

Mission Hill School News

Letter from Child Street

Handling Curveballs

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

Life happens. Even for staff members as dedicated as ours, there are events that pull people away from

professional responsibilities. Dealing with unexpected events is never easy, and this school year we've had more staffing transitions than we've ever had in a single year. We congratulated Jenny as she took maternity leave to welcome her new son, Benjamin, to the family. We sent Josh blessings of strength as he took a 6-week leave to care for his wife. We said good-bye to James McGovern and sent healing wishes to Letta as she recovered from surgery for several weeks. We said good-bye to Teresa Strong and Marilyn Andrey, who were with us briefly this fall. These transitions affected our entire school.

REMINDERS

May

Important - 5/17 work party POSTPONED due to inclement weather. Watch for news about the new date!

Fri. 5/22: Ecoteer Day

Wed. 5/28: Teacher Appreciation Day

June

Mon. 6/2: Grade Eight Portfolios begin

Fri. 6/6: Exhibitions
Recollections

Middle School Orientation

Wed. 6/11, 6:00: Grade Eight Art Show

Thu. 6/12, 5:00: Governance Board Meeting

Mon. 6/16: Seventh Grade Potrfolios Begin

Thu. 6/19: Graduation

Fri. 6/20: Field Day

We are so fortunate to have strong, talented and caring individuals in our community to maintain the learning, culture and climate of the school throughout so much movement. Recognition for the people that stepped in while others were away is due. Thank you to Liz Borson for taking over Jenny's classroom in her absence. She did a wonderful job of bringing the Taíno to life for students and building relationships with families. Thank you to Selina Ruiz, Melanie Centeno and Shanakawa for being such a strong team in Josh's absence. They were and continue to be reflective and responsive to student needs. Thank you to Katie Shepardson and June Meyer for guiding students to locations and learning in Letta's absence. Your leadership and growth as educators was wonderful to watch. Thank you to Khury Petersen-Smith and Chris Barnes for taking the lead in Teresa's absence. The atmosphere you have created in the classroom following a disruptive leave is comforting and has prepared students for learning. Welcome to Billy Buss, our new music teacher. Students have taken to him instantly. It has been fun watching him prepare students for the spring concert.

And of course, all the contributions made by staff, families and community members made a great difference. I often think about how fortunate we are. There were hiccups in the plans we made to keep learning uninterrupted, but without the strong people we have to step-in, step-up and support one another the transitions we had this year could have been disastrous. It's with a sigh of relief that I walk through the building as see that our team is nearly all back intact.

~Ayla Gavins

From the Classrooms

3 and 4 year-olds

Room 108

“We were just at the museum,” said Jeremy. “I like the blue bench the best. Can we go back tomorrow?”

Imagine taking a group of three and four year olds to the Museum of Fine Arts. Well, we did just that, and it was fantastic. When Mission Hill School was at 67 Alleghany Street in Roxbury, I loved being able to walk to the MFA with my students. We would visit the MFA throughout the school year in small groups. I loved that my students felt that they “knew” and felt comfortable at this world class art museum.

It is a little trickier now. I have younger students and we have to take public transportation (the 39 bus). However, I am proud to say we did it! We planned and planned and planned. We arranged a tour called, “Please Be Seated”. It was a tour of five distinct and beautiful benches that we could sit on, feel and even climb under. The materials included wood, leather, glass, fiberglass, and ceramic. We divided the class in half and took two separate trips to make the adventure more manageable. Between the bus ride itself – and all that we saw and touched at the MFA – we have had so much to talk about since returning to school. When you see someone from The Helping Hands class, ask him/her about the trip to the Museum of Fine Arts!



Ms. Donna and The Helping Hands at the MFA

~Geraldyn Bywater McLaughlin
& Donna Winder

Kindergarten

Room 106

Coming next week

Room 107

“That’s me!” “She looks like you Ms. Jada.” “Look at all the legs!”

In connection to our study of who we are and where we come from, we are taking some time to explore our similarities and differences, beginning with physical features. The quotations above were just a few of the comments the Princess Dragon Bumblebees made as we read the book *The Colors of Us* in preparation to paint their individual life sized cut outs. They learned that if they mixed the right amounts of red, black, white and yellow paint, they would be able to create a shade that represented their skin

tones. Excited by the prospect of this challenge, many Princess Dragon Bumblebees were eager to be a part of the painting group during our project time. One after the other, they clambered to the back door, and within moments (at the suggestion of Jo-Ann) our outside space was transformed into an art studio.

