

# Mission Hill School News

## Letter from Child Street

### Getting Ready for the Summer

Dear Mission Hill School Families, Friends, Staff and Students,

One month from now we will all be at the start of our summer. Courtney has been working since December or so to make sure all of our students have summer plans. We hope every child has quality time with family and friends, has fun outdoors, and will grow in lots of ways.

Whether your child is traveling, going to camp, staying home or visiting relatives this summer, there are a few things to keep in mind while they are away from school and have a different routine. There are lots of learning opportunities all around us. Take advantage of the summer to do new things and show

your own learning with your child. At the same time, there may be learning that you don't want your child to lose or forget. Summer time is a great time for practice and fun.

Keep those Habits of Mind alive during the summer. As your child tells you about a favorite part of a book, shares a story about the day at camp, or any experience, ask him or her questions. Encourage him or her to tell you a story from start to finish about one event that includes details instead of just listing the events of the day. Story time at the dinner table is fun all year. Keeping a summer journal is also wonderful. If your child is going to overnight camp write him or her letters.

It's not too soon to take a trip to the library or bookstore and create a list or pile of books that your child would like to read. Your child's teacher will send a list and/or several books home with your child for the summer. This includes the summer reading list published by the Boston Public Library.

Have fun with the math surrounding you and your child(ren). Create number games or pattern challenges with house numbers or license plate numbers. Read and follow new recipes together. Keep track of miles traveled or days until a special event. For example, writing on a calendar the day a seed or seedling was planted and counting the days until it blooms, fruits or is ready for harvest. Keeping track of how many different birds are seen is also fun.

All these ideas are about keeping minds active. Television time is tempting, but we know it doesn't help us grow much. Please keep television and other types of screen time to a minimum. If you have older children, pay close attention to use of social media. Problems with responsible usage are more likely during unstructured times.

*Para ver este boletín en español, visite*

*[http://www.missionhillschool.org/resources/boletin\\_o\\_comuniquese](http://www.missionhillschool.org/resources/boletin_o_comuniquese) con Joel al (617) 548-7523 para una versión en papel.*

#### *June* **REMINDERS**

Fri. 6/7: All rental instruments due to Betsy

Fri. 6/7: Exhibitions, 9:30 - 10:30

Thu. 6/13: All School Roller Skating, 10:00 - noon

Mon 6/17: Staff vs. Student basketball game, 1:30 - 3:00

Wed. 6/19: Middle School Art Show

5:45 - 7:00

Fri. 6/21: Ecoteer Day,

Coffee House 6:00 - 8:00

Tue. 6/26: Graduation, 10:00

Wed. 6/26: Field Day

6/27-28: half days

Are you ready for the summer?

~Ayla Gavins

## From the Classrooms

### 3 and 4 year-olds

#### Room 108

Hello everyone, this is Liying Sun. I'm an international student at UMass Boston majoring in Early Childhood Education and Psychology. I have been spending 20 hours per week with The Rocks from the beginning of this semester. I want to thank you, Mission Hill School and Ms. GERALYN for giving me the chance to be a student teacher in class 108. I explored the community around school and found out that there are lots of services provided by the Boston Public Library, such as knitting group, helping kids with their homework after school and reading books to kids. Therefore, we planned a little field trip to Jamaica Plain Library to attend their "Read in Library" time. I think this field trip helps kids to develop their literacy, social and emotional, physical and art development. Jamaica Plain Library is close to MHS so that we walk there. Kids enjoyed the little exercise time walking from MHS to the library. They can choose some books to read before the "Read in Library" time start. We went there three times and we took five kids each time. The librarian sings at the beginning and we read three books together and then we have some music and movement activities related to the books that we read. Finally, we do some art work which is also related to the books. The first time we went there it was about parties so that we made hats for the party. The

theme of the second week was fairies and we made fairy wings. The last week we made star flags for a parade. The Rocks really enjoyed the field trip and they were very involved and working hard in the library. I have to say that I had a lot of fun in MHS and enjoyed being a student teacher here. It's really a great chance for me to learn and explore the education system in America. Therefore, I will come back here next semester and be a student teacher in 108 again. (For checking the activities provided in Jamaica Plain library: [http://www.bpl.org/branches/jp\\_calendar.htm](http://www.bpl.org/branches/jp_calendar.htm))

~Liying Sun

### Kindergarten

#### Room 106

##### Friction

In our block area we built a ramp. The ramp remained the same we did not change the structure of the ramp. We did however change the surface of the ramp. We tested a smooth ball that came with our Duplo Tubes Experiment set.

