



# Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School of Excellence

## THE FALCON'S NEST School Newsletter • June 2020

### Message from Principal Bernsley

It has been amazing to observe different classes throughout the year. The growth I have seen with our students and staff within the virtual instruction model has been breathtaking.

I would like to thank all of our families for being amazing partners in our most unusual journey in the 2020-2021 school year.

Our students have shown one of the most important qualities for success in life: perseverance. During the pandemic, our students faced challenges that we never had to confront when we were their age. I strongly believe they are going to come out stronger from their experiences.

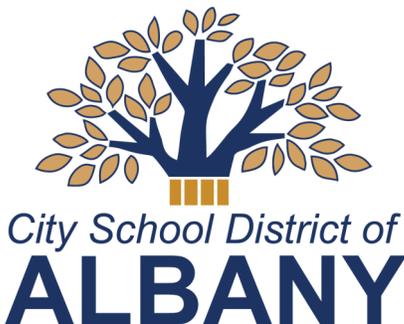
Interestingly, much of the feedback we received from our students was how much they missed being in school. We pride ourselves on creating a nurturing environment that encourages student and staff relationship building.



The O'Neal staff loves our students and community. It was never more evident than it was this year. So many of our staff members volunteered their own time and money to visit students to ensure they had everything they needed.

Sometimes, all they needed was to see a familiar face to let them know how much we love them and miss them.

Have a safe and wonderful summer.



### Important dates

- June 8 Grade 8 New York State Science exam
- June 22 Living Environment Regents
- June 23 Algebra I Regents
- June 24 Last day of school
- June 25 Grade 8 Moving Up ceremonies 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. (see more on page 2)

# Important information for next year

It's the end of era at Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School of Excellence.

Current grade seven O'Neal students will be attending eighth grade at North Albany Middle School in September. The current O'Neal building will become the new home for Albany International Center. North Albany Middle School will be composed of students in grades 6-8. Families affected by the change will receive a letter with more information.

## Grade 8 Moving Up details

Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School of Excellence will celebrate promotion of our eighth-grade scholars in two Moving-Up Ceremonies on Friday, June 25.

### The ceremonies

The ceremony for students whose last names begin with the letters A-K will be held from 10-11 a.m. The ceremony for students whose last names begin with the letters L-Z will be held from 1-2 p.m.

Both ceremonies will be held in the school gym.

Each student is allowed to have up to three guests. Members of the O'Neal faculty, staff and administration will be at the ceremonies, as well.

### Requirements for walking across the stage

Students must be passing a minimum of three core classes

(ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies) with an average of a 65 or higher. Students also must be in good behavioral standing.

### Health and safety precautions

We will continue to observe guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19. All students and guests will have their temperatures taken when they arrive. Families will be seated in pre-marked sections in the bleachers that are six feet apart. Students will be seated in chairs six feet apart.

Between the two ceremonies, our maintenance staff will clean and sanitize the bleacher area and all chairs.

All of us at O'Neal Middle School are excited to celebrate our eighth graders.

## Reading matters!

From Principal Bernsley: I would like to encourage all students to read during the summer. It is important for a student to find a genre that interests them in order to make reading fun and interesting. Another value of students engaging in reading during the summer months is to prevent regression of their reading skills. According to the Texas Literacy Initiative, a student who reads 21 minutes per day outside of school reads almost two million words per year. A student who reads less than a minute per day outside of school reads only 8,000-21,000 words a year (2002). If you have any questions about this, please reach out to your child's ELA teacher.

## If you moved ...

Please remember to update your address and/or telephone number when necessary. It is vital that we have a way to contact you. You can now submit your change of address form by email or mail rather than through a visit to the office. Please visit [albanyschools.org/registration/address](http://albanyschools.org/registration/address) or call the City School District Central Registration Office for assistance at (518) 475-6125.

## Your student's Chromebook

The school district will assign specific Chromebook models by grade for the 2021-22 school year. If your student has the appropriate model, they will not be required to return their Chromebook.

However, we have several students whose current Chromebook will need to be returned in order to replace it with a more appropriate model that aligns with their grade. We will be communicating with the families to outline the retrieval plan.

# Have a great summer!