

Mission Hill School News

Letter from Child Street

Schoolyard Love

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

The sweet sounds of birds fill the air, a cool breeze rustles the leaves on trees- sounding like an ocean wave coming ashore, and I sit on a large rock among many rocks. I feel a deep sense of satisfaction and ease as I write to you from this space, the Mission Hill schoolyard.

After a year of planning and a summer of construction, our schoolyards (yes, there are two) were opened to children this week. Both spaces are near completion. True to the planning committee's design, the space is constructed of natural materials and native plants that inspire observation, study, exploration and imagination. The final additions to

the space will be a weathervane, a thermometer, a rain gauge, a map, and a schoolyard sign. These items will appear in the coming weeks.

Many thanks to the Boston Schoolyard Initiative and the teams that designed these spaces. James Sessum and Nancy Leask from the City, Kathy D'Andrea, Jenerra Williams and me as school staff members, and Jessica Parsons and Deborah Gregson as parents came together each month last year to plan the areas. We were partnered with a great construction crew that brought our ideas to life.

Community members are invited to maintain the space and enjoy it. In order to protect the elements of the space and maintain safe grounds for children's play,

combination locks will be placed on the gates leading to the play areas. Friends of the school and neighbors who wish to have access to the yards should contact the school. The lock combination will be provided. Call us at 617-635-6384, e-mail us at missionhillschool@missionhillschool.org or come in to the main office on the second floor from 9:30am to 3:00pm Monday to Friday. We would love to have gardeners and bird lovers join our schoolyard community.

Sincerely,

~Ayla Gavins

REMINDERS

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

Room 108

We have been doing the important work of getting to know each other in room 108. One of the ways we do that is through singing. We sing many songs that include the names of the children in the class. There is The Welcome Song, The Good Bye Song, The More We Get Together, and more! A favorite song these first few weeks has been The Hat Song. The words are simple...and we pass along our plastic red fire fighter hat as we sing. "Ryan has the hat. What do you think of that? He takes off the hat, and gives it to... Camille! Camille has the hat. What do you think of that? She takes off the hat, and gives it to..." We go around the circle until everyone who wants a turn has had a turn. This simple song is great fun and a wonderful community builder. If you want to sing the song at home ask your child or one of the adults from our classroom to teach you.

~Geraldyn Bywater McLaughlin
& Donna Winder

Kindergarten

Room 106

What do you think we will see when we go outside?" I asked the students in the Peregrine Falcon class. Hands shot up in the air. "We will see butterflies," one student said. "Maybe we will see a butterfly," I added. "We might see apples that look really good but they are on the ground and

might have bugs in them," Lumi added. Tafari said, "We will see bugs." Zyel added, "We will see the plants, maybe a colorful butterfly, blue and red."

The children recorded what they thought they might see in their journals. They filled each page with detailed pictures. We then headed outside. I had a bag filled with tools. The children described what each thing was and how we could use it. They described the binoculars, "You look through them and things get bigger," Tafari said.

We also talked about the hand lenses, magnifiers, clipboards, paper, and pencils. The children found what they needed and ventured into the space to observe. While there, Elliot and Solomon were interested in a worm that appeared to have died. I ask Elliot what he thought was happening. "The ants are help him (the worm) Kathy, they aren't eating him."

~Kathy Clunis D'Andrea

Room 107

Life and Science have begun to fill Room 107. We spent last week exploring the concept that a tiny seed can produce a plant. After learning the poem The Little Plant, we took time to transplant various herb, vegetable, and berry plants. We also planted pumpkin, watermelon, cucumber, tomato, spearmint, parsley and oregano seeds. Our plants are now germinating in our classroom greenhouse. While engaged in our gardening activities, several students realized that our caterpillar climbed to the top of its habitat and was hanging in the form of a J, an

indicator that a change was soon to come. By the middle of the day our caterpillar had spun a cocoon around itself. Excitedly students began predicting how long it would take for the butterfly to emerge. "I think it will take a day." "It will be out tomorrow." "I can see the wing!" "I think it's cracking out now!" Each time they pass the butterfly habitat, they stop and carefully peer in to see if anything has changed.

Later that week a new creature appeared in our classroom. Its grey body swimming around in a small aquarium caught the attention of many of our students. "What is it?" they asked. "It's a tadpole," one student confidently proclaimed. "It's a fish," said another, not quite as certain. The next day several students declared, "There is another one in there!" As we continue to observe these creatures sucking the side of the aquarium, hiding behind rocks, zipping back and forth and then up and down, we hope to gain evidence for our hypotheses.

~Jada Brown
& JoAnn Hawkesworth

Room 109

I am grateful to the butterfly for its unwavering ability to inspire wonder and awe in adults and children alike. This week we visited the Butterfly Garden at the Museum of Science. As soon as we walked through the doors the room was filled with a hushed excitement. Children looked closely at the butterflies and their habitat.