We tested the first ball on the ramp with the wood surface. It took 5.1 seconds to hit the wall. For the second ball we added a piece of cloth to the ramp. That ball took eight seconds to hit the wall.

We then thought about the surface of the ball itself. We used a tennis ball. We put the tennis ball on the ramp with the wood surface. The ball did not make it to the wall. The surface of the ball combined with the surface of the rug slowed the ball to a stop. We tried the tennis ball with the ramp with cloth. That



ball did not make it to the wall either.

The surface of the ball, the surface of the ramp, and the surface of the floor are all a part of how our balls travel. We then started to think of what other things might affect them. We then thought maybe the weight of the ball might have an effect. We added a variety of balls in the block area. I added a pan balance to the block area as well. The children went to work building and testing their ramps. They also made connections to other conversations we had about steepness.

~Kathy Chunis D'Andrea

#### Room 107

"I heard it!" "It just passed me!" "Here it is!" "Whoa! It



worked!”

After several experiments about how sound and air travel through a tube, we decided to take it a step further. Blowing our breath through tubing could not compare to the amplified strength of a vacuum. After exploring the sucking and blowing motion of a wet-vacuum, we demonstrated Bernoulli’s principle by balancing a ball on the blowing air. Later, when asked what to do with the tubing students suggested that we connect them. After several measurements using foot and hand lengths, we had finally created the beginnings of a fully balanced air transporter.

An air transporter transport something so, while several students thought it impossible to move an object from one end to the other using air, they were pleasantly surprised when the ball we put in popped out the other end. As we tested and retested our air transporter, students thought of ways to track the movement of the balls. Some laid their ears on the tubes; others simply placed their hands on them, while some did a combination of both near the opening. Each time it worked and each time we were excited!

However, we were unsure if standing it up (as a student suggested) would affect its functioning. After some great teamwork, we stood up the transporter, reinforced the ends with blocks and found that, while it does work, the ball travels more slowly to the opposite opening but shoots out with a greater force than when it was lying flat.

~Jada Brown  
& JoAnn Hawksworth

### Room 109

On Friday the entire Kindergarten took a trip to the Boston Nature Center. In the drizzling rain, our class took a hike. We chose the mile long fox trail. As we entered the wood, a small group of children skipped ahead excitedly, while others lingered, collecting flowers that lined the trails. We walked for awhile and then stopped. I asked, “how are you feeling right now?” Some felt excited, and reported hearts that were beating fast. Other children were fearful of foxes. I told them that I always feel peaceful in the woods. We continued walking and the rain picked up a bit. We stopped. I asked what they could hear. The

wind in the trees. Raindrops falling. A car that sounds far away. An owl!!! We all enjoyed the change of pace and scenery. Toward the end of the walk, Emile told us, “I thought my legs would be tired by now, but no. I’ve never walked this far.”

~Jenny Goldstein

### Grades One & Two

#### Room 204

Our countdown on the board says “24 days left of school”. Every year when we reach this point it creates excitement, anxiety and amazement. We all feel excited that summer vacation lies just around the bend. I get anxious when I think about all the work that is still yet to be done before those last days tick away. Then there is the amazement at who the children have become.

I look at my students and wonder where the year has gone. I reflect back on the first day and think about how much they have grown and changed over the year. Those who were shy on that first day are some of the most inquisitive students I have. Those that had tears on that first morning are now the social butterflies. Those that were intimidated by the new “first” or “second” grade work are now the ones I have to make stop working! They have all grown tremendously!

This is also the time of year for them to reflect. As we wrap up our Physical Science theme, they will begin a series of activities to help them reflect on their year and prepare a written statement to share at our annual Exhibitions

Ceremony. Begun a few years ago to coincide with the 5<sup>th</sup> graders' Recollections, it has proven to be a wonderful way to not only introduce the idea to students but give them the practice of using reflection as a tool and incorporating the Habits of Mind into their work.

Our Exhibitions Ceremony will be held on Friday, June 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. We hope you will come to see and hear how the Fantastic Crew has grown.

~Jenerra Williams

### Room 205

This past Wednesday was Teacher Appreciation Day! This is one of the only times during the year that all MHS adults stop collectively at lunchtime to sit, eat, chat and dare to relax for an hour. Families organize lunch fixings, which include main dishes, side dishes, various salads, fruits, drinks and the coveted desserts!

