

January 2017

Happy New Year to our middle school family! I hope the holidays gave you the opportunity to spend some quality time with family and friends and for your children to relieve some of the stress that comes along with the pressures of school work. The New Year gives us the opportunity to set new goals, both personally and professionally, and to renew our sense of hope for health, happiness and prosperity. I wish all of you the best throughout 2017 and look forward to meeting our continued goals of academic, social and emotional growth for our children.

December brought an amazing atmosphere to our school as we promoted the spirit of charity and giving. Throughout December, our student ambassadors travelled to Secaucus to spend time with young boys and girls from some of our poorest cities in New Jersey, our foreign language club, under the direction of Mrs. Francisco, was able to collect approximately 100 toys for children at Palisades Medical Center and our music ensembles went out into the community to perform holiday music for the senior citizens of Fort Lee. We are tremendously blessed with strong student and faculty groups who are eager to support our community and give back to those who are less fortunate. I thank all of our parents and guardians for helping us spread the message of charity and kindness towards others.

Our S.A.D.D. organization (Students Against Destructive Decisions), under the direction of Mrs. Pinajian, also collected coats, hats, gloves and other winter attire to help support those who are less fortunate as the weather gets colder. To date, we have collected over 200 clothing items and the drive ends on Friday, January 6. If you or your children received any new coats or winter attire for the holidays, this is a perfect time to donate some of the old items. Your child can bring them to school and place them in the collection area outside of the gymnasium.

We also rounded out the month of December with our holiday concerts. For all of you who were in attendance at the parent/guardian concert on December 15, you were able to witness all of the hard work and effort put into this event by our students and teachers. Music is a large part of our school culture and continues to thrive and prove its worth to our well-rounded programs. The gift of music is always something to be grateful for and I thank all our students for representing our school in such a positive manner.

January brings many exciting events at LFCMS and we are prepared to begin the New Year on a positive note. Our PTA meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 11 in the middle school's media center. An important presentation will be made by our guidance department titled "Finding Kindness." This is an essential theme that runs through our school and will speak about some of the bullying issues middle school students face daily. I encourage all of our parents and guardians to mark your calendars for this date and come out to learn more about helping your child through some of the challenges that come with adolescence.

On Wednesday, January 18, we are hosting an assembly for 7<sup>th</sup> grade students that will bring four Holocaust survivors to speak to them about respect, kindness and hope. This assembly aligns directly with the novel Milkweed, which the 7<sup>th</sup> graders are currently reading. We are excited to bring this assembly back to LFCMS for the second straight year and thank the Fort Lee Education Foundation for funding it. The 7<sup>th</sup> graders will then travel to Medieval Times in Lyndhurst on Friday, January 20 for some educational entertainment as they begin to learn about this historical era in their social studies classes.

Fort Lee High School is hosting a parent/guardian orientation on Thursday, January 5 at 6:00 p.m. This event will begin in the high school's auditorium and will then allow you to visit all of the classrooms to learn about all academic programs. You will also be given the opportunity to speak to administrators and learn all about the numerous extra-curricular activities available at Fort Lee High School. This is an exciting time for our 8<sup>th</sup> graders who will soon be at the high school level. I hope all of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents and guardians attend this event. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are also invited to attend.

Our second marking period officially ends on Tuesday, January 31. This year, our quarterly exams were replaced with mid-term and final exams for 8<sup>th</sup> graders only. The reason for this change was to better prepare our 8<sup>th</sup> graders for the assessment structure in place at Fort Lee High School. No mid-terms or finals will be given to 7<sup>th</sup> graders. The exams for 8<sup>th</sup> graders will take place during the week of January 23 and will skills-based or content-based depending on the subject area. Specific information will be provided by the 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and posted on their respective web pages. Report cards for marking period 2 will be available via Genesis only at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, February 3.

Our goals at LFCMS are always to prepare you children for the next levels of their education and to give them the self-confidence to believe that they can achieve all of the goals they set for themselves. Parents and guardians are the biggest influence in this process and I cannot thank all of you enough for the support you give to our school community. I wish our entire LFCMS family the best of health and happiness throughout 2017. This is going to be a great year!!

All the Best,

Robert Daniello  
Principal  
Lewis F. Cole Middle School