



At 'The Historic Y'  
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*A project of:*  
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Dear 8<sup>th</sup> Graders & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents:

Your middle school days are almost history. While one might be tempted to dwell in the lovely memories – resist – there is still work to do! Here is what you can look forward to, over the next few busy weeks.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Portfolio Exhibition – May 4<sup>th</sup>

The 8<sup>th</sup> graders continue to work to prepare their graduation portfolios for presentation on Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>. They have been working on these since before Winter Break, however, many still have much work to complete in order to present successfully. Here is a link to an online description of the portfolio process:

<http://www.paulofreireschool.org/university/student-performances/8th-grade-graduation-by-exhibition/>.

On that first Wednesday in May, students will be assigned a 45-minute time slot for their presentations. Please note that 8<sup>th</sup> graders have to be at school on that day (May 4<sup>th</sup>) **only** for their assigned time slot and for any portfolio presentation they are attending as a peer observer. **A portfolio scheduling form (see attached) needs to be completed and returned by this Friday (April 15<sup>th</sup>).** We will notify students/parents of their time slot for their portfolio presentation next week.

Portfolio presentations will be assessed by their Portfolio Panel consisting of their Advisor, a faculty member, family member(s) and a 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade peer. Friends may attend the presentation as non-judging guests. **Successful completion of a Portfolio and Portfolio Presentation is a requirement for promotion.** Students who do not receive a passing score will be given a second chance (scheduled for the week of May 9<sup>th</sup>). Although somewhat stressful for our graduates, we know that this process is an amazing learning experience! Here is a link to a downloadable description of the portfolio presentation process:

[http://www.paulofreireschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Graduation\\_Exhibition.pdf](http://www.paulofreireschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Graduation_Exhibition.pdf)

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion Ceremony – Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion ceremony will be held at **The Historic Y in the ZUZI! Theater** at 6:00pm on Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. All students will be released early that day at 1:45pm (instead of Wed) to give us time to prepare for the evening's festivities. A committee of 7<sup>th</sup> graders will be planning the ceremony. **Eighth graders may invite up to 6 people, including family members.** If this limit poses a problem for your family let us know – we might be able to find a few extra spaces. The program will last approximately an hour and a half with a pot luck reception held afterwards in **the Historic Y 'Courtyard'**. We suggest bringing shared, pot luck dishes as follows **by last name:**

A-C - Sides & Salads  
D-Q - Main dishes  
R-Z - Deserts & Drinks

## Final Days of School

The staff is reworking the schedule for the last days of school so that students can complete their final exhibitions of class work and we can wrap up the school year in a fun and memorable way. Our **all-school award ceremony** will be held this year on Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-1:45 in the World Stage. We will be presenting the following awards:

- **Grade Level Academic Recognition**
- **School-wide Habits of Heart & Mind Awards**

The special '**Paulo Freire Freedom School Awards**' will be given to 3-4 graduates during the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion Ceremony later that evening:

- **To Know** (All-Around Academics)
- **To Dream** (Social Justice & Environmental Sustainability)
- **To Rise** (Recognition for Growth)

## Last Day of School – Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>

Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup> is a shortened final day for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders. We are asking 8<sup>th</sup> graders to report to school on that last day at 10:30am. They will leave at around noon to go to the **Tucson Racquet Club for their 8<sup>th</sup> grade Graduation Party (12:30-3:30pm)**.

## Student Success

While most of our students are on track academically, there are a few for whom the last days of school are particularly challenging. Our goal is to help all students successfully complete the year. During the last few weeks we will be using Learning Labs and Literacy Time to provide students with extra support. We also may require students to work during lunches or after school if the additional time is necessary. In these cases we may be contacting families in order to coordinate efforts in this final push!

## How Can You Help?

1. **Portfolio Assistance** (April 28<sup>th</sup> thru May 3<sup>rd</sup> – The days leading up to Portfolio Exhibition can be particularly stressful for our 8<sup>th</sup> graders. In the past we have had a parent or two help students manage the organizational part of their portfolio. This work will largely be done during learning labs from 2:30-3:30. If you are interested in helping out, let us know.
2. **Portfolio Exhibitions** – Support your young person at home to create a powerful presentation and come to their exhibition on May 4<sup>th</sup> to celebrate with them their growth and success.
3. **Send baby pictures** – A special part of our Promotion Celebration on May 24<sup>th</sup> is a slide show that includes a photo of each of our graduates when they were little. If you could send us a baby picture ASAP, we can begin putting that together. (You can email electronic copies or bring in hard copies that we can scan into electronic copies and give back to you).
4. **Promotion** – Please plan to drop off your 8<sup>th</sup> grader by 5:15pm at the school on May 24<sup>th</sup> with the pot luck dish you are bringing for the post-graduation party afterwards.

This is always a momentous occasion for our school. It is hard for us to see our 8<sup>th</sup> graders moving on – but we are so very proud of them and we fully expect them to keep in touch!

Sincerely,



Santo Nicotera  
Co-Director