



The Lion's Pride



December 9, 2019



Sharing personal narratives in 3rd grade. Book Fair has begun!

Dear James John Families,

Happy December. I hope you are all well and enjoyed a nice Thanksgiving Break with your families. Sharon, Tobias, Lilah and I had a nice visit with Sharon's mom in the windy city of Chicago for Thanksgiving. Fortunately, we were able to make the trip there without too much difficulty and encountered a tiny bit of snow on the way.

Life has been typically busy since our last Lion's Pride. We had a successful series of parent teacher conferences on November 25-26. It was great seeing so many of our parents visiting the school and hearing important updates about their child's progress. If you were not able to attend your conference, please contact your child's teacher to set up a make-up date.

Looking ahead this month, we are focusing on the theme of caring school wide. Caring is defined as displaying kindness and concern for others and I encourage you all to discuss this theme with your child in the coming weeks. We

will be honoring students who have displayed caring at school at our Student of the Month Assemblies on December 19. A fun event on the horizon is our next school spirit day on December 20th which will be Crazy Hair Day. For this school spirit day, our new student council members will be choosing 2 students from each grade with the craziest hair style. We encourage all students (and adults) to participate in this spirit day.

Finally, as we move towards Winter Break, I want to wish you all a Happy Holidays and hope you enjoy some restful, nurturing time with your families. I feel we have had a great school year so far and I look forward to ongoing success in 2020.

Sincerely,

Dr. John Melvin

James John Student Council

Congratulations to our new Student Council Members. The members are:

<u>5th grade</u>	<u>4th grade</u>	<u>3rd Grade</u>	<u>2nd Grade *</u>
Claire Strieb	Aleah Valdez	Kayla Gentry	Harvey Edmonds
Kemiya Salah	Adrianna Henifin	Cooper Marsh	Ibrahim Salah
Garret Kaiser	Henry Allison	James Turkus	
Audrey Beck	Christopher Mendoza	Cloe Ortiz-Cruz	
Chistopher Mehrer	Kohler Clark-Kappus		
Ayden Rhoades			
Meguel Longoria			

*- Representatives from Mr. Parada and Ms. Fast have not been chosen yet.

The Student Council will meet with Dr. Melvin twice monthly and will focus on school improvement, promoting school spirit and community involvement. In the next few weeks, members will be choosing the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. Also, the student council chose our upcoming spirit day, Crazy Hair Day for December 20th.

Scholastic Book Fair – December 9 -12

It is an amazing thing to be in a community of readers. The book fair is here and there is a wonderful excitement in the building about books and reading! James John is committed to supporting reading for our students. For each James John student that brings an adult to the book fair, they can earn a free book (up to \$4.99) by reading a page in the book to them. This year we have even increased the amount to \$6.99 for our 5th graders because we know the older books are often more expensive.

In addition, thanks to the generosity of the community, we are able to provide every 4th grader and a 1st grade class with a book for every student. Thank you for all the ways you support reading with your children!

The book fair will be open on Dec. 9th – 12th from 7:30am – 8:40am & 1:45pm – 3:45pm and Wednesday (December 10th) afternoon only from 1:45pm – 6:30pm.

Music at James John with Vibe- K-2 Vocal Instruction and Grades 3-5 Choir-starting in January

Thanks to generous support from the James John PTA and the 2018 James John All Hands Raised Grant Fund, we will be offering one vocal music class per week to all of our K-2 classes beginning in January. The classes will be offered through our community partner, Vibe Music and the instruction will take place in individual classrooms. In addition, the music teacher will be organizing a school choir for students in grades 3-5. The choir is open to all students in grades 3-5 and practice will take place two days a week after lunch recess.

African-American Families Affinity Group Meeting - Thursday, January 9 @ 6:00pm

As an outcome of earlier listening sessions, we are continuing to partner with SEI and the James John SUN school to organize ongoing affinity group meetings for our African American families. The next meeting will be on Thursday, January 9th @ 6pm. All families (and staff) who identify as African-American are invited to this meeting. One topic that will be discussed is a planned February Black History Month celebration taking place on February 20th in the James John auditorium. Light refreshments and childcare will be provided. We ask families to RSVP to their teacher or the school office. Let me know if you have any questions or would like to support this event.

