

Mission Hill School News

Letter from Child Street

Weekly Newsletter

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

Each week for the past 17 years Mission Hill staff has written a letter to families friends, students and other staff members. We call this weekly letter to all of you our Mission Hill School newsletter.

This is the second of many Mission Hill School newsletters that will be sent to you this year. Reading the newsletter is an important part of keeping up with what's happening at Mission Hill. If you don't have time to read each week, save the newsletter until you do have time to read. In the early days of the school, teachers wrote individual letters to families that were sent home with children once per week. Each letter was posted outside of the school office so everyone in the school who came by could read the class letters. Several years later teachers decided to

combine the letters into one weekly newsletter. Its readership has evolved from in-house school community members to international educators, interest groups, and friends of the school.

Topics in the newsletter include information about your child's classroom, news from other classrooms, hot topics in education, a focus on some element of education, and news about the school as a whole. Some of our cover letters will be letters from the past that are still relevant today. Some will feature writing from teachers and friends of the school. You are welcome to submit writing to the newsletter. Please send in announcements or other writing to Betsy Caruso at bcaruso@missionhillschool.org.

A hard copy of the newsletter will come home with your child each Friday. If you wish to receive a copy via e-mail instead or in addition to, please contact Besty Caruso. If your child has more than one household and the news needs to go to multiple places, inform your child's teacher.

Of course the newsletter is not the only way information is shared. Check in with your child's teacher, if you haven't already, about other ways to learn about your child's

REMINDERS

September

Thu. 9/19, 5:45 - 7pm: Curriculum Night

Tue. 9/24, 6pm: Outside the Lines Mtg.

Thu. 9/26, 5pm: Governing Board Mtg.

Fri. 9/27, 10:15am: Outside the Lines Mtg.

September 30 - October 11:
Listening Conferences

October

Tue. 10/1, 6pm: Outside the Lines Mtg.

Thu. 10/4, 10:15am: Outside the Lines Mtg.

Mon. 1-/14, NO SCHOOL

experience at school.

~Ayla Gavins

From the Classrooms

3 and 4 year-olds

Room 108

Happy new school year to everyone! It is a big job learning how to be a part of a group – learning many new names, making friends and learning how to share. To help us in this work, in Room 108 we have all agreed to use Kind Words, Helping Hands, Safe Feet and Listening Ears. We use these words all day long, as we help children learn what to do at school. For example, if a child has used their hands to hurt someone by pushing or grabbing, then they must fix the situation by using their hands to help that same child. This might be by offering a hug, or offering to help rebuild a block structure, or whatever the situation calls for. Already, we are seeing an abundance of helping hands and kind words. For example, at the easel a few friends collaborated on one painting – helping each other and thanking each other with a hug when the art work was complete. At home, please use the copy of the visual we sent home (Kind Words, Helping Hands, etc.) to have conversations with your child – as a reminder and reinforcement. Thanks!

*~Geralyn Bywater McLaughlin
& Donna Winder*

Kindergarten

Room 106

A tall green tubular structure sat on a table in my classroom. The tube was made of mesh. Inside

were creatures. The children's eyes got big as they noticed things moving. "I see them, I see them!" said James. There was a very large stalk of a leafy green plant in there as well. The tiny creatures were devouring the plant.

"What are the creatures on the big plant?" I asked. Almost everyone in the class thought they were caterpillars. A flower and a butterfly were also shared. "Lots of people think they are caterpillars. Why do you think that?" I continued. One child responded, "They walk." Another said, "I saw one."

"How will we know for sure what they really are?" was my next question. "We need to watch them," students said. "We will need magnifying glasses." Another student added. More students said we should get books. Off I went to find field guides and butterfly books. The children used the caterpillar guide to identify that these were monarch caterpillars. Eli added, "These are monarchs and they eat milkweed."

