

# Mission Hill School News

## Letter from Child Street

### **Mission Hill School: Out in the World**

There has been a great deal of buzz about MHS lately. Books have been written about us, our teacher leadership model has been highlighted on several occasions, and a four-year long film project will culminate in a nationally-aired documentary in the fall.

Please read more about the exciting news!

1. **New England Cable News Network (NECN)** met up with our two grade 3/4 classrooms last week, on their annual visit to The Farm School. The segment focused on the deep relationship MHS shares with The Farm School and aired on television Tuesday, May 6, 2014.

You may also view the video and article on their website: [http://www.necn.com/05/06/14/Making-the-Grade-The-Farm-School/landing\\_makingthegrade.html?blockID=866079&feedID=11530](http://www.necn.com/05/06/14/Making-the-Grade-The-Farm-School/landing_makingthegrade.html?blockID=866079&feedID=11530)

#### **REMINDERS**

##### *May*

**Fri. 5/9:** Spring electives begin

**5/5 - 5/9:** Screen Free Week

**5/6 & 5/7:** Math MCAS for grades 3&4

**5/8 & 5/9:** Math MCAS for grades 5&6

**Fri. 5/9, 9:00 - 11:00:** Welcome Session for new families

**5/12 & 13:** Math MCAS for grade 8 AND Science MCAS for grade 5

**5/15 & 16:** Math MCAS for grade 7 AND Science MCAS for grade 8

**Fri. 5/22:** Ecoteer Day

2. **Learning Matters**, an organization who airs news stories on PBS News Hour, spent the day filming and speaking with Ayla and MHS teachers about teacher leadership for a new campaign Teacher Powered Schools. The piece will be aired nationally during the last week of May (date and time TBA).

Read more about Learning Matters on PBS News Hour on their website: <http://learningmatters.tv/blog/tag/newshour/>.

3. **Democracy & Education**, an education journal, recently published a favorable review of former MHS teacher Matthew Knoester's book, *Democratic Education in Practice: Inside the Mission Hill School*.

Read the review online:

[http://democracyeducationjournal.org/home/vol22/iss1/10/?utm\\_source=D%26E+Subscribers+April+2014&utm\\_campaign=97b4be4ab8-Seeking\\_11\\_29\\_2012&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_7947d4a605-97b4be4ab8-84853061](http://democracyeducationjournal.org/home/vol22/iss1/10/?utm_source=D%26E+Subscribers+April+2014&utm_campaign=97b4be4ab8-Seeking_11_29_2012&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_7947d4a605-97b4be4ab8-84853061)

4. **Good Morning Mission Hill (GMMH)** was recently accepted as a submission to the National Education Television Association. The hour-long documentary about MHS was created by filmmakers Tom and Amy Valens and co-produced by Sam Chaltain and Scott Nine (of the Institute for Democratic Education in

America). Based on the year that Tom and Amy spent filming the school, GMMH picks up where the ten-part video series, *A Year at Mission Hill*, left off. GMMH will air on a variety of PBS stations, nationwide in the fall of 2014.

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## From the Classrooms

### 3 and 4 year-olds

Room 108

*Coming next week*

### Kindergarten

#### Room 106

Our first week back has been filled with discovery. Each child interviewed someone who moved to Boston from somewhere else. We shared the interviews and a photo of the person. We soon came to realize that there were some themes as to why people move and what they miss.

So far people have moved to Boston for school, to be closer to family, and for love. When asked what they missed there were two strong themes. They missed family and friends and food. It did not matter if people moved from another state or another country they all really missed their friends, family, and food.

After they shared the photos and interviews, children drew portraits of the people they interviewed. One version is in pencil and the other is with crayons. Please stop by to see our map, interviews, and portraits.

*~Kathy Clunis D'Andrea*

#### Room 107

In the midst of our study of Who We Are and Where We Come From, it came to our attention that Room 107 still did not have a class name. We had started the process several times and the voting procedure had always proven to be too much for

our students to handle (specifically if their proposed name was not voted for). Now that it is May, we chose to try it one more time. To our excitement, this effort finally met with success.

