



# THE PAW PRINT



Title I  
Schoolwide Newsletter

### Translation Services

Just a phone call  
away...

Parean ki ta renmen gen  
enfomasyon ki nan let  
sa a an ol kapab rele an

(561) 374-5600

Cualquier persona que  
desee recibir la  
información de esta  
carta puede llamar

(561) 374-5600



### January

- 15th
- No School
- 22nd-26th
- Literacy Week
- 14th
- Magnet Open House
- February 5th-9th
- PTSA Carnation Sale

## CELEBRATE THE GREAT!

### Congratulations and Farewell

We have some bittersweet news. Dr. Thompson will be leaving Congress Middle and pursuing a new venture. Effective January 4th, he transitioned to his new job as Student Advocacy Specialist for the Department of Support Services.

We thank him for over 10 years of service at Congress Middle school as an Assistant Principal and teacher. He will be truly missed but we wish him the best as he pursues his passion for students and education on another level.



We have some bittersweet news. Mr. Hawkins will be leaving Congress Middle and pursuing a new venture. Effective after the January board meeting, he will transition to his new job as Assistant Principal at Suncoast Community High School. We thank him for his 3 years of outstanding service to Congress Middle school as an Assistant Principal. He will be truly missed but we wish him the best as he pursues his passion for students and education on another level.

## PRINCIPALLY SPEAKING

Hats off to Mr. Simmons who did a fantastic job planning the Principal's honor Trip to the South Florida Fair. Students had a great time!



### MLK Celebration

On Monday, January 15, 2024, the Congress Middle School cheerleaders, led by Ms. Davis and Ms. Brown, had the honor of being invited to showcase their talents at the esteemed 2nd Annual Martin Luther King Day Celebration. Our remarkable Lady Cougars graced the event with their presence, leaving an everlasting mark on the Boynton Beach community. With an impressive turnout of over 500 attendees, the event's popularity continues to soar. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Ms. Brown and Ms. Davis for their unwavering dedication towards our cheerleaders. As always, let us rally behind our beloved Cougars! GO COUGARS



### Inside this issue:

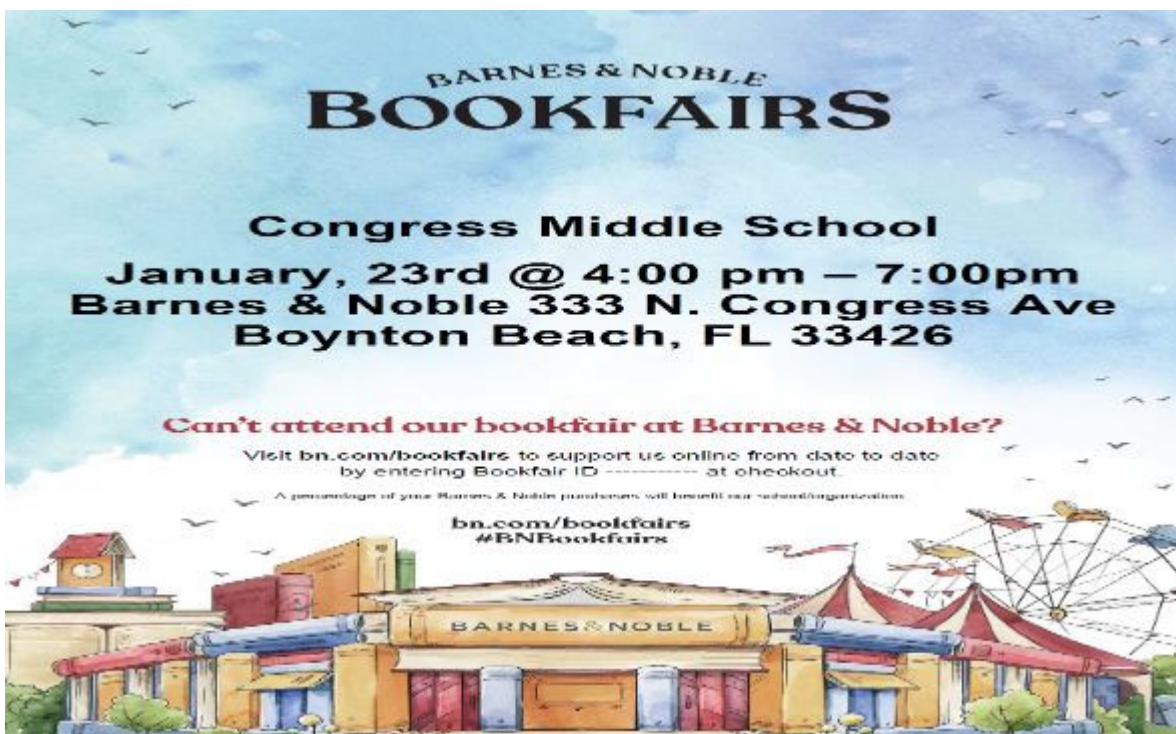
<b>Principally Speaking</b>	1
<b>Student Achievement</b>	2
<b>Get Involved</b>	4
<b>Clubs and Sports</b>	6
<b>Community News</b>	7