James John School Site Council – next meeting - Tuesday, January 21 @ 4pm – Room 29 & Parent Election

The James John School Council is comprised of parents, school staff, and administration and is designed to give input on the school's instructional program. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 21 @ 4pm. Meeting for the remainder of the school year will be on the 3rd Thursday @ 4pm. Site Council meetings are open to all parents and Spanish translation and childcare will be provided. For more information on James John Site Council, please visit: <https://www.pps.net/Page/3529>

In addition, there is one open position for a parent on the School Site Council. If you are interested in serving as a parent representative on the School Site Council, please complete the nomination form attached to this newsletter. Nomination forms are due to the school office by December 18. There will be an election in early January.

School Counselor – Andrea Nahurski

Comments from the Counseling Corner:

The school counselor's position at James John is to support students in their social and emotional growth. Students may work with the school counselor in small groups to support various skills such as friendship, problem-solving, and emotional regulation. If the need arises, students can visit the school counselor on an individual basis if they'd like to check-in about issues that may be impacting them at home such as grief, loss of a loved one, etc. The counselor's office is available at times to check-in with an adult in a private place, take short breaks to reset for classroom success, complete classwork or projects in a quiet space, or problem-solve in a small group as needed. In addition, the school counselor serves on the Student Intervention Team (SIT) to plan for individual student academic and behavior needs, coordinates with the Special Ed team to attend evaluation meetings and create behavior support plans, connects families to community agencies for further support, and participates on the school Climate team.

All children need the security of knowing the rules and boundaries of behavior to feel secure and be able to thrive at school. Our school expectations are that students Be

Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Kind. Since the first day of school, we have been teaching all of our students the behavior expectations for the various locations and activities we engage in at school. James John's Climate team has a committee of several staff members known as PBIS, which stands for Positive Behavior Intervention Support.

The PBIS Committee strives to promote positive behaviors and programs at school such as Pride of the Pride slips, token incentive chains, weekly Lion's Pride awards, and monthly student recognition assemblies. Other tasks of the PBIS committee include examining data, presenting at staff professional development, collaborating with other school-wide committees, and more. Around the school you'll see posters detailing these expectations in our "common areas." We have posters for bathrooms, the cafeteria and auditorium, hallways, and playground. The first days of school, students in grades 1-5 participated in a rotation of these locations and experienced staff members teaching them the expectations specific to each area. Next quarter, we'll revisit this format again with all students K-5. Additionally, every classroom teacher teaches the specific behaviors expected throughout the day, and reteaches expectations to provide a positive and efficient classroom environment. Because our classroom instruction relies on students' exploration and sharing of ideas and materials, it is imperative that every classroom fosters pro-social behavior by teaching clear expectations, routines, and procedures. Please ask your students about expected behaviors at school and how they might differ from what's expected at home. Take a look at our posters and check-in about what events are coming up, and feel free to talk with staff at school about how we build our community at James John.

We are also very fortunate to have a partnership with Multnomah County which provides bilingual mental health support to families and school-based therapy for students at James John. If parents are interested in receiving additional resources in regards to parenting topics, ongoing therapeutic support, and any other services to better meet their student and family needs, please feel free to connect with Andrea Nahurski, James John School Counselor. Email address is asobel@pps.net, or call 503-916-6266 to discuss support options available to families within James John, and/or to receive a referral to schedule an appointment with our collaborative partner at Multnomah County. Thank-you!

PTA News

Dear James John Families -

In November, we all received word from Dr. Melvin about a racist word chalked on the playground. This incident does not represent the best of our neighborhood, and our kids deserve better. While no one condones this action or wants this kind of language at, in, or on our school, the best thing we can do is... talk about it. Talk about it with each other, talk about it with our kids.

