

# Renaissance Academy

# Class Notes

September 2007

## WELCOME

## to the 2007/2008 School Year –

## it's off to a Great Start!

### Class Times:

8:15am - 11:15am	AM 3-6 Class (Preschool Only)
8:15am - 2:45pm	Full Day 3-6 Class (Preschool / Kindergarten)
11:45am - 2:45pm	PM Only Kindergarten
8:30am - 3:00pm	Early Elementary (1 <sup>st</sup> - 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grades)
8:45am - 3:15pm	Upper Elementary (4 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> Grades)

### Daily Extra Program Times:

7:00am – 8:30am	AM Camp
11:15am – 11:45pm	Lunch-Time Fun
2:45pm – 5:30pm	After School Camp

## Arrival and Dismissal

Pick up students at the dismissal time of the oldest child you are driving. 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students do not leave class until 3:15pm so please do not arrive before then.

At arrival and dismissal time, please enter the main gate and line up so that your passenger doors are closest to the school entrance. The first in line should pull up beyond the student door to the marked end of the lane. If necessary, form second and third lines to the left of the first to avoid back up on the highway. At dismissal, we will bring your child to the car's passenger side and help him/her in. Before and after regular arrival and dismissal periods, please walk your children in or come in to pick them up.

Non-regular drivers should park and walk into the office with identification.

With your help, we can keep things flowing smoothly and safely for everyone. Thank you.

## Elementary Uniforms

Except for announced special days, students are expected to wear school uniforms every school day including (*especially*) on field trips.

The Dress Uniform is required for special occasions like the Symphony.

For the outdoor trips such as the Apple Orchard and the Dunes, jeans may be worn with a school shirt.

Reminder -Renaissance Academy daily school uniforms include a choice of embroidered navy, white, light blue, or burgundy collared shirts with navy or khaki pants, shorts, skirt, etc from French Toast. Renaissance sweatshirts or sweaters may be worn over the collared shirts. You can call the office for a copy of the uniform policy or check your handbook or the website [www.rschool.net](http://www.rschool.net) for more uniform details.

## Field Trips

Field Trips are an integral part of the Renaissance Academy education. At Renaissance Academy Charter School, we believe in expanding each child's world by enriching his or her life with diverse experiences, knowledge, and skills. Educational experiences outside of school are one important way we do this. In our great location on the edge of Michigan City and LaPorte, only about an hour from Chicago and forty minutes from St. Joseph and South Bend, there are many enriching opportunities available.

We have planned tentative trip schedule rotating in a three-year cycle, just like our classes, so children continuously enrolled are able to attend every one. One Chicago trip is included each year along with several closer trips. Beginning in 4<sup>th</sup> Grade, children enjoy a full camp like experience with 3-day sleepover trips at the Indiana Dunes Environmental Learning Center. Our oldest graders also attend a second away trip each year with a rotation of Washington D.C., Project American Life at Camp Tecumseh, and Chicago.

Fees are kept to a minimum and spread out over the year to keep it manageable, with fundraisers used to help with the rest of the expenses. Further donations are greatly appreciated.

Our first field trips start next week with exciting trips to the Field Museum in Chicago. The other trips planned for this month are listed on page 3.

Field Trip Fees:	Monthly Sep - May
K-2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	\$5
3 <sup>rd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> grade	\$10
6 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	\$15

\* Field Trip fees are pooled and required from students regardless of attendance, and all students in the class are expected to participate in class trips. If finances are a serious concern, assistance may be arranged through our TAP program in which family work at fundraisers can be applied to their own expenses.

### Label, Label, Label

Note - We had a huge number of lost and found items last year. If you have not already done so, please LABEL all loose clothing, coats, slippers, water bottles, and other items. Occasionally, we will help children with this by using permanent markers to label items.



## HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

Throughout the school years, teachers at Renaissance Academy coordinate their history and geography curriculums so the whole school follows the same general schedule of studies. This way all classes will have one of their subjects in common, siblings in different classes can talk about it together, and parents know what's coming. This year, our focus will be he Ancient World History.

Teachers have already begun the year with lessons about the beginning of the Earth and its geography. Classes will continue their studies with the Earth, life on Earth, and mankind. Students will learn about early farmers and settlements, ancient civilizations, societies until the early Middle Ages.

Next year's studies continue with the focus on history from the Middle Ages through the Renaissance and into Modern Times. The third year of the three year cycle focuses on United States History.

Of course, the exact timing, activities, and depth of studies will vary in different classes and at different age levels but these topics will provide one major area of focus. Preschool students will learn about general themes and related basics - i.e. volcanoes, dinosaurs, ancient Egypt and pyramids, etc. Interesting items related to the area of study always make a great show and tell.