After entertaining ideas like White Dragons, Bubble Lollipops, Splits, Ice Dragons, Spy Kids, Coquis and Princess Dragon Bumblebees, two names came out to be the clear contenders. With 12 votes each (students were able to vote more than once) Coquis and Princess Dragon Bumblebees were the obvious favorites. When restricting their voting to only one for the final two names, Princess Dragon Bumblebees led with 15 votes, while Coquis garnered only four. In order to be inclusive and alleviate the disappointment of the other name not being chosen, we came to the following compromise: Whenever I address the class as "Princess Dragon Bumblebees", everyone will respond "Coqui! Coqui!" With just one day's practice, the Princess Dragon Bumblebees (formerly known as Room 107) have shown tremendous ownership of their new name.

*~Jada Brown  
& JoAnn Hawkesworth*

#### Room 109

*Coming next week*

### Grades One & Two

#### Room 204

Our theme is fully underway and we have begun a number of projects to think about our next

guiding question: Why do people move from place to place?

This week and next we will be reading a number of immigration stories and discussing this question. From seeking a better life to escaping a war torn country, our stories reflect a wide variety of reasons people have left their home countries.

Along with reading stories, we are also watching short video clips of real life children that have immigrated for these specific reasons. Hearing their stories has been interesting and informative!

Activities we have done or will do include simulating a boat ride from England, going on a nature hunt for treasures that remind you of home, writing a diary entry, and writing a letter to someone in another country. Below are some of the books we have enjoyed. Maybe you'll check them out from your local library and enjoy them as well.

*Azzi in Between* – Sarah Garland  
*My Diary from Here to There / Mi diario de aqui hasta allá* –

Amada Irma Perez

*Goodbye, 382 Shin Dang Dong* –

Frances Park and Ginger Park  
*Small Beauties: The Journey of Darcy Heart O'Hara* – Elvira Woodruff

*Pilgrim Cat* – Carol Antoinette Peacock

Last, please be sure to contact Miss Jenerra to sign up for your family presentation date!

*~Jenerra Williams*

**Room 205**

As we've begun our new theme we've been talking a lot about who we are and where we come from. We've started to talk about why people move and how they move, while focusing on the challenges that come with that, how your environment changes you and how we should celebrate our differences. We started by first looking closely at ourselves. After reading the book, *The Colors of Us*, students drew self portraits and thought of a word to describe the color of them. We then combined what the students said to create a poem: I am the color of pineapple (Shane). I am the color of a Kit Kat bar (Hamse). I am the color of honey (Olivia). I am the color of dark chocolate (Justin). I am the color of peanut butter (Skye). I am the color of a pinecone (Kaylon). I am the color of light coffee (Sara). I am the color of caramel (Anand). I am the color of pink milk (Amos). I am the color of peaches (Miles). I am the color of sand (Gianna). I am the color of milk chocolate (Zuhri). I am the color of yarn (Euan). I am the color of peanuts (Chrisvely). I am the color of sausage (Shawnmathew). I am the color of mud (Braxton). I am the color of rice (Lukas). I am the color of peach (Destiny).

~Ashleigh L'Heureux

**Room 217**

"Whoo!" the Lightning Dragons shouted as the Jamaica Plain Fire Fighters welcomed them into their station. Our class has been inviting our neighbors to share their stories of how they

came to the united States. Friday morning the class walked down Centre and South Streets to deliver the letters to local business. Amari and James introduced themselves to the fire fighters and then handed them their letter. We were quickly invited to look around and ask tons of questions. We had many highlights from this spontaneous field trip. Here are some. Luis said, "We sprayed the hoses!" Janira said, "We went into the fire trucks and saw gadgets and stuff." Mekhai said "holding the hose" was a highlight. Anna said, "seeing someone slide down the poles" was her highlight. Now as we are waiting for the businesses to respond to the letters, we are beginning to think of the questions we want to ask them during our interviews (and we're excited about what spontaneous field trips might come out of our next walk down Centre Street!).

~Emma Fialka-Feldman

**Grades Three & Four****Room 207**

This week the Role Model Hawks would like to showcase four pictures, which represent our experiences the past two weeks. We have attended a Farm School field trip, our student teacher had her last day, and we had our annual music show. Enjoy the pictures!