According to the most recent [school climate report](#), we have an opportunity to help our students feel safe. We can do this by staying connected, setting high expectations, and making the most of teachable moments in school and at home.

Towards that end, the January 21st PTA meeting is dedicated to how to talk to your kids about race. Too few parents talk with their kids about race, and this has serious implications because kids may assume talking about race is taboo and have no way to test and vet the stereotypes that our society makes implicit.

[Studies](#) show that even infants can distinguish skin tones. By early childhood, kids begin to have more favorable opinions of people they perceive as “the same” as they are – even if the similarities are meaningless.

The [Hechinger Report](#) outlines some interesting facts:

- Only 10 percent of parents discuss race often with their children.
- A parent’s race impacts how often these conversations are happening. Twenty-two percent of black parents discuss race often with their children, compared to six percent of white parents.
- Nearly thirty-five percent of all parents surveyed said they never talk to their children about social class.
- Fifty-seven percent of all parents said they rarely or never talk about gender with their kids. These conversations are less likely to happen with younger children.
- Less than a third of parents of three to five-year-old kids discuss race and ethnicity sometimes or often.

Your PTA is committed to diversity in all its types, because that is what is best for every small human who attends our school. We welcome your thoughts on this and look forward to learning more together in January. If you have any questions, comments, or ideas, please email us at equity@jamesjohnpta.org.

Sincerely -

Your PTA Leadership Team

Calendar of Events

20th – Spirit Day

Crazy Hair Day

23rd – January 3rd – Winter Break
school closed

January 2020

6th – return from Winter Break

8th - Walk to School Day

7:45 @ Community Center

Portland Public Schools recognizes the diversity and worth of all individuals and groups and their roles in society. It is the policy of the Portland Public School Board that there will be no discrimination or harassment of individuals or groups on the grounds of age, color, creed, disability, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation in any educational programs, activities or employment.

District Title VI & Title IX Contact: (503-916-3963)

District 504 Contact: (503-916-5460)

American Disabilities Act Contact: (503-916-3544)



Aml Salem



James John Elementary
7439 N Charleston Ave.
Portland, OR 97203

My name is Aml Salem. Currently I am a first grade teacher at James John Elementary. I have been teaching for five years overseas and three years as a substitute teacher with Portland Public Schools. I have an undergraduate degree in the Art of Education and currently one term away from completing a Master's degree in bi-lingual Education through Oregon State University. My career goal is becoming a dual language educator to close the opportunity gap for historically underserved students in our culturally diverse community.

Sincerely,
Aml Salem



With early snow in at least one forecast, time for a reminder on how to stay updated

Meteorologist Rod Hill of KGW recently [issued a winter forecast](#) that projected 8 to 10 inches of snow, including possible early snow in November or December. If that turns out to be correct, that would be much earlier snow than last school year, when our first weather-caused disruption to the regular classroom schedule did not come until Feb. 5.

Whatever the accuracy of the forecast, it seems a good time for a refresher for the Portland Public Schools community about how we let you know about school closures and delays caused by weather, or school emergencies or other special events. Here are the ways we get that information to you:

School Messenger: You can get text alerts and auto-dialer calls on your cell phone with important news and updates. Text "Yes" or "Y" to 68453.

Website: Our website, www.pps.net, will have immediate updates. Look for a yellow bar across the top of the home page when there is an urgent situation or weather-related closures.

Twitter: We put out urgent communications on this social media platform. Simply [follow our account](#) to get updates.

Facebook: We also put urgent communications on Facebook. "Like" [our account](#) to get posts into your timeline.

Phone calls: Auto-dialer calls go to the primary numbers on the student registration form in all supported languages. Remember to update contact information with your school if your phone number changes.

The decisions about weather-caused closures and delays are made after a PPS transportation crew personally inspects roads starting at 2:30 a.m., and consultations with a large group of experts and district leaders. Read more about the process in a [PPS Pulse story from March](#).