You can follow up at home by reading about ancient times, watching related specials on television, or just pointing out or discussing any related information that may come up (Depending on the age and level of your child of course.). Also, talk to your child's teacher if you have a special object, project, or idea to suggest.

### Reminders

\*If your child needs to be absent for any reason, it is very important that you call the school before class to report the absence.

\*Totes bags were ordered a couple weeks ago and should be here any time. If needed, backpacks may be used only until then.

## Montessori Concepts

As a Montessori school, our focus is on having students use hands-on learning to develop conceptual understanding. This is not based on rote learning or worksheets but on active participation in the classroom. Since each step of learning is built upon the previous work, students keep their written work in subject specific spiral notebooks. Teachers also keep small portfolios for each child with work showing their growth.

At conference time, parents have the opportunity to look over a great deal of their child's written work and see their progress.

So, don't be worried if you don't see papers coming home. We assure you your child is learning and growing, especially with ...Montessori Concepts.

## Extra Enrichment Classes

We try to make all the classes parents are looking for available right here at Renaissance Academy. Registration forms for *Piano*, *Violin*, and *Guitar* are now available. Both group and individual violin lessons will be on Tuesdays, Guitar (4th Grade or older) on Thursdays, and individual piano lessons will be scheduled with appointments throughout the week. Call the office or bring the registration in quickly if you want to enroll.

There will be more courses coming including Dance, Cooking, and Chess Club. Enrichment information will be sent home as classes are finalized. Just return the registration form to sign your child up. Call or write to let us know if there are certain other programs you'd like see at Renaissance Academy.

## Renaissance Wear

Gym Uniforms are in and will be coming home Friday. The sweatpants and hoodies are being printed by a different company and will be arriving in the next few weeks.

If cold weather comes before the sweats, students may wear other sweats for gym.

## School Lunches

When packing lunch, please consider the types of food that best serve your child's healthy eating habits. Do not send candy, pop, cake, pudding, sugary foods, or any 'desert' food. This is a good opportunity for you and your child to discuss nutrition and allow your child to make healthy choices and help prepare food.

Please have foods pre-cut and peeled if necessary. Lunch should be ready to eat.

We are not able to cook or prepare foods; with the number of students, microwave time is impractical. Hot foods and soups work well in a thermos; cold packs work well for foods that need to be chilled. An extra napkin in the lunch box can come in handy.

Milk and water are provided, you don't need to send a drink.

On Wednesdays, we offer pizza lunch for \$1.00 per slice.

We try to provide time and a pleasant atmosphere for dining. We will not force or pressure children to eat. Please be aware that children do not eat everything sent and send only foods that you would be happy to have your child eat if s/he eats only one thing. We will encourage children to bring home any food that is left over so that you can see what they are eating at school.

Thank you.

## Gym Schedule Changes

With the Chicago Field Trips over the next two weeks, the gym schedules are changing to accommodate all students. All 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students will have gym on Monday, September 17 and 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders will have gym on Wednesday Sep. 19.

Then all 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders will have gym on Monday, September 24 and all 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students will have gym on Wednesday Sep. 26.

**\*Special Note -ISTEP TESTING WINDOW  
is September 18 -28, 2007.**

Grades 2-8 will take ISTEPs during this period.

# **Coming Soon . . .**

## **Chicago Field Trips**

### **We take the South Shore Train to the Field Museum!**

Early Renaissance (1<sup>st</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> Grades) – Monday, September 17

Upper Renaissance (4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grades) – Monday, September 24

\*Remember to wear a Renaissance Uniform with the embroidered shirt and meet at the Carroll Avenue Station by 8:30 am. Parents pick up at the train at 4:15 pm.

## **Garwood Apple Orchard Trip**

Pre-School and Kindergarten – Wednesday, October 3

Early Renaissance (1<sup>st</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> Grades) – Thursday, October 4

## **Symphony Field Trip**

LaPorte Symphony: 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades - October 12<sup>th</sup>

\*Students are required to wear the full Dress Uniform.

## **Indiana Dunes 3-Day Field Trip**

**“Frog in the Bog”**

Upper Renaissance (4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grades) – Wednesday, Oct. 24 - Friday, Oct.26

.....FYI Parent-to-Parent ...

## **PIONEER DAYS**

at Creek Ridge Park

September 22-23

This Fall event is a fun activity to enjoy with your children. Some families are planning on going on **Sunday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1:00 – 3:00pm.**

Hope we run into each other there!