“I need a little red.” “Can I have some black?” As our students experimented to find the right combinations, paint was rapidly being poured. Our students’ bodies were in constant motion as they made sure to cover their paper heads, legs, arms and torsos with their newly stirred skin-toned paint. As they worked, some students lingered by the door saying, “I just want to watch.” The minute someone said, “I’m done” another student was ready to take his or her place. By the time we were done with two rounds of painters, just like

in the book, the different shades of brown graced our room and it was indeed beautiful to see.

~Jada Brown
& JoAnn Hawksworth

Room 109

I can't believe I've already been back for two weeks. The loving faces of my kindergarteners and the support of the Mission Hill community have all helped to make this a joyful transition for me. Thank you!

Following the Taino study, Original Stars learned about the Wampanoag and other American Indian tribes who were the original inhabitants of Massachusetts. This week we started thinking about ourselves. We are wondering, "Who Am I? What makes my family special?" Yesterday we talked about living in Boston, and where our families were before they came here.

We learned about the word "ancestors", and that our families came from many places- Ohio, New York, Georgia, Vermont, Maine, St. Vincent, Haiti, and China. Some of our families have been in Boston for a long, long time. Over the next few weeks we will be learning more about why our families moved to America, and then to Boston. We will investigate and share with each other our cultural traditions and other special things about our families.

"You want to learn to count to ten in Chinese?" Kenneth asked.

Of course we do!

Next week we'll share a little of what we've learned!

~Jenny Goldstein

Grades One & Two

Room 204

Coming next week

Room 205

Coming next week

Room 217

Responses from local businesses are trickling in. Businesses are responding to letters students wrote and delivered, asking to interview someone from their workplace who would like to share their migration story to our class. In order to get ready to interview local businesses, we watched student immigrants from other parts of the United States share their migration stories. We listened carefully to the questions asked and we noticed how we learned more about their personal stories by the particular words in a question (i.e. how did you move instead of did you move). I shared pictures of some of the business from many years ago and we noticed that businesses have changed in Jamaica Plain. This helped us think about more questions to ask. Some of the questions we thought of were: How long have you been here? (Janira and Inka), When did you move? (Marquell and Noah), Where did you used to live? (Amari and James) and Was there a different business before you worked here? What was it?

~Emma Fialka-Feldman

Grades Three & Four

Room 207

A couple of weeks ago, the Role Model Hawks performed a song called, "Radioactive" by Imagine Dragons at the annual MHS Music Concert. Unfortunately many of our Role Model Hawk families were unable to attend.

Therefore, we decided as a class to publish the lyrics of the song so that we can sing at home or after school for those who missed it. Listed below are the lyrics.

Sing loud and proud!

I'm waking up, to ash and dust
I wipe my brow and I sweat my rust

I'm breathing in, the chemicals,
Yeah

I'm breaking in, shaping up
Then checking out on the prison bus

This is it, the Apocalypse,
Whoa-Oh

I'm waking up, I feel it in my bones

Enough to make my systems blow

Welcome to the new age, to the new age

Welcome to the new age, to the new age

Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh

Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh

I'm Radioactive, Radioactive

Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh

Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh

I'm Radioactive, Radioactive

I raise my flags, cut my clothes

It's a revolution I suppose

We'll paint it red, to fit right in,

Whoa-Oh

I'm breaking in, shaping up
 Then checking out on the prison
 bus
 This is it, the Apocalypse,
 Whoa-Oh
 I'm waking up, I feel it in my
 bones
 Enough to make my systems
 blow
 Welcome to the new age, to the
 new age
 Welcome to the new age, to the
 new age
 Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh
 Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh
 I'm Radioactive, Radioactive
 Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh
 Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh
 I'm Radioactive, Radioactive
 All systems go, sun hasn't died
 Deep in my bones, straight from
 inside
 I'm waking up, I feel it in my
 bones
 Enough to make my systems
 blow
 Welcome to the new age, to the
 new age
 Welcome to the new age, to the
 new age
 Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh
 Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh
 I'm Radioactive, Radioactive
 Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh-Oh
 Whoa-Oh-Oh-Oh
 I'm Radioactive, Radioactive
 ~Robert Baez

Room 216

Greetings from Room 216,
 This week we worked hard on
 the math MCAS. I'm proud of
 how seriously they took the
 assessment, and their efforts. As
 I was watching them I began

thinking to myself a few
 questions about how we came
 this point: taking one test to show
 what the students know or don't
 know. I started thinking about
 how this year we have had many
 conversations about what it
 means to be respectful and to
 work hard. I also started to
 wonder: how does a whole
 educational system assess the
 quality of a person? I'm
 interested in knowing how the
 students progress and who they
 become ten or fifteen years from
 now.