**Literacy Week**

“Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! is designed to raise awareness about the importance of reading and to inspire Florida’s students and families to make reading part of their daily routines.” This year’s theme ‘Believe in Your Shelf’ will be celebrated with a Spirit Week activity. Each day beginning Monday, January 22nd, students may dress up according to the day’s theme. Please see the poster below for details.



Additionally, during lunch, students may visit Ms. Sullivan to participate in a Book Tasting event to highlight books within the media center based on the genre of the day. Ms. Sullivan will distribute passes to each Period 3 teacher. One student per class may participate each day. Mark your calendars for the Congress Literacy Week Book Fair being held on Tuesday, January 23rd



**Black History Month Activities**

"We must never forget that Black History is American History. The achievements of African Americans have contributed to our nation's greatness."

— Yvette Clarke, U.S. congresswoman

The FY 24 theme “Create.Cultivate.Celebrate” will shine a spotlight on Black entrepreneurship, HBCUs and historic communities. Through it our Congress Cougars that Black people have built bountiful businesses, trail-blazing brands and blocks of thriving neighborhoods. To kick-off the learning, Literacy Week (January 22nd-26th) will include morning announcements featuring Black authors with connections to Florida. Additional activities include:

- Staff Event: ‘Dishing the Diaspora’
- Cougar Museum
- Student Business Expo

BLACK HISTORY MONTH ACTIVITIES				
Create.Cultivate.Celebrate				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		Jan 17 📖 Kick-Off of Black History Month Exhibit Project AM ANnouncements	Jan 18 📖 Kick-Off of Black History Month Exhibit Project AM ANnouncements	Jan 19 📖 Kick-Off of Black History Month Exhibit Project AM ANnouncements
Jan 22 📖 Literacy Week Believe in Your Shelfie Author Highlight: <a href="#">Zora Neale Hurston</a>	Jan 23 📖 Literacy Week Believe in Your Shelfie Author Highlight: <a href="#">Edwidge Danticat</a> (Miami)  Barnes and Nobles Book Fair Night 4-7PM	Jan 24 📖 Literacy Week Believe in Your Shelfie Author Highlight: <a href="#">Colson Whitehead</a> (Nickel Boys)	Jan 25 📖 Literacy Week Believe in Your Shelfie Author Highlight: <a href="#">Ibram X. Kendi</a> (UF Professor/Stamped)	Jan 26 📖 Literacy Week Believe in Your Shelfie Author Highlight: <a href="#">Pyramid Books - Black Owned Bookshop</a>
Jan 29 👕 Spirit Week: Wear Green and Orange HBCU Highlight: FAMU	Jan 30 👕 Spirit Week: Wear Burgundy and Gold HBCU Highlight: Bethune Cookman	Jan 31 👕 Spirit Week: Wear Blue and Orange HBCU Highlight: Florida Memorial	Feb 1 👕 Spirit Week: Wear Purple and Orange HBCU Highlight: Edward Waters	Feb 2 👕 Spirit Week: HBCU T-Shirt
Feb 5 👉 Entrepreneur Highlight: Daymond John	Feb 5 👉 Entrepreneur Highlight: Shaquille O’Neill	Feb 6 👉 Entrepreneur Highlight: George Foreman	Feb 7 👉 Entrepreneur Highlight: Shonda Rhimes	Feb 8 👕 Spirit Week: Wear a Shirt with a Quote
Feb 12 📖 Historic Communities Black Wall Street	Feb 13 📖 Historic Communities Harlem, NY	Feb 14 📖 Historic Communities Oakland	Feb 15 📖 Historic Communities Sweet Auburn ATL	Feb 16 👕 Spirit Week: Wear a Shirt with a Quote
Feb 19 NO SCHOOL/ PDD 👉 Staff Dishing the Diaspora	Feb 20 Build Your Own Brand: Students will create their own product, service. 3 Selected Students will attend trip	Feb 21 Build Your Own Brand: Students will create their own product, service. 3 Selected Students will attend trip	Feb 22 Build Your Own Brand: Students selected and announced.	Feb 23 👕 Spirit Week: Red, Green and Black 📍 Palm Beach Historical Field Trip
Feb 26 📖 Museum Exhibit 6th Grade Social Studies Visits	Feb 27 📖 Museum Exhibit 7th Grade Social Studies Visits	Feb 28 📖 Museum Exhibit 8th Grade Social Studies Visits	Feb 29 📖 Museum Exhibit Honorees selected and announced.	

