pizza and fun for everyone. All families and friends come join us.

Renaissance Wizards Chess Club

The Renaissance Wizards Chess Club has gotten off to a great start this year. We have just over thirty students staying after school each week to improve chess skills and have fun playing together.

The Michiana Area Chess Tournament held at Renaissance in January went off without a hitch. Tournament Director John Calo kept things moving swiftly. Players enjoyed four rounds of competition in each of the three experience divisions. We are looking forward to at least two more Michiana Area Chess Tournaments hosted by our Michiana Area Chess partner schools St. Mary's and New Buffalo Middle School.

Renaissance Wizards are gearing up for the Indiana State Chess Team Tournaments in March. All interested students may join the chess team and we will enter as many teams as needed to ensure everyone gets to play in the regionals. State Chess Tournaments have four divisions: 3rd Grade & Under, 6th Grade & Under, 8th Grade & Under, and High School. Renaissance will enter teams in all three grade school divisions.



Teams must qualify at the Regional Team Tournament to go on to the State Tournament. It is a tough competition and many teams do not go on to State. We have had Renaissance Wizards teams qualify in each level in the past, but not all our teams have made it through.

Our Regional Tournament will be March 1st in Goshen, Indiana. We need to know definitely which students will be playing there. Please call or stop by the school to confirm with Kieran McHugh.

These chess tournaments are a terrific opportunity for our students. It is an amazing thing to walk into an auditorium full of several hundred children silently focused on chess. The benefits to students who play are remarkable and we recommend it strongly to every family who can make it happen.

Annual Giving Campaign

Renaissance Academy is making a difference in our world. By offering a better option to many students and modeling a school where every child can reach his or her greatest potential with confidence and joy, Renaissance is improving the face of education.

It is the support of so many people that has made this possible. As a private school Renaissance Academy struggled to keep tuition low and offer scholarships for students in need. The school Charter has eliminated that set of concerns, and made our top quality education and individualized ‘private school’ experience available to more elementary students tuition free. What a wonderful change! To all of you who have donated or assisted Renaissance in the past – Thank You. Give yourselves a pat on the back – look at what you’ve helped create!

But the help of Renaissance Families and friends is still needed. State support helps pay for direct student expenses, classroom supplies, and base teacher salaries. However, unlike traditional public schools, Charter Schools do not receive any funding for building or other related infrastructure expenses.

For example, a newly-mandated septic system will come at incredible cost to the school. Another building will be needed next year to allow the school to achieve its plan of growth and begin to reduce the size of the waiting lists. The sports teams are pressing us to move plans for a gym up on our list of long-range plans, and our playground is definitely reaching its limits. These and other urgent needs mean that this wonderful school is still dependent on the generous gifts of contributors to sustain its operations.

Our fundraising goal for this year is \$25,000. Given the intense demands of this first year as a charter school, we’ve decided to forgo the auction or similar major fundraising event. Instead, we’re counting on gifts from friends and Renaissance families during the annual Giving Campaign.

Please be generous, and give to the best of your ability. If we met a target gift goal of \$250 from each family, that would bring the school halfway to our goal. I know that for some this is asking a lot, but please look into your hearts and consider what the school is giving to your children in return – the promise of a better future.

Individuals and companies that can give more, please do. The Board of Directors and Renaissance Faculty have already signed on. Kieran McHugh launched the drive with her own personal check for \$250. Vicki McHugh Carroll and Lori and Alan Steinhiser quickly followed with \$250 each.

One teacher asked if she could ask her family members to help her reach her \$250 goal. The answer was Yes! and her response was, “Count me in!”

Please let us count you in as well.

All School Party

February 28, Thursday, 4–7pm
Michigan City Armory

Chess Tournaments

Michiana Area Tournaments

Open to all players, all levels

February 9, Saturday 9:00am
New Buffalo Middle School

March 8, Saturday 9:00am
St. Mary’s, New Buffalo

State Regionals Team Tourn.

Renaissance Wizards

March 1, Saturday 8:30am
Goshen, Indiana

U.S. Jr. Chess Congress

March 8-9
East Side MS, Anderson

State Team Tournament

Renaissance Wizards (if qualify)

March 29, Saturday 8:30am
Terra Haute, Indiana

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Chess Club

Mondays 3:15 – 4:30 pm

Basketball Practice

Grades 4 – 8

Tuesdays 4:15-5:30pm

Thursdays 3:30-5:30pm

Basketball Practice

Grades 1 – 3

Thursdays 3:30-4:30pm

Girl Scouts:

Tuesdays, Second and Fourth

Daisies (K) 2:45 – 3:30 pm

Brownies (1-3) 3:30- 5:00pm

Juniors (4-6) 3:30 – 5:00 pm

Field Trips

Renaissance Students have enjoyed some great off-campus learning experiences already this school year, and we have many more planned.

4th – 8th grade students started the year's excursions with our annual three-day overnight trip. This year's Frog in the Bog at the Indiana Dunes Environmental Learning Center was a great adventure with learning and good times packed in.

All Renaissance 1st through 8th graders got a kick out of riding the South Shore train to Chicago and visiting the Field Museum of Natural History. Everyone agrees this was the perfect way to start off a year of learning about natural history and ancient times.

Pumpkin picking and apple picking were a highlight of the year for our younger students. Seeing the cider mill, riding a hay wagon, and learning about the workings of a large orchard made the trip to Garwood even more exciting.

The symphony brought music to everyone's ears when 1st - 8th graders put on their dress uniforms to watch the LaPorte Orchestra perform. The music teachers agreed this fun event would also contribute to the music curriculum all year long.

Visiting Barker Mansion and Lubeznik Art Center bring warm feelings to many of our 1st to 8th graders during the cold days of winter. Our younger students have already been to Barker while the Upper Renaissance students are planning their trips, and the great Clue mysteries, for the 10th and 11th of February.

On a regular basis, the weekly gym excursions help keep everyone in shape and gaining physical skills throughout the year.

Wow- now that's a lot of learning adventures! At Renaissance Academy Charter School, we know that students learn in many ways and hands-on field trip experiences are an integral part of an excellent education. We believe in expanding each child's world by enriching his or her life with diverse experiences, knowledge, and skills, and we are happy to report success on that front this year.



Weather Related School Closings and Delays

School Closings - If Michigan City or LaPorte Schools are closed for bad weather, so is Renaissance Academy.

School Delays - Renaissance Academy will not offer before school camp but will open for classes at regular class times.

Our primary concern is your safety. Use your best judgment.

Winter Clothing Required - When it is over 17° the group plays outdoors, all children go out together. Please send your child with labeled clothing appropriate for the weather.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Renaissance Academy has the following volunteer activities that need to be completed. Please contact us for additional information.

Chess Coaches

Mondays from December – April

Coach needs to attend after school practice as well as tournaments.

Track Coaches

March - May

Coaches need to be available once or twice weekly after school for training and for Saturday Meets.

Golf Coaches

April - May

Coaches need to be available once or twice weekly after school for lessons & for two Saturday Golf Tournaments

Volunteer Coordinator

(RPA) September - June

Coordinator will keep track of all volunteer hours for families to make sure everyone has a chance to meet their obligations. They will help find volunteers for

events and match volunteers to school needs.

Create Your Own Opportunity

September - June

Do you have an interest you'd like to share? Would you like to run a craft night for parents and students? Perhaps you love karaoke?

Perhaps you love fundraising and talking to people?

Do you have an idea and know someone else who would like to spend some time with our students?

Call us and let us know what you'd like to do.

Anyone interested in volunteering can call the office at 878-8711.