For me, this is the true test: Are
 they kind, respectful, and
 compassionate? Do they voice
 their opinions when they feel
 slighted by the world? Do they
 question common ideas and find
 "the truth"? Are they hard
 working and passionate about
 something in life? Do they know
 how to put themselves in
 someone else's shoes to help
 them problem solve? I'm not sure
 how to put this on a written,
 multiple choice, short answer test,
 but I think this test would say a
 lot about our teaching here at
 Mission Hill.

~Josh Kraus, Selina Ruiz
 Elsa Batista & Melanie Centeno

Grades Five & Six**Room 210**

Coming next week

Room 215

This week I had the pleasure of
 conferencing with students on
 their recollections. It was

wonderful to hear about their
 first day of school, how they
 made their first friendships and
 exciting learning moments.
 While some students were
 drafting there was a buzz in the
 air as they looked at their
 archives.
 "Remember this...", "Ooooo
 look at this." I heard. Other
 students needed to be asked a lot
 of questions to help jog their
 memories, but everyone had a
 lot of special memories to share.
 This is my first year doing the
 Recollections project and it
 helped me see school as a
 process in a way I hadn't
 thought of before. I saw how a
 moment in Kindergarten can
 stay with someone, and how
 friendships can form through
 two people wearing the same
 shirt, or playing with blocks. I
 am looking forward to June 6th,
 when the sixth graders present to
 their families.

~Sarah DeCruz

Grades Seven & Eight**Room 213**

Friday afternoons are different
 now at Mission Hill School –
 electives are here! Every
 springtime, for one hour once a
 week, classroom doors open and
 students spill out with one thing
 on their minds: Where's my
 elective? For the next five
 weeks, staff and students will
 gather weekly in multi-age
 groupings to focus on an activity
 of shared interest.

Origami, Legos, Frisbee,
 Coming of Age Movies, Nature

Exploration, Papier Mache, Beats and Rhymes... What would you choose? This year, newcomers like Summer Camp, Butterfly and Bird Feeding, Sensory Tools, Workshop, and Embellish Yourself joined old favorites like Purses and Pockets, Beading, and Drawing.

Here are some fun facts about electives at Mission Hill. 236 students were placed in 21 electives with 4 to 32 students in each group. Over 90% of students received their first or second choice, and the remaining students their third choice. As we ended our first Friday of electives last week, there were many smiling faces. Kids and adults appreciated the opportunity to meet new friends and share an interesting activity.

Perhaps next year, you'll join us. Do you have a passion, hobby, or skill you'd like to share with others? Electives at Mission Hill promise fun for all.

~Ann Ruggiero

Room 214

Coming next 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.

Workday Postponed

Heavy rain and conflicts are expected. for Tomorrow, Saturday the 17th. The outside work day has been cancelled, and will be rescheduled. Watch for the new date!

Family Fun Listings

Massachusetts Libraries
Summer Programs

In June, libraries across the Commonwealth will kick off their Summer Programs for all ages: kids, teens, and adults. Participants choose their own books, track progress, and feel a sense of achievement. Learn More at <http://libraries.state.ma.us/>

Radio 92.9 EarthFest at the Hatch Shell 2014 - Boston

The Annual Radio 92.9 EarthFest returns to DCR's Hatch Memorial Shell in Boston with a stellar line-up that includes Neon Trees, The Wailers, Small Pools, and Morning Parade.
Saturday, May 17, 2014

The Boston Pops Cirque de la Symphonie - Boston

Conductor Keith Lockhart leads the Pops at Symphony Hall in a fusion of circus with live orchestra with aerial flyers, acrobats, contortionists, dancers and more. Performances on May 16 & 17, Kids tickets 50% off.

Kids Planet Family Music & Activities at Earthfest 2014 -

Boston

In addition to the main stage, Earthfest will feature an impressive family area including a stage with live music & entertainment all day, face painting, crafts, the famous Super Mercado, and more
Saturday, May 17, 2014

Franklin Park Bike & Kite Festival - Boston

Bike and fly kites in the park Kites are for sale, starting at just a few dollars. Bring a picnic or enjoy fare from Boston food trucks.
Saturday, May 17, 2014

Birthday Wishes CakeWalk - West Roxbury

CakeWalk is a fun, non-competitive walk and festival that raises money for Birthday Wishes' great cause. In 2013, Birthday Wishes brought the magic of a birthday to more than 20,000 homeless children.
Sunday, May 18, 2014

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