Magnet/Choice Applications

The deadline to apply for all choice programs is January 26th 2024. Visit [mypbchoiceapp.com](http://mypbchoiceapp.com) to apply for one of Congress' 4 choice programs:

Pre-Engineering - This program leads to the Boynton Beach High School's Engineering program. Students will learn about bridge construction, home floor plan designs, building codes, architectural lettering, and robotics.

Pre-Medical - Students learn basic life services, vital signs training, medical technology, and CPR skills. This program leads to the Boynton Beach High School's Medical program.

Digital Video Design - Students get to create the morning announcements, videos, and interviews using the latest technology such as final cut pro, adobe premiere, garage band, clip grab, scriptwriting, casting, and production management.

Digital Art - Students not only design their art on paper, but transition it to the technology tools using Procreate and Adobe Pro. Students interact with bookmaking, topography, sculpting, drawing, painting, creating collages, printmaking, and Adobe creative cloud.

For more information on our programs, contact Ms. Trifolio, our magnet coordinator at 561-374-5600.

WIDA

The WIDA ACCESS screening is the assessment used to measure the progress of our ESOL students. The students are tested in 4 areas: Reading, Speaking, Listening, and Writing. The Reading, Listening, and Writing portions can be done in a group setting. The speaking section has to be done on an individual basis. The ESOL teachers will be administering the assessment to students, starting Wednesday January 24th through March 12th

MSCRP

If your child has received an F in any quarter, he/she will be removed from their elective and placed in a critical thinking class. In this class, the students will have the opportunity to increase that F. Once they do, they will be moved out of critical thinking and be placed back into their elective. If your child does not attend and pass the critical thinking class, he/she will not be promoted to the next grade level.

Tutorials

Our tutorial program is up and running. On Saturdays from 9 to 12, we offer tutorials in Algebra and Geometry. On Mondays and Wednesdays from 8 to 8:45, we offer Math tutorial. Language arts tutorials will begin shortly. If you are interested in having your child sign up for tutorial, please contact the main office at 561-374-5600.

Congress Middle School is proud to announce our school finalists for the science fair. Please congratulate the following students as they have advanced to the District Science and Engineering fair where they will compete against other Palm Beach County schools for an opportunity to compete at the State Science Fair.

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Makayla Alvarez 8th grade  | Clifford Alliance 8th grade |
| Nephtalie Adrien 8th grade | Michael Cofield th grade    |
| Elissa Velez 8th grade     | Jasiah Singleton 7th grade  |
| Jolicia Yssac 8th grade    | Atzhiry Mendieta 6th grade  |
| Jeremiah Vega 8th grade    | Adlisha Dorneson 6th grade  |



FAMILY NEWS

Administration would like to welcome the following individuals to the Congress family:



Co -Located Therapist  
Larry Duncombe



Attendance Clerk  
Elizabeth Destine Theus

**Holiday Day Show**

Administration would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the students, faculty, and staff for a wonderful job with our Annual international Holiday show. The night was filled with wonderful performances by all involved. I would like to thank the City of Boynton Beach for its generosity and hospitality throughout the entire process. We would also like to thank our business partners , The Picnic and Kona Ice .