~Kathy Clunis D'Andrea

Room 107

"Look! The leaves are falling," proclaimed a student while we played on the playground. The beginning of this seasonal cycle is a clear indicator that another summer has passed and a new school year has begun. Some of our students are getting used to a brand new school with new structures and routines. Others are acclimating themselves to a new classroom within the building, as evidenced by Nyla's question, "Is this my

classroom for ever and ever?" However, for everyone it is a fresh start, a new beginning, an acknowledgement of and curiosity around new faces and personalities with which to engage in play or conversation.

The first week back has felt more familiar than in past years for me...almost as if we had not left in June. It could be the amicability of the staff community or that I no longer see teaching as my profession, but an essential part of my being. So, as we begin to experience the next few seasonal cycles together, we will investigate the life cycles of various plants and animals, as well as thinking about how we have grown and changed over the years. We look forward to a year filled with observation, exploration, creation and hard work!

*~Jada Brown
& JoAnn Hawksworth*

Room 109

Welcome back! It's been an amazing week of getting to know new friends, and learning new things about old friends. I asked the children what they liked most about school so far:

I like the kitchen and the blocks. They are easy to build with and make stuff that I want to do.

-Theodore

I like to play outside because everybody likes to play. And I like breakfast in the morning.

-Jackson

I like my lunch! **-Kevin**

I love my school. In my class I like baby dolls. I'm so happy.

-Kennedy

I like to play on the playground.

-Beatrice

I like playing trains. And I like skateboarding with the big blocks.

-Hiram

I like making airplanes and cars with Legos.

-Alex
I like to draw with crayons.

-Maya

I like drawing a school with twistable crayons.

-Luke
I like everything, like playing with the trains and Legos.

-Kaia
I like to make little coins with prints of shells in the play dough.

They are really pretty.

-Zora

I like the trains and drawing pictures of trains.

-Cole

I like play dough. You squish it.

-Evan

I'm going to work on my art projects. I'm going to make rockets and other projects, and play with the play dough more.

-Kenneth

I like to play Legos in the block area. I make cars and buses.

-Emile

~Jenny Goldstein

Grades One & Two

Room 204

A friend of mine asked me what he could do to get his child more interested in reading. "Let his passion steer his learning," I said. I thought about our conversation later and realized how passionate I was in my response. Why? The answer is an easy one – because I love being a teacher. Thirteen years later, I am still letting my passion steer me.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."

This quote by William Butler

Yeats, is exactly why I love teaching. It is my chance to light a fire. I don't just want to fill your children with information and facts all year. I want to light fires - fires of curiosity, of wondering, of excitement, and fires of passion.

We have begun what will be an incredible journey. I am looking forward to getting to know all your children (and you!) better and building a community that is passionate about learning. It is my hope that many fires will be lit! Anyone got a match?

~Jenerra Williams

Room 205

Helping. Sharing. Listening. We are learning to work together.

Discussing. Suggesting.

Questioning. We are discovering ways to learn from each other.

Building. Climbing. Tagging. We are learning to play together.

Negotiating. Challenging.

Compromising. We are learning to be problem solvers. Our first days of school have already begun to teach us so much, and I feel so grateful to be part of a school that values such a strong sense of community. From the first day, I have observed students offer to help their peers who couldn't find something, help clean up a mess, or offer a hug.

In order to work, learn, and play together as a community we must also understand each other as unique individuals. We have spent a lot of time this week sharing information about ourselves: favorite colors, activities we like to do at school, things that feel easy and hard. Through these sharing times we are learning what it means to be active

listeners as well as getting to know the members of our class better. We are learning that we all belong here.

~Ashleigh L'Heureux

Room 217

I've been blessed with opportunities to work with kids in various school settings and after only a week at Mission Hill it is becoming more evident what makes this community so very special. Students eagerly ask questions, solve challenges with their peers, and respect materials. I'm thrilled to be part of this team. I'm excited to see how our classroom will continue to support the students' development as socially and intellectually curious humans.

We've been reading books about starting the school year including *Yo! Yes?* by Chris Raschka. It is told only through dialogue between two boys - one who is reluctant and lonely, and one who is eager to make friends. After rereading it, we split the class into two – each half acting out one voice in the story. It was beautiful to watch their enthusiasm as they fluently read each line, and silly to hear their energetic "Yes!" or reluctant "Me?" I am excited to see our class bring this warm energy into our work throughout the year!

~Emma Fialka-Feldman

Grades Three & Four

Room 207

I am so excited to be spending another year at Mission Hill. The first days of school have been eventful and joyful! Getting to

meet new families and friends, exploring the changes to our classrooms, participating in community building activities, and having extra outside time as the fall weather approaches are some of the few great things we do at the beginning of each school year at MHS. As we let go of our summer blues and get our thinking caps working for an amazing year ahead of us, I will take these next couple of weeks to carefully learn about each student in room 207. Here at Mission Hill we take the time to understand the individual characteristics of each child as a learner and person. Therefore, I predict we will have an amazing year of learning. Yes there will be challenges along our path but together with families, we will work hard to find all possible avenues to individual success. I look forward to the rest of the year. Please feel free to offer suggestions and feedback as we travel together on this journey.

~Robert Baez

Room 216

Dear Mission Hill Family and Friends,

Thank you for welcoming me into the community! It has been quite a surprise and a great start to a new school year. It is my hope to create a safe, fun, and supportive learning environment this year. We have all started to begin to know each other, learn new games, discover the classroom library and use the art materials. The classroom will continue to evolve with new artwork and design.

Our first theme that we'll study this year is plants. We plan to go to the Arboretum and the Museum of Science to discover more. I welcome any parents who would like to be chaperones or even guest lecturers into our classroom. Feel free to email me or call, if you think you have an idea or would be willing to help out.

The beginning of the year has definitely made me feel like a beginning teacher as I embark on an adventure in a new environment. I will be learning new ways of teaching and learning from the students and families. I welcome any suggestions or ideas anyone may have and look forward to having a strong partnership with all families. Let's continue to have great year of discovery and learning!

~Josh Kraus, Selina Ruiz
& Melanie Centeno

Grades Five & Six

Room 210

No news this week,

Room 215

After five months of maternity leave, it is good to be back. This is my first year looping with a group of students and it was so nice to start the year already knowing half of my class. We spent the first few days working on building a new classroom culture. We played some games to learn about each other, practice teamwork, and teach each other new things! In addition to this we

created class agreements. Students worked in pairs to create posters to help remind us of how we want our classroom to be. We did our first critique on the posters they created and students were observant and respectful of each other's work. It took some questioning to elicit specific feedback on ways to improve each other's work, but they got there. I am looking forward to all this year has in store!

~Sarah DeCruz

Grades Seven & Eight

Room 213

It is wonderful to be with your children again! I am amazed at how much they change in the two short months of summer. Our 7th/8th grade classes include six new students. We welcome them and their families to our Mission Hill community. We are excited about the possibilities for learning that await us in this year's themes: Life Science, Taino, and Peopling of America.

We started the school year getting reacquainted and meeting our new students. Conversational games, identity charts, and six word memoirs helped us to learn about each other. This work will be displayed in our classrooms. You are all welcome to stop in and learn about your children and their peers.

Teresa and I are working together closely and will both be in touch with you throughout the year. Please contact us as needed (phone, text, email, or in person). We welcome families'

questions and concerns, and depend on your support as we work together to help these fine young people to grow in body, mind, and spirit.

I look forward to seeing you at Curriculum Night on Thursday, September 19th.

~Ann Ruggiero

Room 214

I am new to the Mission Hill School and just finished my first week at the Mission Hill School. My 7th and 8th graders have been a delight! I couldn't have asked for better students. They got right down to work observing monarch caterpillars, making posters for our bulletin board, and discussing the literary components of the novel *Wonder*. I have been impressed by their effort so far.

I'm not the only thing new about 7/8th grade this year. The America SCORES soccer/literacy program will be coming to our school Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 5:30. We need all permission slips back by Friday from 15 girls and 15 boys for the program to go ahead. To learn more about the program go to www.AmericaSCORES.org

We are planning on going to the Museum of Science on September 24th. If you have not filled in and returned all the forms that were sent to you this summer, please do ASAP. In that packet was a field trip permission slip necessary for this trip and others. For instance, in science, we are learning about ecosystems and I want to be able

to take my students to the Arnold Arboretum to do some field studies.

I look forward to meeting all of you over the year. Please don't hesitate to call or e-mail me with questions or concerns.

~Teresa Strong

Hot Topics

Courtney's Corner

Check out Courtney's Corner outside her office (114) on the first floor or online at missionhillschool.org under Family Resources 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" fuera de su oficina (114) y en línea para información sobre varios programas y recursos para ti y tu familia.

We collect Box Tops!

Turn in all those Box Tops for Education you've been collecting on groceries and home/office supplies! Remember, each one is worth 10¢, so every single one counts! Clip them from products you use every day and bring them up to the office to leave for Courtney. For a complete list of Box Tops products or to sign up online to support our school, log onto www.boxtops4education.com.

Like to shop online?

Consider shopping through the Box Tops for Education Marketplace. Go to

<https://www.boxtops4education.com/marketplace> and using the MHS id: 378325, you can shop at a number of stores online – all while earning points (and cash) for Mission Hill. There are over 100 retail stores online through the Box Tops for Education Marketplace! Check it out!

Stop and Shop A+ Rewards

It's time to re-register your Stop and Shop card and designate it to Mission Hill School. Then, every time you shop, your purchase total is rounded to the nearest dollar and used to calculate school earnings – free money for Mission Hill, just for buying your groceries! Register at: <http://www.stopandshop.com/aplus> and us ID Number: 09287. If you would rather send your stop and shop card number (13 digits) and last name that the card is registered under to Courtney and have her register your card for you, please email her atcourtney.bruno@bc.edu. Once you are registered you will earn points from October 4, 2013 until March 20, 2014.

Bilingual Story Time for Toddlers

Parker Hill Library (1497 Tremont Street) will have books, songs, and rhymes in English and Spanish on Wednesdays at 10:30 from September 11 – October 9. This story time is for babies and toddlers up to age 2 along with their caregivers. Call 617.427.3820 if you have any questions.

Tiempo de Cuentos Bilingue para Niños de Biblioteca Parker Hill

(1497 Tremont Street) tendrá libros, canciones y rimas en inglés y Los Miércoles de Español a las 10:30 desde septiembre 11-octubre 9. Este tiempo historia es para los bebés y niños pequeños de hasta 2 años de edad, junto con sus cuidadores. Llame al 617.427.3820 si tiene alguna pregunta.

and Fridays. Marilyn will be with us on Mondays and Wednesdays.

BPS Offers Universal Free Lunch for Every Child

BOSTON – The Boston Public Schools will serve free meals – both lunch and breakfast -- to all students, regardless of their income status this year. Boston becomes one of the largest cities in the nation to join a program aimed at serving healthy meals to more children and save families money.

“Every child has a right to healthy, nutritious meals in school, and when we saw a chance to offer these healthy meals at no cost to them, we jumped at the chance,” said Mayor Thomas M. Menino. “This takes the burden of proof off our low-income families and allows all children, regardless of income, to know healthy meals are waiting for them at school every day.”

Wellness and Music

Please welcome **Laura Golitko** our new Wellness Coordinator and teacher of Gymcraftics.

Also welcome **Marilyn Andry** our new music teacher. Laura will be with us on Wednesdays

Mission Hill School

A Boston Public Pilot School

Deborah Meier, Founder

Ayla Gavins, Principal

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