

# Mission Hill School News

## Letter from Child Street

Look What We've Been Doing!

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

"Oh, wow - did you guys make these books all by yourselves?" An amazed parent holds up a book about bikes. The cover is fashioned from a cardboard bicycle box donated by the bike shop around the corner. The binding is made from a section of inner tube. It's proudly displayed along with others from the Friendly Monkeys class.

It is Exhibitions Day at MHS, a day to welcome families to see student work, to share breakfast, and to strengthen connections.

In the "K Quad", a group of first-year parents are animatedly talking and munching on fresh fruit and muffins, as they admire their children's work and compare notes on the year at Mission Hill. They are already bonded, already a unit, having met at classroom doorways, Friday Shares and on the playground all year long.

### REMINDERS

**Para ver este boletín en español, visite <http://www.missionhillschool.org/resources/boletin> o comuníquese con Joel al (617) 548-7523 para una versión en papel.**

#### *June*

Fri. 6/7 - Mon. 6/10: Child Street  
Closed for construction - no parking

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

In quiet rooms upstairs, seventh and eighth graders are focused on the final details of their portfolio preparations. Their teachers are nearby, greeting families, and offering words of support and confirmation. Weaving throughout the visiting adults and excited kids are the eighth graders who have already presented and passed their portfolios. Their pride and excitement shine out, sometimes in hands-in-the-air dances down the hallway, sometimes in more subdued glowing satisfaction. In a school where judging is suspended in favor of guiding and mentoring, this final act of judgment is all the sweeter.

Everywhere, children are sharing their newly acquired or newly expanded discoveries with other community members. The whole building vibrates with excitement and enthusiasm.

Former staff members, interns and student teachers wander through the crowds, alternately gazing at artwork and into classrooms, and stopping for a wave or a hug and a chat with old friends.

Even as families admire their children's new skill and the evidence of creativity and growing maturity, the staff is caught in the swirling currents of completing this year and preparing for the next. Snow days have pushed the last day of school past the date when we had planned to begin our June retreat. Those sessions have been tacked onto our Tuesday morning meetings and several four-hour evening sessions, as well as some weekend time. Somehow, we will get it all done, and write reports as well.

The year is nowhere near finished, yet it will be over before we know it.

*~Betsy Caruso for Ayla*

## From the Classrooms

### 3 and 4 year-olds

#### Room 108

Last week we went with the other K classes to The Boston Nature Center. The BNC is an urban sanctuary with a few miles of hiking trails, a community garden, and more. After a short hike, we visited the Nature Nook, a natural play space. The children loved the open ended materials (branches, stones, sticks, fabric, etc.) for building; the xylophone for making music and dancing; the tree stumps and boulders for climbing and hopping and the sand and mud for mixing, mushing and making pretend food. Most of all, they loved the dry river with bridges, stones and muddy water. It was a rainy day, so some water had gathered in the dry river bed, making a great spot to wade and muck about. At one point, a BNC staff member opened the rain barrel, and let some more water pour into the river bed. As the water meandered its way through the rocks and bends, and under the bridge, some of the students got very excited. "Make a dam, make a dam!" they exclaimed, as they scrambled to contain the flowing water. Others joined in with matched enthusiasm. "Dam it! Dam it!" I heard one enthusiastic builder proclaim.

I love being with young children - especially when they are playing in nature. Where else can you hear someone yell "Dam it!" with such pure delight in his voice?

~Geraldyn Bywater McLaughlin

#### Kindergarten

#### Room 106

Last week I attended the Future Forum in Washington D.C. Ashoka organized the conference. If you are unfamiliar with Ashoka it is a great organization to get to know. Bill Drayton, CEO and founder of Ashoka believes that everyone is a Changemaker. He has built a team of teams. These teams involve the Ashoka fellows, Changemaker schools, the Start Empathy initiative, Youth Ventures, and Ashoka University.

I was a part of leading a workshop titled From Nice-to-Have to Must Have: Creating Schools of Tomorrow Today. Eric Dawson and Sarah Hemminger, both social entrepreneurs, also spoke during our session. Eric is local. He lives in Dorchester and works with local youth. He started an organization called Peace First.