This year, more than most, it was awesome to have a few moments to stop, reflect and celebrate all that we have accomplished thus far. We have had a tremendous school year! We have successfully settled into our new home. We have welcomed new members- staff, students and families into our community. We have begun to establish new relationships with members of our surrounding community.

Our moments of celebration on Wednesday were much appreciated yet there is a lot still to be done. There are curricula to be wrapped up and

assessments to be made. Portfolios for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are about to begin. We have field trips planned and more end-of-the-year celebrations will take place. Report cards need to be written and rooms need to be packed up. As we move closer to the last day of school, our moments of celebration and appreciation push us on.

Thank you Mission Hill Families for the splendid Teacher Appreciation Day!

~Amina Michel-Lord  
& Brenda Lau

### Room 217

On the day this newsletter goes to print, I will deliver the children's How To books to the Boston Public Library downtown. There, they will be included in a display and celebration called Kids Are the Experts. All of the approximately 160 books will be instructional and about things children know how to do; ours are all about how to do things on bicycles.

It takes a lot of work to publish a book. In the morning, we roll a bike tire through paint and then across the span of a couple of bicycle boxes (Thank you, Ferris Wheels Bike Shop). This will become our covers, complete with inner tube binding. (Whether brake cable will prove a useful binding thread is yet to be seen.) The physical book will require some careful work of the hands.

But in this moment in the afternoon, the focus is on polishing content. Children busily write down instructions, complete detailed illustrations, and match

words to drawings for each page. They count pages and put them in correct order; others children complete the biographical information that will go on the back cover. The room hums, with occasional outbursts of satisfaction or frustration. My job is to get all the instructions into the computer and read over them with each child to make sure they say exactly what the child intends; always there is at least one other child close by, scrutinizing the accuracy and clarity of the instructions, trying to make the book the best it can be.

Please come see our books on display! Saturday, June 1 at the Boston Public Library, from 2:00 to 3:30.

~Melissa Tonachel

## Grades Three & Four

### Room 207

Exhibitions are coming and the Hawks are excited to share their work! On June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013 students at the Mission Hill School will showcase their work from the current trimester. This year has been amazing thus far. Each Hawk member has shown tremendous progress socially, academically, and physically within the school year.

Therefore, we are working really hard to choose specific items of work to showcase our progress. During our literacy time we have done some reflective writing to help us brainstorm the hot and cold moments this year. During our reflective writing time I have noticed that children are really

proud of their literacy accomplishments this year. Students have worked really hard to master the idea of writing and reading at grade level. Children are also happy with the move to our new building. However, they have all expressed how it took time to adjust and make the new space feel like home. The more we write the more we will thoughts/ideas we will have to reflect on. Come join in next Friday to see it all with your own eyes!

~Robert Baez

### Room 216

The sun is shining, the leaves are blowing in the wind and vibrant colors of greens, blues, purples and yellows are popping up all around us. The Golden Rulers have taken the nice weather as an opportunity to learn and engage with our outdoor surroundings. Whether it is enjoying one another as we discover new things or engage in a new game to play, we have been enjoying spending time outside in the nicer weather. The various outdoor spaces gives us a chance to play with new friends while others find the wider space a refreshing change from the classroom indoors. As we continue to utilize our outdoor spaces as weather permits, we hope to learn more about not only our surroundings, but various ways to play and take advantage of our outdoor resources.

~Erica Switzer & Juan Cortes

## Grades Five & Six

### Room 210

“How to put your hair in a bun”, Instructions on how to use the Nintendo Wii, How to make a sling shot, How to do a wheelie, How to make breakfast pizza, How to make structure and organized debate, How to care for a cat” How to survive living with siblings, Leopard Geckos, and Edible Plants in Boston, Angel & Stitch, and how to play manhunt.

These are a few of the subjects that students wrote about to put into our book of nonfiction writing. We spent time reading a variety of different non-fiction text and looked at different text features. Students incorporated many of those elements into their own work. This will be made into individual booklets and a class book of “stuff we know”. That will be available for the school community to enjoy.

~Nakia Keizer & June Meyers

### Room 215

Nethery Brenzel writes:

Thanks to ALL the MANY families who contributed wonderful food and time, the Teacher Appreciation was a great success! The spread was outstanding! MHS parents rocked teacher appreciation yet again!

