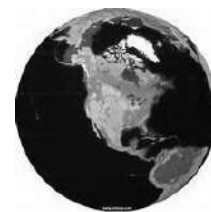




Obama Magnet Elementary School Gifted Education Newsletter



Happy Holidays!

DECEMBER 2019

Playground Project Phase II Underway!



Phase I of the Obama Magnet Playground Project, "Improving the Culture of Health in Our School," was dedicated on September 13, 2019. Phase I focused on the school's north playground area and included the installation of a 6 seat swing-set, basketball goal, tetherball pole, and renovations to the playground blacktop area.

We are now focusing our attention to Phase II of the project. Phase II will include repair and/or replacement of equipment located on the school's south playground, renovation of the blacktop area, and other improvements. The estimated cost of Phase II is between \$23,000-\$25,000.

Plans for Phase II include acquisition of funds and coordination of resources beginning with the start of the 2019-2020 school year. To date, over \$20,000 has been raised! Current sponsors include the Jack and Jill Foundation, Selby and Richard McRae Foundation, and the Obama Magnet PTA. Phase II is expected to be completed by the end of summer, 2020.

If you know of someone or a business that might be interested in supporting this worthwhile endeavor, please contact David Schommer, at 601-951-9091.



Playground Dedication September 13, 2019



C-Spire Coding Challenge – 2nd Place!

STEM Club Members Place 2nd in C-Spire Coding Challenge!

Through special invitation, the Obama Magnet S.T.E.M. Club, had the opportunity to participate in a special event held at the **Mississippi Children's Museum** on **September 19, 2019**. This "invitation only" event was held in conjunction with the **Mississippi Science Fest**. Presented by **C-Spire**, the field trip included hands-on activities, special exhibitions, and interactive activities for our club members.

Organizers of the event requested a 4-student / 4th grade robotics team to compete in the coding challenge. Students were selected based, in part, upon their performance in Hour of Code. Members of the 4th grade team included Kaleigh Gates, Raelynn Austin, Gabriel Williams and Terrence Harvey.

Fifteen public and private schools across 14 counties competed. In an incredible performance, Obama Magnet placed 2nd in the competition! Madison Ridgeland Academy came in first place while Eastside Elementary, of Clinton, came in third. All 3 teams won a trophy, an iPad, the Cue robot and other related tech prizes! This was the second statewide coding challenge for elementary school students convened by C-Spire and Obama Magnet's second year to participate!

Other members of the STEM Club participated in a museum wide scavenger hunt. Students who completed the entire scavenger hunt were awarded a medal. Those students were Makenzie Ward, Nathalie Yakana, Zamiyah McClendon, Amerie Thomas, Serenity Moore, Aili Clincy, and Alayla Powell. *Congratulations!*

STEM Club Dominates Mississippi Robotics Competition

Congratulations to the Obama Magnet STEM Club for an outstanding performance in the Mississippi Robotics Competition held at Nissan on October 19th. 19 out of 20 STEM Club members participated in competition, which included Mathematics, Science Knowledge, Tool Identification, Remote Control Car Bowling, Drone Flying, SUMO and a mystery team event, which included building a functional simple machine. Students earned points in each category. Students with the highest percentages of points won 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. We placed in all categories with *multiple* 1st, 2nd, 3rd finishes. Eight of Obama Magnet students placed in the Top 10 overall! In the SUMO competition, **Raelynn Austin** and **Amerie Thomas** made it to the semi-final round.

Students were able select prizes based upon their total number of points! Congratulations to all of our participants! A thanks goes to all the parents who supported the event and the Greater Jackson Retired Teachers of Mississippi for serving as our sponsor. All of our teachers are to be commended as well. Organizers informed us that our students did extremely well in science and math – far superior to other schools and clubs in the competition. A special thanks also goes to Ms. Garner and Ms. Mays for serving as co-moderators for the STEM Club and helping our students prepare for competition!



Fall 2019 Mississippi Robotics Competition Results

1 st Place: Terrence Harvey - Obama	6 th Place: Justin Henry –WCCA
2 nd Place: Charles Irvin - Obama	7 th Place: Austin Windham – Obama
3 rd Place: Gabriel Williams – Obama	8 th Place: Alayla Powell - Obama
4 th Place: Kaleigh Gates – Obama	9 th Place: Kameron Moses - Obama
5 th Place: Donald Jordan – Obama	10 th Place: Demyrion Dillon - JCCDA

Junior League Grant Promotes Early Literacy

Obama Magnet was recently awarded a \$9,600+ grant from the Junior League of Jackson! The project, which is entitled, “Bound for Success – A Technological Transdisciplinary Approach to Early Literacy” aims to address the early literacy needs of our students through the effective use of technology using an inquiry based, transdisciplinary approach. The project includes 22 (classroom set) of Lenovo 500e Chromebooks and headphones. The grant-writing team included David Schommer, Kacy Hellings, and Beth Roach. This is the second technology grant awarded to Obama Magnet by the Junior League for a classroom set of Chromebooks! In 2018, the school received another \$9,600 grant for our global competency project!

Science Fair Supports Gifted Outcomes

The Obama Magnet Science Fair is scheduled for January 17, 2020. Participation in the science fair supports several gifted outcomes including conducting experiments and investigations utilizing the scientific method, gathering information through research, creating and visually organizing information, and justifying conclusions and generalizations based upon gathered data.

Science Fair Packets have been sent home. Projects are due January 13, 2020. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact [David Schommer](#).

Gifted Education at Obama Magnet

Barack H. Obama Magnet is an International Baccalaureate and Primary Years Program School. Due to the unique nature of our program, I work collaboratively with faculty and staff to incorporate the gifted standards into our rigorous IB program. Joining me this year is Patricia Burnett, who is assisting with 4th and 5th grade, part-time. Our service is not simply limited to students identified as intellectually gifted. We are a resource for ALL students and staff at Obama Magnet IB. I serve as chess club and STEM club moderator, gifted team leader, spelling bee, science fair and STEM lab / technology chairperson, playground project coordinator, grant-writer, and serve on the school safety, garden, Adopt-A-School, Exhibition, and Watch DOGS committees.

If you have any questions about the Open Doors Program, do not hesitate to [contact me via email](#).

David Schommer, M.Ed.

Chess Club Stimulates Higher Level Thinking

The Obama Magnet Chess Club is off to a great start with over 20 participants. The introductory class meets on Mondays, while more experienced players meet on Wednesdays. Thanks to the generosity of the **Obama Magnet PTA**, each club member received a gold membership to [ChessKid](#). This website provides lessons, puzzles, videos, articles, and more to help club members develop their skills!

The benefits of chess are many and support gifted outcomes! Benefits include memory development, improved concentration, development of logical thinking, promotion of imagination and the ability to predict and foresee consequences of actions. It also teaches independence and inspires self-motivation. These are just a few of the many benefits of learning to play chess!