



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

- Wednesday, May 20, 2015
Spring Music Concert at MHS! 5-7:30 pm
- Thursday, May 21, 2015
Friends of the Mission Hill School Annual Mtg
- Monday, May 25, 2015
Memorial Day: NO SCHOOL
- Wednesday, May 27, 2015
Teacher Appreciation Day (see attached flyer)
- June 1-9: Grade 8 Portfolios

May 15, 2015

Volume 18, Issue 29

An Obstacle Course Helps with Writing?

Dear Friends, Families, Students and Staff:

“Walk around the tire, use the trapeze to swing onto the pillow, jump 5 times on the trampoline...” These are typical directions for moving through an obstacle course, one of the many activities that students participate in during SPOT (Speech and Occupational Therapy). It is easy to see how climbing over objects, jumping from one place to another, and crawling through a tunnel can help develop motor skills and the ability to complete multiple-step motor sequences. But, is harder to understand how this kind of activity can help with writing.

In order to write a cohesive paragraph, story or essay, children have to learn to sequence their thoughts and include a beginning, middle, and ending in their work. Obstacle courses contain all these parts—a starting place, a series of steps, and a specific way to finish. By creating a course, moving through it, and remembering the steps, children learn this kind of sequencing with their bodies, and once the sequence is experienced physically, it is much easier to represent it either through drawing or writing.

The third/fourth grade SPOT Group has been working on creating and describing an obstacle course that solves a problem. Working together, they constructed a course that allowed them to move from one end of the room to the other without touching the floor. Once everyone had negotiated the course several times, each child completed a graphic organizer that listed the piece of equipment and the action used in each step. Then, using the outline as a guide each student, wrote a paragraph describing the course that included a topic sentence, details about each step and a conclusion. Finally, they each drew a picture of the course.

Next week, all students at Mission Hill School will have the opportunity to visit the SPOT room and participate in an obstacle course. They will also be able to either write about it or draw a picture. Ask your children if they can remember the steps to the obstacle course!

-Chelsea Robson & Anne Trecker, Mission Hill School Occupational Therapists

We used an obstacle course to get across the floor. First, I stood on the blue bench. After the blue bench I walked on the spots and they bounced. I balanced on the bolster and it was hard not to fall. I grabbed the rope and swung through the tire swing. It was hard to get through. Then I jumped from the tire swing to the square swing and then crawled through the tunnel. I jumped on the trampoline 10 times and then I walked on the chocolate bar. It was super easy to do that. I felt good about the obstacle course because we had to use energy.

-Kesler



KINDERGARTEN

Room 108

Somos el Barco

Somos el barco, somos el mar,

Yo navego en ti, tu navegas en mi.

We are the boat, we are the sea,

I sail in you, you sail in me.

The stream sings it to the river,

the river sings it to the sea

The sea sings it to the boat

that carries you and me.

(chorus)

Room 108 we have been learning this song and singing it everyday. For me, it is a song about peace, acceptance, connectedness and more. Our students have said the words are about sharing, friendship and kindness.

What do these words mean to you?

Ask your child to sing our new song and talk to you about what it means.

And please bring your child on Wednesday, May 20th to perform at our evening Spring Music concert!

-Geraldyn Bywater McLaughlin

Room 106

Friday we went to the Farm School. It was filled with both joy and sadness because it was Liz's last day with us.

I can't think of a more perfect way to have spent it. On the ride up we sang songs and had yummy snacks. While there we discovered a new tradition.

The farmers took all the children's pictures to document them as they visit the farm each year.

Children learned how to calmly feed and take care of the cows, retrieve eggs for farmer Josh's breakfast, and plant new seedlings in their garden.

Watching the students was a wonderful way for me to return to MHS as well. There was a lovely feeling of renewal and cycle.

As we got ready to head back to school I was filled with big emotions. How wonderful the Farm School is and how lucky I am to share this experience with children, families and farmers.

-Kathy D'Andrea

Room 107

Our long anticipated trip to the Farm School has finally come and gone.

We could not have asked for a better day. The sun was out, a cool breeze blew, families were all smiles, the animals were both gentle and alert, and as always, the farmers were amazing!

On our ride up, we recorded what students thought they would see when we finally arrived. Here is what they had to say.

I will see: "...a chicken... I might smell cupcakes." "...Jeremy." "...a lot of animals and mice." "...a black and white cow." "...grass and trees."

"...goats. I want to see goats more!"

"...roosters!" "... a horse, unicorn, pony...swamps." "...turkeys and

donkeys." "...pigs and ducks!"

Here are some end of day reflections. I saw:

"...2 dogs, 3 cats ...turkeys." "...a tractor. My favorite was the baby cows." "...baby goats...3 days old!" "...eggs!" "My favorite was the ducks and the chickens." "I liked seeing the goats. It kept biting my hand!" "The horses were my favorite!" "I got to jump out of a window." "One of the dogs was my favorite."

Evidence of another great day on the farm!

-Jada Brown & Jo-Ann Hawkesworth

Room 109

We had an absolutely perfect day at the farm last Friday. I'm pretty sure the children agreed. Walking through the fields, Evan looked up at me and asked, "Isn't this the greatest day of your life?"