I was also able to learn about many young people who had started social entrepreneurial ventures. One that stood out for me was Turning Grease Into Fuel. Ten year-olds in Rhode Island started it. They organized restaurants to recycle their cooking oil. They sell the cooking oil to companies who turn it into biodiesel fuel. The money earned from the project is then donated to buying heating fuel for families who cannot afford it. These young people and many others around the world are solving real world problems with their ventures. It was great to be a part of such an amazing conference.

~Kathy Clunis D'Andrea

#### Room 107

The Silver Star Patriots continue to enjoy listening to a variety of stories. They often interact with the story's events and characters and most times have a lot to say about what should or should not happen. So, when we recently asked them to dictate their own stories to share with the class, here is what two of them conjured up:

**Brian:** Once upon a time there was a lion and he liked to eat grass. He found a bug, then he asked the bug, "Do you want to be friends?" The bug said, "Yes." They would climb trees, they would play tag, musical chairs and that's all. They played every day in the morning. After they played they went back home to go to sleep. The bug ate ... I don't know what bugs eat! Bugs just carry things to their homes. The lion, he fell asleep without eating anything until the next day. He got up the next day and ate grass. The End.

**Diany:** Once upon a time there was a dog. The dog was eating in the park. He was eating everything! He was eating the slides! The slide broke and everything broke! The builders fixed it. The dog came to the park again and he ate the windows in the park. The builders came into the park and fixed the windows. The dog came there in the park again and she ate the clock in the park! The builders were so tired and then everybody said, "Dog don't eat the park!" Then the builders came to fix the fence and to fix back the park again. The

dog was eating the flowers! The builders fixed the flowers. The dog went to the park again and the dog ate the bigger flowers. The dog ate the whole park and she ate the bigger flowers. She ate the whole thing! The End!

~Jada Brown  
& JoAnn Hawksworth

### Room 109

The Magic Dragons are taking their story telling and story acting on the road. On Friday evening, we will share the Kids Stage at the Boston Children's Museum with two other BPS kindergarten classrooms. All three classrooms will share stories told by the children this year, and the children will collaborate in acting out the stories. Admittance to the Children's Museum only cost \$1 on Friday Nights. We are taking the stage at 7:15. Hope to see some of you there!

Here is one of the stories we plan to share, told by Luki.

*Once upon a time near the end of the Ice Age a flood came. A glacier melted forming Lake Champlain. A prehistoric squirrel was getting washed away with its acorn. But he lost it. And he got in a hawks nest because he thought he would be safer there. Piranhas jumped out of the water. A whale tried to get the squirrel but it dived back in the water. There was a shark that ate the piranhas. The end.*

~Jenny Goldstein

## Grades One & Two

### Room 204

The Fantastic Crew has begun

talking about, reading and writing poetry. Our first poem was a community poem in which each person chose descriptive words to write about their classmates. It was not just a wonderful way to learn about poetry and using adjectives, it was a wonderful way to help children stop and think about the best qualities of their community members and why we are so "fantastic"! Below is a sample of what they came up with:

Andrew is honest.  
Joliana is happy.  
Zayna is brave.  
Maryam is funny.  
Dalia is caring.  
Victoria is musical.  
Alejandro is fast.  
Marquell is playful.  
Jarrell is sporty.  
Amari is hungry.  
Hamse is awesome.  
Arianny is jumpy.  
Destiny is cool.  
Enaisja is kind.  
Fatemah is pretty.  
Kalea is smart.  
Rafael is exciting.  
Melissa is amazing.  
Miss Jenerra is classy.

~Jenerra Williams

### Room 205

June has finally arrived and it is time for the Wonderful Wonderers to reflect on their year. This past week the class worked hard on preparing for our annual Exhibitions Ceremony.

Exhibitions are a reflective time of the year where students share with families their learning and how they have grown. Here are some of the children's reflections:

**Abidemi:** At Mission Hill, we

have fun.