**Room 216**

It is great to be back and I appreciate the support, good wishes, and prayers from colleagues and families. I missed the students, families, and the school atmosphere. This past week has been great for several reasons. One of the reasons is I experienced the Farm School for my first time, along with a couple of other students. It was fun walking into the woods and the students had a great time playing a fun game there. We toured around the farm looking at goats, feeding the cows, chasing the chickens, and even had a read-aloud. The views from the top

were amazing!

Another first for a couple of the students was bike week. The students worked really hard learning to ride together as a group, and building their stamina. At the end of the day three, quite a few students were tired, but proud of accomplishing a long thirty minutes of riding. One student wrote "I had to walk with the bike by the side of me" due to all the strenuous work. I also witnessed a concert this week of the whole school singing songs. One student in our class reflected on being "proud of myself because I was scared to sing, but when I got on stage everyone was singing." Everyone seemed to enjoy singing and trying to hit the high notes. I look forward to more fun experiences with the students!

~Josh Kraus, Selina Ruiz  
& Melanie Centeno

## Grades Five & Six

### Room 210

"...Nakia, did you hear about what happened in Philly?" Dylan whispered to me in a somber tone during a recent morning meeting. Our class was talking about the containment drill that we had gone through just moments before. Students had lots of questions and comments. Some wondered why we all needed to be huddled up in the back of the room. "What is that really going to do if someone comes in..." their voice trailed off a bit. Nerves,

mixed with hubris kicked in for some as one child pantomimed shooting a gun toward the direction of the classroom door. Another brashly announced, "If someone came in here I would...!" while making an aggressive gesture as well. "What do we do if someone is out of the room? A student asked. Interestingly enough, one of the kids had gone to the bathroom just moments before the announcement. I was about to head that way to get her when one student shouted to me, "Nakia, Autumn's in the bathroom." I'm not really sure what the right thing to do is...I guess that is why we do drills" I told the student. They followed with "Yeah, but this was a drill, that's why you went to go get her..." It brought me back to the moments that we sat in the block area, all huddled up awaiting for the announcement saying that all was clear. Despite it being a drill I was emotional just looking at the eighteen kids in front of me. Thinking some of the same thoughts they were in those moments.

~Nakia Keizer

### Room 215

*Coming next week*

## Grades Seven & Eight

### Room 213

Last week, the 7th and 8th graders went on a field trip to Roxbury Community College to attend a lecture. The guest speaker was Sarah Collins

Rudolph, who is known as the "fifth little girl" in the Civil Rights Struggles. In 1963, the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama was bombed on a Sunday morning. Sarah's sister and three friends were killed; she was injured, but survived. She has lived a forgotten life, and is still affected by injuries sustained in the bombing.

Some of the kids' comments: "That was really sad. I wanted to cry." "She told a funny story at the beginning to help us relax." "Why did they want to bomb a church?" "She still has to clean houses. That's not right." "They raised money to fix a window, but they didn't help her?"

We also made a connection to our recent Taíno studies. Three men, members of the Ku Klux Klan, were found guilty of the bombing. But who else was responsible? Were they like Columbus's men, just following orders? What structural system was in place that led such hatred to fill peoples' hearts?

At the lecture, we were asked to spread Ms Rudolph's story and sign an on-line petition in support of compensation for her injuries and suffering. Would you consider making this a family project to talk with family and friends and ask them to sign the petition?

Use this link to listen to Ms Rudolph's story:  
<http://www.npr.org/2013/01/25/170279226>. Use this link to sign a petition in support of MsRudolph:  
<https://www.change.org/petitions/the-fifth-little-girl-who-was->

severely-injured-in-the-1963-birmingham-church-bombing-deserves-restitution-now?utm\_campaign=autopublish&utm\_medium=facebook&utm\_source=share\_petition

~Ann Ruggiero

### Room 214

*Coming next week*

### *Continued from Page 1*

#### *From the Good Morning Mission Hill website:*

"At this Boston Public School academics connect to experiences, empathy and exploration are valued, and children with diverse abilities and backgrounds flourish. There are no panaceas, but much can be achieved when teachers have the freedom to teach, plus the support to keep growing. Expect laughter, tears, singing and fresh baked bread."

Visit the Good Morning Mission Hill website:  
<http://goodmorningmissionhill.com/>

~Ayla Gavins



First and Second Grade Bike Week Participants

## 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

### **Mission Hill School**

*A Boston Public Pilot School*

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