The children conquered fears of the unknown as the cows entered the barn for their feeding. They delighted



Smiling faces at Farm School.

in feeding the cows hay after they hungrily gobbled down their grain. Will A. asked, "Jenny, can I touch it's horn?" He reached out a tentative hand and smiled as he said, "It's soft and smooth!" On the way out I overheard Yediel laughing as he shared, "Liz, there's a cow named daisy!" Walking through the field to visit the chickens, Beatrice made a connection, "This grass is taller than I expected... It's like going on a bear hunt swishy swashy, swishy swashy!" Throughout the day, Kaia paused to collect treasures from the ground, feathers, leaves, and nut shells.

My favorite part was our walk through the path in the woods. Beatrice exclaimed "I love how the pine needles feel under my feet. They make a crunchy sound"

A few minutes into our walk Evan grabbed onto my hand. I shared with him that walking in the woods was one of my favorite things to do in the whole world. In the woods, I feel at peace." "Yeah", Evan answered. "I can feel my heart slowing down."

-Jenny, Meira, Angelina, & Stephanie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 204

This week we will have a guest writer for our newsletter, Eli Banzaert. Eli is one of my students and has decided to use his voice this week to share his feelings, thoughts and hopes around a topic that is important to him.

"Another boy and I in room 204 are currently wearing nail polish and a lot of people are teasing us about it. For example, someone said, "Why are you wearing nail polish, nail polish is for girls?" I really want that to stop.

So please tell children to not tease

people who wear nail polish.

I like to wear nail polish because I think it looks pretty. Something everyone in the world should learn is that everything we wear and play with should be for everyone, not some things for girls and some things for boys. For example, I used to wear dresses and got teased about it and that wasn't fair. A long time ago girls weren't allowed to wear pants and I'm glad they fixed that. Boys should be allowed to wear what they want too.

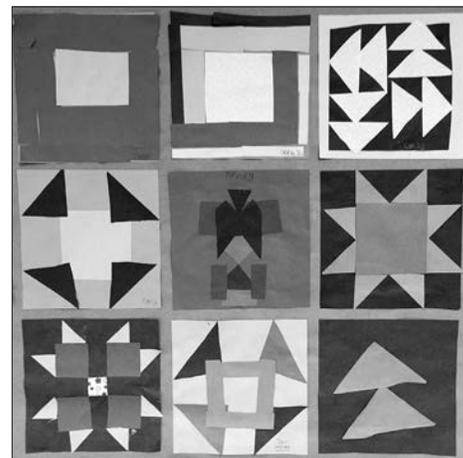
I am really hoping that no one will tease me anymore about wearing nail polish and I will persevere in wearing it because it makes me happy."

Eli Banzaert, with help from his mom Amy Banzaert would like to share this resource on gender creativity: <http://www.tolerance.org/gender-spectrum>

-Jenerra Williams

Room 205

Stories are such an important part of our history. When asked how students remember things from their past, many talked about photographs, special stuffed animals or blankets, ticket stubs, or old clothes. Students learned that people also recorded history and told stories through quilting. By looking at African fabric and quilts, students have started to notice some common characteristics such as geometric patterns, many bright colors, lots of shapes and lines. We also read books that talked about the importance of colors and symbols. Harriet Powers was a slave who did not know how to read or write, but she created beautiful story quilts. We spent some time learning about her and observing her detailed quilts. Students have now started to



5th & 6th grade paper quilt squares based on designs used in the Underground Railroad.

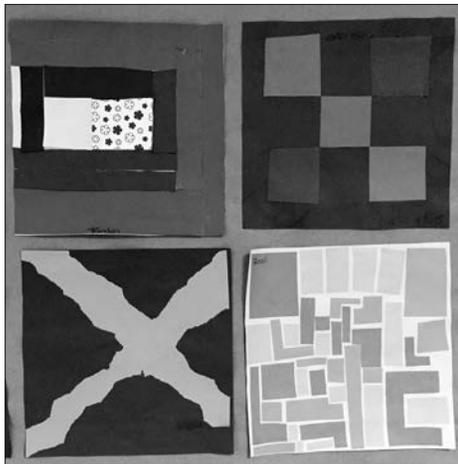
create their own designs, working with different shapes and patterns. If you couldn't read or write but wanted to tell a story about yourself, what would you illustrate in fabric?

-Ashleigh L'Heureux

Room 217

Recently we looked at a population map of Boston during the 1970s. We read the map key to understand that each dot represented 25 people (Lumi chimed in, "So 4 dots means 100 people!"). We learned that the dots were different colors to represent different groups of people. In order for students to understand why and how Boston integrated its public schools, students needed to explore how groups of people are located





throughout the city. Students made observations about this map. They noticed the large concentration of White people throughout Boston, the smaller concentration of Blacks, and the very small amount of dots to represent the number of Hispanics. Students began to wonder if some racial groups were afraid of larger racial groups. After we read a number of books about what it took to desegregate schools in the U.S and interview Bostonians who were part of challenging this inequity, we will look at a population map of Boston from 2010. We will see what has and hasn't changed in Boston and see what changes we want to make to contribute to a diverse, safe, and equitable Boston for all.