"Look at the eyes on that one's

wings!” exclaimed Hiram. Beatrice recognized it immediately and responded, “It’s an owl butterfly!”

When asked later about their favorite moments, Luke remembered, “It landed on my head.” Kenneth agreed, “One landed on my shoulder and another on my chest. It was the coolest thing.”

Others were amazed at the size of some of the butterflies: “We saw a big butterfly the size of a rock” explained Emile. Maya added, “We saw some big ones like two dollar bills connected.” Jackson recalled “a big moth in a cage. It was huge! It was the size of a plate!”

I am grateful to the butterfly, for it inspires wonder and awe. Upon returning to school, Zora reminisced, “The coolest thing was how beautiful they were. They just lit up the whole place.”

~Jenny Goldstein

Grades One & Two

Room 204

Last week we made our classroom agreements. We shared our hopes and dreams for this year and talked about the agreements we needed to make as a community to help make those hopes and dreams come true. One of our classroom agreements is “ask for help”. To that end, we asked each person to share what they could help someone with and what they needed a buddy to help them with. Here are things they can help with:

“I can help others with...

Michelle – feeling better when they fall down or when they have

a boo boo.”

Kaylanie – riding a bike with one hand and doing the splits.”

Adler – building legos.”

Arianny – writing words.”

Kelise – doing the splits.”

Peter – learning to do splits.”

Keysha – blocks.”

Maya S. – building a tall building.”

Roldani – running super fast.”

Dillon – riding a pedal bike.”

Fatemah – building things.”

Rafael – reading.”

Liam – dressing up as Revolutionary War people.”

Typrese – organizing and putting stuff away.”

Vitoria – reading and math.”

Maryam – learning to color.”

Shirley – jumping rope.”

Alejandro – drawing.”

Maya M. – drawing hearts.”

~Jenerra Williams

Room 205

As I watched the children settle into their project time choices, I saw some children gather art materials for the group of students working at their table; others carefully removed blocks from the shelf to start building, and one child invited a new friend into her dramatic play scenario. Already they were demonstrating that they could follow our newly established class agreements without much help from me. After each student shared his or her hope for the school year with their classmates last week, we thought about how we, as a group, can help each other achieve these goals. We thought about how our bodies should look and sound and what rules or agreements we would need to make sure that

everyone could learn and grow this year. The students drew on their past experiences and listed many wonderful ideas about how to interact with one another in a learning environment. From about 20 rules, we narrowed it down to six meaningful class agreements: share, be safe, help each other, use kind words, listen to each other, and make good choices.

~Ashleigh L'Heureux

Room 217

Our bulletin board has morphed into a place full of children’s work. Student names are posted there, with spaces in which to highlight their work and learning around a question we are investigating: What does an ant look like? First, we have answered what ants look like with drawings and clay models (a very tiny clay ant now rests on the bulletin board). Drawings capture the various parts of an ant’s body, the intricate tunnels they build, and the details of an ant’s face. In discussions, we have shared what we know about ants – they are small, they can be found outside, and there are red ants and black ants. We are sharing what we want to learn about ants, too – we are curious about flying ants and how they function. As we begin to use our science journals, we will develop our skills as scientists honing our ability to make careful, accurate observations with both pictures and words.

~Emma Fialka-Feldman

Grades Three & Four

Room 207

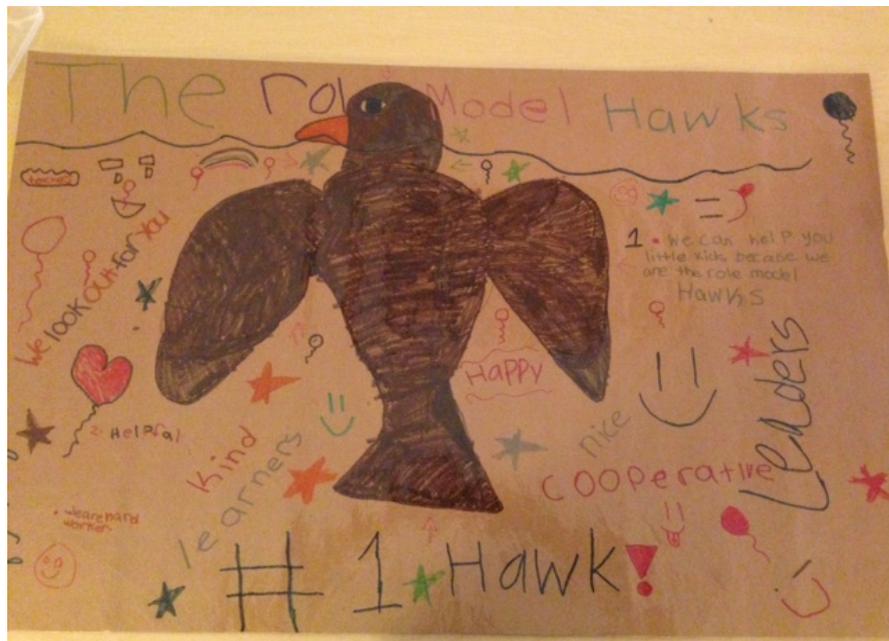
Hello Room 207 families! I hope the first weeks of school have been joyful. I know that these times are busy as we get back to our routines. The past couple of weeks Room 207 has worked really hard on picking a name that best represents us as a group. We brainstormed various names multiple times throughout the days and participated in a voting process, which narrowed down our list to two options. Therefore, we are proud to announce that we are now known as “The Role Model Hawks”. Here are seven sentences that describe why we

