

RAPP

RENAISSANCE ACADEMY PRINTING PRESS

February 9-13

rappsubmissions@gmail.com

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*Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement.
Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.*

- Helen Keller

IMPORTANT DATES

February 11 - 20 SAGE Writing

February 9 - 13 - HOPE Week (FEC Sponsored)

Monday February 16 - Washington-Lincoln Day

Saturday February 21 - Ballroom Competition

Thursday & Friday February 26 & 27 SEPs

Theme Days for HOPE WEEK*

Monday, February 9 – Peace, Love, and Kindness – Wear tie dye shirts & headbands

Tuesday, February 10 – Mix it Up – Wear crazy or mismatched socks

Wednesday, February 11 – Never Give Up Hope – Wear yellow for hope

Thursday, February 12 – Friendship is Magical – Wear fairy tale attire

Friday, February 13 – Friendship Day – Wear pink or red (MS must be in dress code attire for field trip)

*Unless otherwise specified above, all other articles of clothing must be dress code appropriate.

Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence (SAGE)

SAGE is a series of online formative and summative tests designed to measure students' understanding of Utah's Core Standards in English language arts, mathematics, and science. SAGE formative assessments are used to ***monitor*** student learning and provide teachers feedback that can be used to guide and improve their teaching during the current school year. The year-end SAGE summative assessment is used to ***evaluate*** student learning at the end of their grade level instruction. Summative assessment results can help teachers and administrators plan for future instructional activities and student supports.

State law requires all public schools (district and charter) to administer SAGE and other mandated assessments as detailed in state statute to students in grades 3-11. (http://le.utah.gov/code/TITLE53A/htm/53A01_061100.htm). These assessment results provide us with important longitudinal data about student learning. This information guides our teacher's classroom instruction and ensures that adjustments can be made for remediation or acceleration based on the individual needs of students.

State mandated summative testing is not new; however, the SAGE assessment is different from prior benchmark tests in that it goes beyond subject area content knowledge to provide important insight on students' analytical and problem solving skills. It also includes many powerful new tools to help educators effectively use student results to drive classroom instruction.

Utah state law allows parents to opt their student out of the year-end **summative** SAGE test. Opt-out requests must be submitted annually. Therefore, parents may only opt-out their student from the 2014-15 SAGE summative test at this time. Parents may not opt-out a student from the formative assessments conducted prior to the year-end summative test.

We have prepared a FAQ document regarding SAGE that contains additional details regarding the test. If you are considering opting your student out of the SAGE test for the 2014-2015 school year please be sure to read all of the FAQ before doing so to ensure you are fully informed of your options.

RENAISSANCE ACADEMY END OF YEAR TESTING FAQ

Is my student required to take the SAGE test?

No. However, Renaissance Academy is required to administer the test and is accountable for both student participation and proficiency. Here is a link to the state's participation policy.

<http://sageportal.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Portal CMS Tutorial Resource.pdf>

How do I opt my student out of taking the SAGE assessment?

You must complete the Renaissance Academy 2014-15 opt-out form. This form will be posted on the school website and FEC Facebook page by Friday January 30, 2015.

If I opt out my student will it affect my child's grades?

No. There is no impact on student's class grades. Likewise, extra credit or participation points are not awarded to students who take the test.

What repercussions are there for Renaissance Academy and/or my student if we choose to opt out of the 2014-15 SAGE assessment?

It depends whether the student is absent from school during testing OR whether they attend school but opt-out and do not participate in the assessment. The consequences for each scenario are detailed in the state's Student Test Participation Policy. Here is a summary:

If a student *is absent from school* during test administration:

1. The absence will count against the school when calculating its percentage of student participation. Utah code 53A-1-1110 requires schools to have 95% participation on state mandated tests. Schools who have less than 95% participation will receive a school grade of "F".
2. The absent student does not receive a test score and is not included in the school's proficiency/achievement calculation.

If a student attends school during the test administration but opts not to participate in testing:

1. There is no impact on the school's participation percentage for the purposes of determining compliance with the 95% statutory requirement.
2. The student receives a non-proficient score (1 out of 5). The score will also be included in the school's proficiency/achievement calculations.

Will opting my student out of the assessment ensure that their data is not transmitted to the federal government?

No. All students in a public school are included in the aggregate data submitted to the federal government whether or not they take the assessment. Aggregate data is state, district, school and grade level data. It does not include student level data. The state office of education has reported aggregate data to the federal government since the 1970s. Neither the new Core Standards nor the SAGE assessment changes these data collection requirements.

When will Renaissance administer the SAGE test?

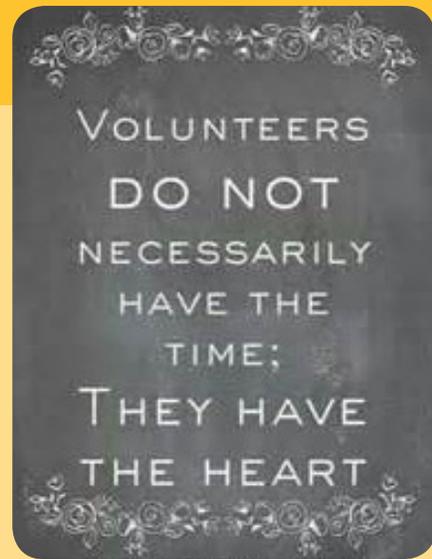
Testing will begin the weeks of Monday February 9 - 20 (SAGE Writing) and Monday May 4 - 29 (Math, Science, Language Arts (Reading, Language, Listening)). We have until May 29th to administer the test to students in grades 3-9. The Math, Science and Language Arts (Reading, Language, Listening) tests require one test session of approximately 90 - 135 minutes to complete. Language Arts (Writing) requires two 90-minute writing sessions.