**Amber:** At Mission Hill, we go to Farm School.

**Amishai:** I used to not be able to jump rope, now I can.

**Athena:** I am working on putting details in my stories.

**Ceva:** I am working on spelling long words

**Daniel:** In our classroom, we have classroom jobs!

**Elias:** I am working on doing homework.

**Janira:** At Mission Hill, we have Pajama Day.

**Jovanni:** In our classroom, we are kind.

**Justin:** I am working on math because it makes me smart.

**Kelise:** I can help a friend play a new game.

**Laudys:** I used to not like being the caboose, now I like being the caboose.

**Maya:** I can help a friend draw a girl.

**Ruby:** At Mission Hill, we sing.

**Shawnmathew:** I am working on spelling and being kind.

**Sofia:** In our classroom, we do special projects.

**Vitoria:** At Mission Hill, we sing at Friday Share.

~Brenda Lau

### Room 217

It's hot outside on Saturday, and cool inside the Boston Public Library. Child authors from all over the city have gathered to celebrate their work at "Kids Are the Experts!" Families take photos of children with finished books ranging from How to Draw Really Good, How to Play Soccer, How to Mix Paint, and How to Run Away From a Dragon. The finished books only

tell part of the story, of course. Each book has behind it the work of a child with expertise, a teacher and peers who have noticed that expertise, a group of child editors, many drafts, help from families, and the materials and tools of publishing.

The books that represent Mission Hill School also include shop work from 8<sup>th</sup> graders Hawolul and Ziggy (punching and drilling holes) and tools and expertise from Jacob. Aubrey jumped in to help with binding, Jenny offered design suggestions, and Jeanne offered appreciation and encouragement as the books began to take shape. Thank you everyone! The children felt all this support and responded to it, working with renewed energy to finish their books and make them beautiful.

At the library, in a room with sliding ladders and a bricked, vaulted ceiling, the children hold their books up for people to see them, and hold them close to their chests to feel the satisfaction of hard work reverberating in their hearts. Their smiles are barely contained in their bodies.

*~Melissa Tonachel*

### Grades Three & Four

#### Room 207

As we prepare for our exhibition reflections, the Hawks would like to share our greatest accomplishments this year:

**Marcus:** I learned how to speak better!

**Axel:** I got better at sounding

out words!

**Malehk:** I learned how to use the computer for math and reading!

**Luisairy:** Getting through the MCAS!

**Daniel:** I got better at writing!

**Tandin:** Creating my amusement park project!

**Bryan:** I got better at reading harder books!

**Tato:** I got better at building and writing!

**Salma:** My ancient Greek God and Goddess project!

**Zachary:** I got a lot better at spelling words and building with K'Nex!

**AJ:** My presidential speech, because I spoke about all the things I would change to better this country!

**Giselle:** I got better at making art!

**Dario:** Building self-confidence!

**Chantal:** I got better at reading and writing!

**Omauri:** My drawing got so much better!

**Anaïs:** I got better at reading higher levels!

**Uly:** I learned how to work in groups with people who I typically wouldn't work with!

**Rose:** I really liked my ancient Greece project because I learned how to compromise during group work!

**Jaylin:** The amusement park project because I worked really hard on making the bumper cars!

*~Robert Baez*

#### Room 216

The Golden Rulers took a look back into the year while preparing for our exhibitions. As a group we remembered and reflected about different points in our year.

We talked about both the successful and the challenging moments in our year, and how each of these moments taught us about ourselves as learners and members of a classroom community. As individuals, the students reflected on their work, looking through work and projects done thought the year and across the curriculum. All of this happened through the lens of growth and change. We highlighted and celebrated our growth in different areas of our life at school. Phrases such as "this used to be really hard for me" were frequently heard as the students realized all the learning that happened this year.

Just like a seed doesn't realize she has turned into a flower, we often are blind to our own flourishing. Preparing for exhibitions gave everyone the opportunity to clearly see all the flourishing we have gone through. After this realization we were ready to share and celebrate our work and insights with the whole Mission Hill Community.

*~Erica Switzer & Juan Cortes*

### Grades Five & Six

#### Room 210

*No news this week*

#### Room 215

When we came back from the holiday weekend, we received a nice surprise. There were two letters from 5th graders in Waipahu, Hawaii, inviting us to join in the Great Mail Race! The rules of the Great Mail Race are simple. Each student writes to a

5<sup>th</sup> grade class in another state, telling them about their school and their state, and encouraging them to join in the race, too.

One of the letters we received was from David, from Oahu, Hawaii. He wrote, "At my school only my class is doing robotics. Robotics is building a Lego robot which will compete with other robots in a competition.... We also have different programs like Enrichment and JPO. Enrichment is where students will learn about environmental and social issues. JPOs, or Junior Police Officers, are students who help other students to behave. They also hold up a stop sign to help students get to school safely."