**Hip-Hop Style - It's About Culture!**

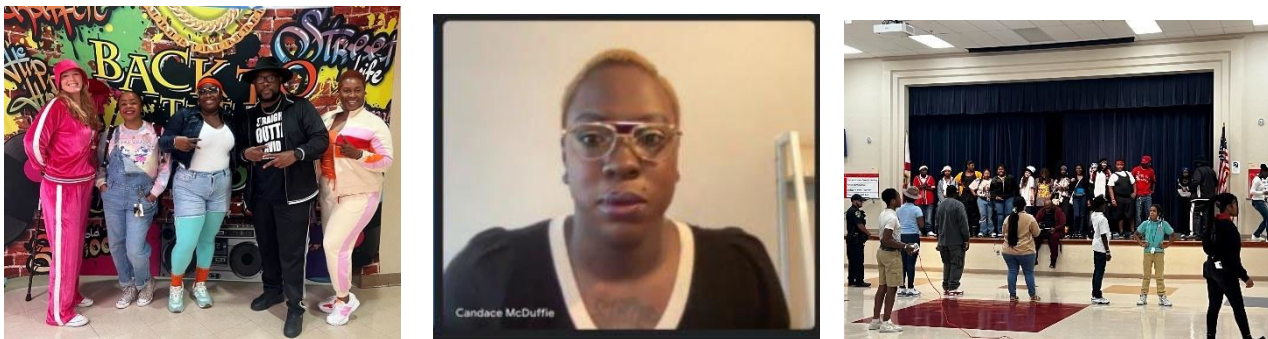
In the illustrious words of hip hop phenom, Queen Latifah, these past several weeks have been an opportunity for the Congress Cougar community to come together in U.N.I.T.Y for the 50 Years of Hip Hop for the Culture school wide initiative.

The Congress Literacy Committee consisting of a smattering of stakeholders, across all disciplines, *united to develop and implement several opportunities for students and staff to work together. Through the work of this committee, several classes banded together to decorate classroom doors to pay homage to various genres of hip-hop. Members of the greater Boynton Beach community, and Palm Beach School District Leadership visited the campus to recognize those efforts during the door decorating contest.* Additionally, first period teachers supported the overall goals of the Congress Literacy Committee, with helping students hone their writing and speaking skills by delivering daily read aloud featuring the biographies of notable, hip-hop artists such as Jay-Z, Missy Elliot and the Sugar Hill Gang. This component of the initiative was a standards-based activity which provided an opportunity for students to explore both vocabulary and comprehension.

An author's visit was coordinated to enable *all students a chance to meet with Candace McDuffie, who penned the book 50 rappers Who Changed the World. During this Q&A session members of the digital arts program led a student broadcast to explore the author's craft and author's purpose. Students and staff were able to interact with the author as she discussed the role hip hop has played within society.*

The capstone activity held prior to the holiday break was reminiscent of an old-school block party. Students, staff and community members *assembled to play double dutch, freestyle and engage in visual arts. All who attended had an amazing time.*

Respect and appreciation to all those who *collaborated on the schoolwide effort !*



**Community News**

National Junior Honor Society would like to thank all of the students and staff that donated to their Food Drive for Family Promise of Delray Beach.

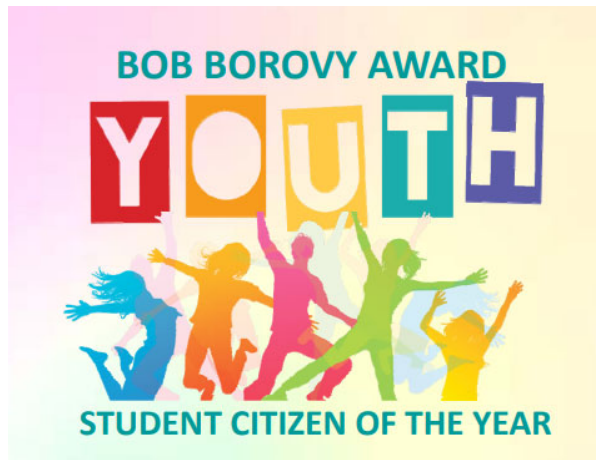


### Bob Borovy Student Award

The city is accepting awards for student citizen of the year. This award is given to a graduating high school senior who best embodies the spirit of volunteerism and giving back to the community, as exemplified by the late Bob Borovy.