How much class time is spent preparing for the SAGE assessment test?

The SAGE test is a summative assessment. It is designed measure student proficiency of the state standards which are the foundation of teachers daily instructional planning The only specific time allocated to test preparation is the use of computer labs for practice tests. Since the format of the test now requires students to type their answers and navigate other more complex tasks to answer questions we have required all teachers to use the SAGE practice assessment tool with their students to familiarize them with the test format.

As a parent can I preview the SAGE test questions?

The questions are not available publically. However, if you are interested in understanding the nature of the test you can take some training modules online. The training tests can be found at <http://sageportal.org/training-tests/>. You can access the portal with Username: guest Password: guest



FEC VOLUNTEERS ROCK!

What a great week for volunteers at Renaissance. So many volunteers generously giving service from the heart. Thank you!

Congratulations to Hlumela Tibbett , our Smith's Marketplace volunteer of the week, chosen at random from the volunteer tracking program, helpcounter.net. Hlumela said:

"I just love being at the school and seeing how hard the teachers work, like during the 100 days celebration. Being at the school, I feel more confident to help my kids. I do the Take-Home library, and I love seeing the kids advance, and it's also helped me with my own children. When I'm not at the school it's easy to not follow through. Another good thing is seeing other volunteers. It's like team-work with the teachers. At the beginning, I was totally intimidated about volunteering, even with little kids, but there are different ways you can help. Volunteering is very flexible."

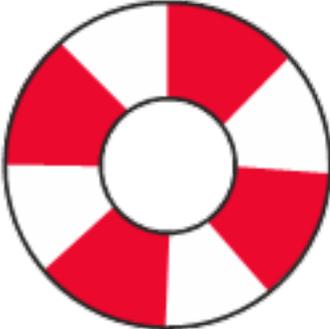
Hlumela has received a \$5 gift card from our neighborhood Smith's Marketplace.

Track your volunteer hours at home on help.counter.net or at school, in the office on the laptop next to the school counselors office. Knowing where and how you serve is very helpful information to have, especially when applying for grants. Thanks again!

Tip:

Be sure to track the hours spent outside of school preparing for wonder days and holiday parties and purchasing classroom supplies.

HOPE



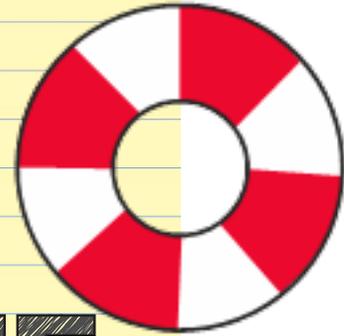
SQUAD

Hold on. Persuade. Empower.

The HOPE Squad will be organizing HOPE Week during the week of February 9-13.

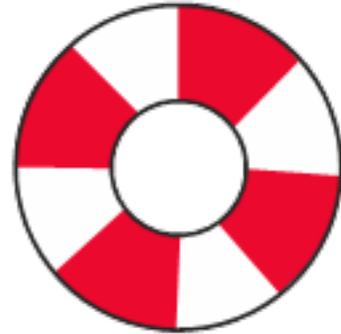
The HOPE Squad is a group of students who function as a peer support team at Renaissance Academy. The purpose of this group is to provide friendship, encouragement, and support for students who may be struggling. The overall goal is to improve access and availability to appropriate prevention services for vulnerable youth and individuals who may be at risk for suicide. Students who are part of Hope Squad were nominated by their peers as someone who displays naturally good listening skills and to whom students would go if they needed help during difficult times. Students do not act as a counselor, but rather are trained to refer student peers to a trusted adult for help.

To kick off this new program, the HOPE Squad will be organizing activities during Hope Week. The focus for the week is on promoting KINDNESS and SUPPORT in the Renaissance Academy community. Students in grades K-9 will participate in a Kindness Challenge where they will work toward completing as many kind acts as they can during the week. They will receive a checklist of kind acts in their homeroom class on Monday, February 9. Students are encouraged to keep the checklist at school so they do not lose it. Checklists are due to their teacher no later than Friday, February 13. Those students who turn in their checklist will receive a reward for their kind deeds.



SAVE the DATE

February 9-13, 2015



GreatKindnessChallenge.org
A Kids for Peace Experience



Kindly Presented by
Dignity Health™

Celebrate **CHINESE NEW YEAR** with **RENAISSANCE ACADEMY**

Join us at Renaissance Academy on Wednesday, February 18th at 7:00pm to celebrate the Year of the Goat!

Chinese Calligraphy • Face Painting • Watch the story of Chinese New Year • and more!

8:00 pm Performances by Shen Yun Performing Arts and Renaissance Academy Students



BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

- There will be a board meeting this month on Wednesday, February 25th at 7pm. Public welcome!
- The minutes from past Board Meetings as well as agendas for upcoming meetings can be found at <http://renacademy.org/>.