Our class decided to write to 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes in Alabama, Hawaii, Georgia, Texas, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee, Colorado, California, Iowa, Florida, Arizona, Rhode Island, Michigan, and Washington. One of the first things we told them in our letters was how different Mission Hill School is, because we have a combination 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade class.

Writing the letters was fun, but challenging. Besides learning about using proper letter format, and how to address an envelope, we had to think hard about questions like: What is your state famous for? What famous people came from your state? What are the major landforms or waterways in your area?

We breezed through other questions, describing field trips, our favorite foods, movies, and books, and our school colors.

Did you know that our school colors are black and white? And we don't think we have a school mascot. Do we?

~Carol Knox

## Grades Seven & Eight

### Room 213

One of my favorite assignments this spring was our World War II Book Group project. During literacy in Room 213, we all read books related to the Holocaust and World War II. Leylaine, Xin, Mikaila, and Tajonna read *Night* by Elie Wiesel. Andy, La'Renz, and Javon read *Heroes of the Holocaust: True Stories of Rescues by Teens* by Allan Zullo and Mara Bovsun. Siobhan, Ahsad, Kavon, and Shantel read *The Boy Who Dared: A Novel Based on the True Story of a Hitler Youth* by Susan Campbell Bartoletti. And Nicole, Kaya, Yimara, and Gavin read *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry.

This was a new topic of study for most students. They used the globe and atlases frequently to understand which countries were involved and where they were located. Many kids made a connection to our fall theme study of Identity and Eugenics. All of the books were hard to read and kept us asking, "How can people be so mean?"

After reading their book, groups generated questions for background research and worked hard to understand the economic and political context that set the stage for the war. Then, using this knowledge, kids wrote individual historical fiction

stories. Before beginning to write, they identified the elements of fiction (characters, setting, plot, conflict, point of view, and theme) for their stories and used this as a guide when writing.

The students' project reflections and the quality of the work produced let me know that this project was a hit with the kids. I was really touched by their sensitivity, emotional connection, and strong feelings of justice. I'm really glad I had the opportunity to do this project with Room 213.

~Ann Ruggiero

### Room 214

I wanted to share a quote that I wrote down during our first portfolio presentation of the year. I feel that it captures the spirit of investigation and experimentation that is at the root of pure science, invention, and engineering.

*"Circuits are a big part of how we are evolving with technology. I think this is helpful for our community because if we don't experiment with projects there won't be an evolution of technology. The more we experiment with circuits and projects the more we will move forward. And to understand technology you have to understand circuitry."* - Leylaine, Class of 2013

I could not say it better myself. It is so important for us to experiment to learn the basics, get interested, and eventually bring innovation to a discipline. This is true for working with circuits in technology as it is with working with cells in biology, or experimenting with building materials in architecture.

~Jacob Wheeler & Chris Barnes

## Hot Topics

### 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))

Or,

(2) Visit the Mission Hill School Family Forum site, take a look at the homepage, and click the "Join This Group" link to submit a request that way:

<http://tinyurl.com/MHSconnects>  
Please help to grow the forum as a community asset by bringing this invitation to the attention of your MHS friends. It's always a good time to be in touch!

**Free Fun Fridays!** - Free Fun Fridays is a summer program that opens the doors to 60 museums and cultural venues

across Massachusetts for free. Starting June 28th and going through August 30th, there will be 6 museums or cultural venues open for free each Friday. For the full calendar of events, please go to [www.highlandstreet.org](http://www.highlandstreet.org).

### Check Lost & Found

There is still a large collection of jackets, hats, sweaters and other apparel in the Lost and Found near the MHS front desk. Is your child missing anything? Stop by and have a look if you haven't seen that lunchbox, pair of boots or hoodie in a while. Items still left at the end of the year will be donated to charity.

### Second Cup Now Brewing

Mark your calendar for Friday evening, June 21st. for MHS' second coffee house of this year. Members of the MHS community, the tall and the small, have been working on performances to share with us all. Come cheer on your friends and discover talents you never knew existed. Six to eight o'clock in the auditorium.

Boston City Singers offers outstanding programs for young people ages 4 – 18. You do not need previous singing experience to join - just love to sing! Boston City Singers is a community-based, after-school program. Members come from all over the City of Boston and neighboring cities and towns.

Dorchester & JP Auditions  
June 9 & 10, 2013

### Mission Hill School

*A Boston Public Pilot School*

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