An additional thanks goes to the families able to be present for the luncheon, helping a TREMENDOUS amount with setup, lunch and recess supervision and clean up. This event was such a group effort

and I was blessed to organize such willing helpers! BE KIND AND WORK HARD. We showed it. I would like to recognize the following for their effort: Naama Goldstein, Michelle Harper, Lydia Reynolds, Nina Korsosaari, Sarah Rocha, Eva, Kari Albuquerque, Natalie Ake, Steve Banzaert, Chris McGroddy, Susie Shayegani, Danielle Gantt, Valerie Grabiell, Ailish Ford, Paula O'Gilvie, Keisha Arthur Cole, Nancy Laste, and Steve Clinkenbeard.

If you are looking for plates/platters/bowls they can be found in the Office area on the second floor.

If you would like to share your recipe (and we hope you would) please email it to [bcarus@missionhillschool.org](mailto:bcarus@missionhillschool.org) and Betsy will post/share them on the MHS website.

Thank You Mission Hill Families!

## Grades Seven & Eight

### Room 213

“...when I was about five years old, my father built my house. It was an old horse barn when he started and it's now a beautiful loft with two levels and a beautiful backyard. I was amazed when I watched him do it.” “A pen and paper are my tools to freedom... I am a writer.” “When you snowboard you get this feeling inside of you that is unexplainable, the adrenalin rush is intense.” “The piece of paper was dropped onto the table. The pencil sharp and simple. I picked it up and tapped it lightly on the table. I thought of what would be worthy to put on this paper.” “The stars were brightly shining. The sky was as navy blue as a uniform for a

school. We were all happy and ready for the cool night.” “Food is delicious, if you know how to cook it.”

Intriguing? One of my favorite tasks is working with the 7<sup>th</sup> graders as they begin their Beyond the Classroom Portfolios. We ask students to share with their portfolio committees an out-of-school experience or passion that has helped them to grow. An essay and a demonstration/artifact accompany their reflective oral presentations. The fragments quoted above were generated during a brainstorming process to help kids identify the focus they will choose for this portfolio. When I started by reading some student examples from other years, the kids were quickly on board. Who doesn't enjoy sharing a special interest or passion with an appreciative audience?

~Ann Ruggiero

#### Room 214

I recently found this article from my second year at MHS. It still rings true.

Here is my best transcript of a conversation I seem to be having frequently. “Jacob, I’m a little worried about portfolio.”

“I don’t blame you! I can’t believe how much we expect you to do here. I’ve never seen anything like it in a middle school. I know it would have been very difficult for me when I was your age.”

“So how come we have to do it then?”

“Well, we feel that the

portfolio process really teaches you a lot of skills that will be helpful to you in life. You have to practice being very responsible. You have to meet deadlines, reflect deeply on your work, and be able to explain not only what you have learned but describe the process that got you there. You also have to speak publicly to people who are examining your work, some of whom you might not even know! The important thing to remember is that you have the ability to do everything that we have asked, and you will get lots of support along the way.”

8<sup>th</sup> graders are in currently sending out their work, and 7<sup>th</sup> graders will be doing so next week. We ask a lot of our middle school students here at MHS, and they are feeling a lot of pressure right now. Take a minute to check in with one of the members of the Class of 2013 when you get a chance and talk to him or her about the process they are going through. They need our support!

~Jacob Wheeler & Chris Barnes

### Hot Topics

#### Congratulations, Graduates!

The end of the school year brings celebrations for our eighth graders as they look ahead to their next schools. However, each year brings graduations for other special members of the MHS community: interns, paras and student teachers. This month, we also celebrate Kadian Simmonds, Rosalind Dailey,

and Rizawn Huda, who all graduated. Congratulations!

#### Courtney’s Corner

Check out Courtney’s Corner for information on various programs and resources for you and your family.

#### Rincón de Courtney

Mira la información que esta fuera en el “Rincón de Courtney” para información sobre varios programas y recursos para ti y tu familia.

#### Join the Mission Hill School Family Forum!

The Mission Hill School Family Forum is an initiative by school parents and caregivers FOR school parents and caregivers, a place to forge connections in and across classroom communities. Staff is welcome, too.

To join the group:

(1) Request to join by sending an email to MHS Family Forum moderators Naama or Neathery ([mizzgee@yahoo.com](mailto:mizzgee@yahoo.com) or [neathery99@gmail.com](mailto:neathery99@gmail.com))

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