chose this name:

- 1) We are hard workers,
- 2) We help little kids when they need help,
- 3) We lead by example,
- 4) When someone gets or feels hurt we help them,
- 5) We have a bird’s eye view of the outside because we are high up,
- 6) We look out for each other,
- 7) The teachers oversee the learners. Teachers are adults and students.

We hope you enjoy our class name. We will work hard to take full ownership of it. Below is our class name poster.

~Robert Baez, Amanda Rulera
& Anastasia Puckerine



The Role Model Hawks' Poster

Room 216

I walked over to Ayan and Sophia who were near a tree in the Arboretum. I asked to join their group and they said it would be fine. “Wow, those leaves are huge! What else do you notice about the leaves?” I wondered.

“They look like a leprechaun’s hat,” Sophia answered as she began to draw the leaf. “Are they mirror image?” I asked them. “Well, yes. But the right side is a bit larger than the left side.” Ayan drew the leaves a couple of times. We examined the drawing and asked if there was a way to get the drawing more accurate. “You noticed the lines on the leaves. What do you think we could do to make the leaf more accurate?”

“We could count them.” Ayan’s third drawing turned out to be much more accurate and she was able to write down a few sentences along with the drawing. Sophia noticed that her leaf had brown spots. She began to revise the drawing and create the spots within her drawing. “Why do you think there are brown spots on the leaves?”

“Probably because the ants eat it, but then throws up all over the leaf,” said Sophia. “Maybe it’s a disease,” responded Ayan.

“I have to go find this leaf right here! I have to go! I think I know which tree this leaf belongs to! I’ll be back!” shouted Sophia.

Our morning field trip is coming to an end, but the wondering and excitement is just beginning!

~Melanie Centeno, Selina Ruiz
& Josh Kraus

Grades Five & Six

Room 210

~No news this week

Room 215

Choosing a class name is always an interesting activity. We took several days to decide on a class name. First we brainstormed anything that came to mind. Some of the original ideas were Learning Achievers, The Wild, and the Mohegans. We discussed the importance of what our class name represents and what we wanted others to think about when they said our name. Then students had an opportunity to take a name they suggested off the list or defend the name they chose. Students had three votes to start with and once the choices were narrowed down they had one more chance to vote. The majority chose the name the White Lions. Here's what some students said: "I like the name the White Lions because lions stick in a pack and are there to protect each other. I think our class should be like that." – **Asmani**

"I like the name White Lions for our classroom because our class is one of a kind." – **Jaylin**

"The White Lion is a rare and unique lion, which is why we chose it. We are all unique and no one is like anyone else." -

Natalie

~Sarah DeCruz

Grades Seven & Eight

Room 213

Each Friday afternoon we stop to take stock of our week. The Week-in-Review reflection considers what went well, what was challenging, and plans for next steps. The school year seems to have started well for the students in Room 213. Here are excerpts from their journals.

"Something that was difficult this week was adjusting to school after a crazy summer. I'll make it work though. A goal I can set myself to is going for it and not giving up. Striving for success is good. Not even a goal for the week but a goal for the year."

"Math is going well because I'm understanding it better and I like doing the math. I enjoy working with my group members."

"The third thing that went well would have to be read aloud because I am really enjoying the book and the different perspectives."

"Some of the problems were confusing but I would take a break and then come back, to look at it with fresh eyes."

"I am really looking forward to this year and being able to get to know my class better."

"One thing I know for sure is I'm going to come to school to learn and have fun doing it!"

~Ann Ruggiero

Room 214

~No news this week

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.

Turn in your Box Tops!

It's almost time to submit our Box Tops for the fall. Please turn in any Box Tops to Courtney by October 18th so they can be sorted and sent in. We collect them all year long for two big submissions: November 1st and March 1st.

Questions about high schools?

The third annual MHYC High School Information Night will be hosted for youth and families 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 deepens, 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

A Boston Public Pilot School

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