High school seniors who reside in the city of Boynton Beach and are active in their community are eligible to apply.

All applications must be received by Sunday, March 31, 2024. [Visit our website to apply.](#)



### Summer Camp Scholarship

This program covers all summer camp expenses for qualifying children in Palm Beach County, ages 5 and 14.

Applications are accepted from January 29 to April 12, but space is limited.

For more information, contact the PBC Youth Services Department

[561-242-5713](tel:561-242-5713) or visit their [website](#).

### Tree-mendous Giveaway

City of Boynton Beach and Community Greenery will be giving away free trees at 9 a.m. Sat, January 27th, at Sara Sims Park. This will be a walk-up tree giveaway, with native and fruit tree options available.

Those receiving trees must be Boynton Beach residents to receive a tree. The trees will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis with a limit of two per household.



### Save the Date

Take a taste tour around the City of Boynton Beach at our annual food and wine festival, where the city's finest restaurants come together to showcase their culinary delights and diverse flavors.

Join us for an evening filled with appetizing food and drinks, live music and plenty of artisan vendors.

Local restaurants are invited to showcase their diverse and delectable flavors, which make Boynton Beach's food scene truly exceptional. Showcase your culinary expertise to a captivated audience [register here](#).



## COMMUNITY NEWS

Thank you to the Boynton Beach Police Department for their donation of 16 holiday baskets for families at Congress Middle School for their Community Giving Drive Winter 24.



## DISCIPLINE AND SAFETY

Dear parents, we are delighted to announce that Congress Middle School has recently implemented a ground-breaking system called Student Conductor. This revolutionary solution has been designed to effectively monitor and manage various aspects of your child's academic journey, including tardiness, fines, events, student activities, and disciplinary matters. By utilizing Student Conductor, our administration now possesses an advanced capability to provide you with real-time updates regarding your child's progress and activities here at Congress Middle School. Please be assured that this system will greatly enhance communication and ensure that you are well-informed about your child's educational experience. If you have not yet received an email or notification from the system, we kindly request you to visit the school to update your contact information.

## GET INVOLVED



### Share Your Thoughts by Completing the SEQ

The School District of Palm Beach County's School Effectiveness Questionnaire (SEQ) gives school-based staff and parents of enrolled students in all elementary, middle, and high school grades an opportunity to submit feedback to the District. Participation is strongly encouraged. [Read more about the SEQ.](#)

**The Staff and Parent SEQ are now open:**

- **School-Based Staff** – Complete the questionnaire by **Monday, February 19, 2024.**

**Both instructional and non-instructional school-based staff can access the SEQ through their Portal.**

- **Parents** – Complete the questionnaire by **Friday, February 9, 2024.**  
[Parents and guardians can go to this link to access the survey.](#)

## CLUBS & SPORTS

Dear parents, we would like to bring your attention to the exciting sports opportunities available at Congress Middle School. We are delighted to inform you about the ongoing boys and girls basketball teams, as well as the girls soccer team. These sports are currently in progress, offering a fantastic chance for your children to engage in physical activities and showcase their skills. Looking ahead to April 2024, we have more thrilling sports events lined up for your children. The boys and girls track teams, along with the boys volleyball team, will be starting. These sports provide a wonderful platform for your children to develop their athletic abilities and foster teamwork. We encourage you to consider these sports options for your children at Congress Middle School. Engaging in sports not only promotes physical well-being but also instills values such as discipline, teamwork, and perseverance. We believe that participating in these activities will greatly contribute to your children's growth and development. If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to assist you and provide the necessary support to ensure a positive and enriching sports experience for your children. Thank you for your attention, and we look forward to your child's active participation in our sports programs.

Sincerely, Congress Middle School Administration

Congratulations to our Girls Volleyball team on a great season. Our 8th grade girls were recognized at their last game of the season.



## PTSA & SAC

### Valentines Carnation Sales

Students will be able to purchase a carnation for \$1.00 in the cafeteria from February 1-9. The delivery of the Carnations will be February 14. Please support the PTSA!!! Also, teachers can earn comp time by assisting with the selling of carnations during lunches.





BUSINESS PARTNERS

Administration would like to thank the following community business partners:

