

Mission Hill School News

Letter from Child Street

A Few Words about Mistakes

Dear Mission Hill Families, Friends, Students and Staff,

When I was an Algebra student in high school, I was among many in my class that repeatedly got the wrong answer to problems. My teacher stayed seated at his desk with a long line of students standing in front. Each student held a worksheet in his or her hands and question in his or her mind; Did I get it right this time? Or "Can you tell me what to do?" Daunted by the long line, I typically took my "X" sprinkled paper, hunkered down with it at my desk, sorted through my mistakes, and tried to discover the root of my errors. A lover of math and puzzles, I always knew there was a path to the answer that I just hadn't found yet.

Unfortunately, for some of our children/students, they do not see the connection between success and sticking with a difficult task the way I did. In classrooms and at Friday Share last week, the following strong message was sent to students as we launched the school year.

Mistakes are opportunities for learning. We all make mistakes and we can get smarter if we use our mistakes and hurdles to learn from. This seems like a simple message, but it's a difficult one to actualize. The idea that mistakes are a part of learning runs counter to the society we live in and perhaps to how you were raised or schooled. Our children may receive messages from peers, family and the media about what it means to be smart or stupid. If we are not careful our children can begin to falsely believe that they are or are not smart. The truth is we are all good at some things and not so good at others. If we believe this about ourselves and the children in our lives, we also believe that there is no limit to our accomplishments, just much to learn. Learning things that don't come naturally will take more time and effort than other things that we learn quickly.

Join us (the adults in your child's school) in sending a message to our students that effort makes the difference in learning. If no effort is required in accomplishing a task, then it may be enjoyable, but learning is not happening.

Here are some ways you can help your child with this at home:

Use the language of Mission Hill Habits of Mind* and Work* to ask questions and to give your child feedback on how he or she is working. Notice and acknowledge when your child sees a task through to the end even when it was tough. Notice and acknowledge when your child has created a challenge for him/herself. For more information on this topic read *Mindset* by Carol Dweck.

* *The Mission Hill Habits of Mind and Habits of Work can be found in the Hot Topics section of this newsletter.*

~Ayla Gavins

REMINDERS

September

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. 10/14, NO SCHOOL

From the Classrooms

3 and 4 year-olds

~No news this week

Kindergarten

Room 106

~No news this week

Room 107

"I did it!" Jordan proclaimed as he ran from the back of the classroom to show that he had sorted all the pom-poms by color.

"I'm going to put my purse at home in this purse," Lila said proudly as she carried around one she had just sewn.

"I want to learn to sew," said Erik eagerly.

"Is it my turn yet?" asked Adam as he waited patiently to play the water transfer game.

"I'm getting good at this," said Natalia as she proudly showed that she had woven two entire rows on her mat.

"Let's make pixie dust!" several students declared when they found out the sand table outside our classroom was open.

"That's a big bubble!" marveled Keith as he watched it lift higher and higher into the air.

"Are you still proud of me?" Nyla asked as she rested on her mat.

"Our caterpillar is getting so fat! He's like, this big!" (shows with his hands) said Eamon after peering into the butterfly case.

"Can I water the plants?" asked Juel holding a watering can.

"There it is! I knew there was

going to be a black seed!" a student announced as we predicted what we would see once we cut open our watermelon.

"These muffins are great!" said another student as we ate the corn muffins our snack bakers baked.

"Can you start the good-bye song with me?" asked Madison at the end of the day.

These few quotes show we are quickly beginning to feel comfortable, confident and successful. In addition, it is evident that while things have not been perfect, our students are cultivating individual and collective niches and relationships as well as finding ways to be positive contributors to our classroom.

~Jada Brown

& JoAnn Hawksworth

Room 109

Last year our class had many more children in K2 than in K1. In fact, only three children remain in 109 from last year's class. I'm pretty sure those three children had mixed feelings about another year in Kindergarten while the rest of their friends joined the "big kids" upstairs. But here we are, just over a week into my second year at Mission Hill, and I am already beginning to see the benefits of a multi-age classroom. Before my eyes, I am watching as last year's crew turn into kindergarten experts, ready to lend some guidance or a helping hand to their new friends. Emile shows some of the boys how to clean up the block area, how to sort the toys into their right baskets. A child asks, "Jenny, where's the paper?" and Kenneth jumps up to

show her the way. Zora watches two children get into a conflict, and helps them sort it out using the problem solving protocol she has seen succeed so many times. Although we are only a little over a week into the year, the children are already learning an important lesson: We are all teachers, and we are all learners.

~Jenny Goldstein

Grades One & Two

Room 204

The past two weeks have been full of learning each other and learning routines. Already room 204 has begun to get the hang of our quiet work time. This is the last hour of our day every day except Thursday. It is a time that will focus mostly on literacy and will also include other types of work children and adults may need to check in on. Some things that go on during quiet work time are independent writing and reading, book groups, one-on-one conferences and goal setting with students and maybe even visiting another first-second grade class to join in their literacy activities.

At the end of quiet work time we asked students what the best part of their time was. Here is what a few of them had to say:

Roldani – "I made my own book."

Typrese – "I read a robot science book."

Kelise – "Reading with Kaylanie."

Adler – "I wrote about a jelly bean truck."

Maryam – "I made a book of

shells we found.”

Rafael – “Reading the bee books.”

Maya M. – “Making books with my friends.”

~*Jenerra Williams*

Room 205

A great way to establish a tone of collaboration and mutual respect is by sharing our hopes for the school year. Creating these goals sends a message to students that they have a say in what they learn. They’re also introduced to the importance of reflection and selfknowledge as they consider what is important to them and where they want to improve.

Destiny hopes to learn about nature. **Kaylon** and **Hamse** want to learn how to draw better. **Sara** hopes to make new friends. **Shawnmathew** hopes to build castles taller than him. **Shane** and **Gianna** want to play outside. **Braxton**, **Zuhri** and **Chrisvely** hope to learn how to read. **Miles** hopes to build with blocks. **Skye** hopes to learn how to take care of materials. **Euan** hopes to learn how to draw better with colored pencils. **Dashawn** hopes to learn about things that live. **Lukas** and **Olivia** want to learn how to do the monkey bars. **Anand** wants to learn how to read longer sentences. **Justin** hopes to learn about how flowers grow and **Amos** wants to learn about water this year.

~*Ashleigh L'Heureux*

Room 217

Learning the morning routine has been beautifully interrupted with children entering the

classroom first to check on our caterpillars, and then moving on to answer the daily question and make their morning choices. With faces close up against the glass and books about butterflies in hands, they have noticed details, asked questions, and welcomed their friends to a new day. Unfortunately, the caterpillars died over the weekend, and keeping with the routine, it was the first thing students noticed the next morning. As scientists given time to make sense of a change in our classroom, the children used tools including their prior experiences, science books, and each other to come up with answers to our question: “Why did the caterpillars die?” Students listened to each other’s ideas, added on to each other’s thinking, and consistently used evidence to make sense of what happened. As we begin our life science theme, exploring ants, I am eager to learn with and from all the scientists in our classroom!

~*Emm Fialka-Feldman*

Grades Three & Four

Room 207

Week two has officially ended! It has been a great start to the 2013-14 school year. This past week we have worked really hard on setting goals for ourselves. Setting goals at the beginning of the school year is essential for success to occur. Our room 207 friends would like to share one of our goals with our community:

Tato: I want to be better in reading, writing, and math!

Anais: I want to get better at reading and writing!

Luisairy: I want to get better at reading and writing!

Athena: I want to get better with my handwriting!

Tandin: I want to get better at spelling and receiving green lights!

Giselle: I want to get better at completing my homework and bringing in my communication folder!

Chantal: I want to get better at reading, writing, and math!

Sadiqah: I want to get better at reading!

James: I hope to make friends!

Zachary: I want to get better with handwriting and presenting at Friday Share!

Daniel R: I hope to make new friends since my best friend is in another class!

Daniel M: I hope to go to 5th grade! I also hope to learn all my shapes!

Kalea: I hope to get better at reading and writing!

Dalia: I hope to get better at reading and becoming a teacher!

Axel: I hope to learn how to read and spell better this year!

Laudys: I want to get better at math!

Andrew: I hope to play and learn a lot during Project Time!

Zack: I hope to play capture the flag this year because I really like it!

Abidemi: I hope to draw, write, do math, and complete homework this year!

Bryan: I hope to get better at writing! I also hope my classmates have a safe year!

CJ: I am hoping to learn a lot of new things in math this year!

AJ: I want to get better in math, especially with multiplication,

division, and fractions! I also want to get better at working with people I don't work well with!

Mr. Robert: I hope to get better at teaching all learners! I hope to create curriculum that allows each child to access it! Thanks for reading one of our many goals for the school year!

~Robert Baez

Room 216

I would like to introduce a few really important teachers. These teachers are Selina Ruiz, Melanie Centeno, and Elsa Baptista. Elsa is a one-on-one paraprofessional and I've learned from her what activities the students can do in the morning and afternoon. Elsa has a gentle soul and works great in the class with all the students, which means she helps with groupings. Melanie Centeno is a student teacher from Tufts University and will be with us for the entire year. Melanie has so many wonderful ideas and we have implemented quite a few and will continue to do so. Selina Ruiz is a former Mission Hill student, and is now a student teacher from Northeastern University. She will also be with us this year. Selina has been instrumental in helping me understand the ways of Mission Hill and to think in other ways.

I have learned so much from all of them. I feel that we can all learn from each other and this will help us within our practice. All of them have been completely dedicated to the

students they work with. It has been a tremendous experience so far this year and I hope we can continue to grow - along with the students - and get better at what we do. I'm still excited about how this year will play out!

~Josh Kraus, Melanie Centeno
Selina Ruiz & Elsa Baptista

Grades Five & Six

Room 210

The beginning of the school is always an interesting time of the year. Children getting acquainted with one another, new students trying to find their footing. Teachers working to get to know them all better and helping them to learn how to be with one another in new and different ways. On top of all of that, this time last year we had a big, new building to navigate. Most of the kids are now familiar with the layout of the building and lunch/recess norms. With the "newness" factor gone, it will be interesting to see how the students handle the first several weeks. This has been addition by subtraction for the adults. Getting the year started without all of the distractions that last year brought is exciting. We are looking forward to sharing all of the experiences of our yet to be named classroom.

~Nakia Keizer, Katy Laguzza
& June Myers

Room 215

When looking around room 215, the song "Make new friends but keep the old" jumps to mind.

While the song's specifics are about friends, I am aware that the lyrics are applicable in all areas. The 5th and 6th graders are in the process of both creating new community norms and strengthening ones to which they return year after year (Be Kind. Work Hard.) They are learning to respect other learning styles while deepening the commitment to their own education.

It is a hard task—this coming together---after a summer of "doing my own thing". But it is a task for which they are ready—if we help them. What does it mean to support each other? How do we take care of our own learning and our class community? How does your child make sure his/her needs are valued as much as but not more than someone else's needs? We begin by accepting each other and ourselves as individuals, as a classroom and as a school.

It requires patience, open-mindedness and willingness. And even though it is difficult at times, we also laugh a lot at differences, similarities and the shades in between.

~Letta Neely

Grades Seven & Eight

Room 213

At our first Friday Share last week, MHS adults performed skits to help us all remember important ways to start the school year. We learned there is more involved in doing well than the MHS saying: Be Kind. Work Hard. My group, the

“Child Street House,” created a scene in which young students experienced frustration when their work efforts weren’t initially successful. Blocks tumbled to the floor and tally marks did not represent an accurate count. “Aaaugh!” screamed the frustrated learners.

Then we were reminded not to be upset, that nobody’s perfect. The learners didn’t fail; they did something else. They produced results. That happens every time you make a mistake. What can you do with your results when you make a mistake? What can you learn from what didn’t work?

Mistakes lead to discoveries. Mistakes are a key part of learning. This is a belief we want to be alive in every classroom at MH. Fear of failure shuts down learning. We don’t walk away from mistakes, but use them to build understanding. When is the last time you made a great mistake? What did you learn?

~Ann Ruggiero

Room 214

~No news this week

Library

Children are coming to the library to borrow books. I am enjoying helping them find what they need. Please encourage you child to come to the library to borrow books, if they haven’t done so yet. Some children ask for a certain kind of book, such as a book with a princess in it, a basketball book or a book they

can read themselves. I am in the process of putting reading levels on the easy to read books. I also ask the children which books they have been reading recently to help them find the just right book.

All children can take their books home. Here are some tips to keep the books safe and sound. We encourage our students to put the books in their book bag as soon as they return to the classroom, and not take them out until they get home. Do you have a “home” for library books at your house where your child can put the book when they are not reading it, so it will not get lost? It is best if this place is a little higher up, out of the way of food and small children. Avoid eating and drinking near the book. Books may be kept for two weeks at a time.

Thank you for your help and encouragement. If you have any questions please email me at mhalbertsma@missionhillschool.org or call at the school phone: 617 635 6384.

I hope to see your children in the library soon!

~Marietje Halbertsma

Hot Topics

Habits of Mind:

Connections- Have I seen something like this before?

Conjecture- Could it have been otherwise?

Evidence- How do we know what’s true and false?

Relevance- Does it matter? Who cares?

Viewpoint- How else might this look if we stepped into the shoes of others?

Habits of Work:

Plan- Think ahead

Persevere- Stick with it

Produce- Create

Reflect- Think about the work done

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.

Questions about high schools?

The third annual MHYC High School Information Night for youth and families will be hosted on Thursday, October 3rd, from 6-7:30pm at the BCYF Tobin Community Center in the 2nd Floor Conference Room, 1481 Tremont Street, Roxbury. Dinner Will Be Served! Please RSVP to Missionhillyouthcollaborative@gmail.com or call (857) 237 0933.

Brrr!

As fall approaches, we want to make sure all students have clothes to keep them warm through the winter. If your children could benefit from a new, warm, winter coat please let Courtney know. She will be getting new coats for any child that needs one in the beginning of October (infants and siblings too). Call, email, or stop by Room 114 to let her know what sizes your family needs. She can also get extra seasonal clothing for children ages 0-12 on an as-needed basis. Check in

with her if that is something that will help your family.

Abrigos de Invierno Disponibles

Se está poniendo frío afuera y es hora de empezar a pensar en la ropa para en invierno. Por favor avísenle a Courtney si necesitan ayuda para conseguir la ropa para sus hijos. Courtney tiene abrigos disponibles para aquellos niños (y sus hermanos) que necesiten. Pueden llamarla al teléfono: 617 635 6384.

Parent University

Fall Learning Session - Saturday, October 12, 2013 8:30-3:30 @ Northeastern University in the Curry Student Center. Parent University is an opportunity for parents and caregivers to learn information about their vital responsibility in shaping children's lives. Sessions focus on child development, what children are learning in schools, advocacy, parent leadership and effective parenting skills. Parent University is FREE for all BPS parents. Register online or contact Courtney in Room 114 for more information.

Mission Hill School to offer Tech Goes Home classes this fall.

Tech Goes Home is a FREE technology skills class for children and family members, 5th grade and up. It is designed for students to participate with an adult family member, who must be present for every class. After families have completed 15 hours of instruction (six 2 1/2 hour classes), they are eligible to receive a brand new netbook laptop computer for only \$50.

In order to hold the classes at MHS, we must have at least 12 interested families. Please contact Dani Coleman by Friday, September 27th if you would like to join the class. You may stop by room 103, email dcoleman@missionhillschool.org or call the school 617-635-6384, ext. 210.



Mission Hill School

A Boston Public Pilot School

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