-Emma Fialka-Feldman

GRADES 3 & 4

Room 207

In conjunction with our Struggle For theme here is another favorite Mission Hill School song:

*Ain't Gonna Let Nobody
Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around
Turn me around turn me around
Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around
I'm gonna keep on walkin', keep on talkin'
Marchin' on to freedom's land*

*Ain't gonna let segregation turn me around
Turn me around turn me around
Ain't gonna let segregation turn me around
I'm gonna keep on walkin', keep on talkin'
Marchin' on to freedom's land*

*Ain't gonna let no jail cell turn me around
Turn me around turn me around
Ain't gonna let no jail cell turn me around
I'm gonna keep on walkin', keep on talkin'
Marchin' on to freedom's land*

*Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around
Turn me around turn me around
Ain't gonna let nobody turn me around
I'm gonna keep on walkin', keep on talkin'
Marchin' on to freedom's land*

Almost every class has sung this song with Billy in their music class this week. Ask your child to teach it to you and sing along.

-Amina Michel-Lord & Kristina Voss

Room 216

This week our class brainstormed ideas for a new class name. We eliminated all the names that did not reflect who we are. We arrived at two names, Smart Tigers and Awesome 21. As explained by one of our students, "We are all awesome and there are 21 of us". Another explained, "We are smart and not afraid of anything." We took a vote. Awesome 21 became our class name by one vote. But wait... two of our students were out and missed the vote. Our name could not be official until all classmates voted.

The day before our vote on a class name I overheard a conversation that Amanda was having with students. The student described how special our class is, "Because now we have two classes together as one". I think that student comment, our new class name, and the story of how it came to be are all evidence of our classroom community becoming more

united as one.

-Ayla, Amanda & Shaina

GRADES 5&6

Room 210

Here is the latest installment of our *End of the Week Reflections*. Enjoy.

"Something I learned this week was how to use Adobe Photoshop..."

"This week we got to go to the ICA and it was pretty fun I got to see a lot of interesting art and they were all cool in their own way. My favorite piece was a painting by Carry Mae Weems, it was very interesting."

"Something I did this week was that I got to go to Jada's class and played with Playdough and exercised."

"I liked the field trip it was fun. The elevator. The art. The music. The view."

"I really liked how I got to sing with Ms Jenerra and Ella. We really enjoyed singing songs with each other and we have things in common."

On Thursday my class went on a field trip to the TCA...we saw an exhibit called *When the Stars Fall*. My favorite piece was a video called *A Song for Nat*...they also had a wall of pictures about slavery and segregation. I really liked going to the ICA and looking at the art work."

"One thing I wish went better was me getting in trouble in math class and leaving the class to tell Nakia. I had a bad time and I was really mad"

"My week went okay and I had a good time. I have been tired these days but I have been sleeping early. But it has been a hard time concentrating a couple of times. It is really hard for me to concentrate at times"

-Nakia, June, & Meron

Room 215

Theme study on social justice is in full swing. We are working on producing a podcast that will involve at least two interviews with African Americans who witnessed the struggle for justice in Boston. Our first interview will be of Roberta Logan, MHS Board member and retired MHS teacher. Each student has chosen to be part of team; we have a graphics team, music engineers, interviewers, writers and researchers and a final production team. We looked at some sample radio podcasts, such as The Moth, This American Life. We are examining the Boston Busing crisis and we are eager to learn from Roberta's experiences. We are learning different ways to tell stories and in the process learning how stories connect us to history and to each other.

-Abdi, Angela & Carlos

GRADES 7&8

Room 213

I spent two days this week at the Edward Brook Courthouse on jury duty. Along with voting, serving on a jury when called is another citizen responsibility. The operations in a court are fascinating to observe, and there was much to share with the 7th and 8th graders when I returned to school.

Use of the Habits of Mind were important to me in my role as a juror. What **evidence** was presented? How did the situation look from different **viewpoints**? How were all the parties and their stories **connected**? How could the conflict be resolved (**conjecture**)? What details were **relevant** to consider? This is exactly what I love about the Habits of Mind – they are designed to travel with us outside

of school and help us to make sense of the world.

Before the jury started deliberations, the judge gave us instructions. He reminded us that we were a group for a reason and that we should help each other to remember and understand the evidence. At one point, we submitted a question to the judge to clarify a part of the trial. His response: "Use your collective memory." Here in court, as in school, group work is valued.

There are many jobs related to work in the judicial field. I had fun thinking about my students in various roles. The careful listening and decision making of the judge, the thinking on her feet and crafting of language demonstrated by the lawyer, the explanation of systems and responsibilities shared by the court officers – these are all qualities I see kids use in school that will serve them also in the world of work.

-Ann Ruggiero & Letta Neely

Room 214

During one of our recent morning meetings, I reminded the class that we will be taking the PARCC assessment this week and the next. Many of the students started grumbling, then Elianna asked what was probably in many of their minds, "Reginald, which is more important? Getting ready for our portfolio presentation or taking the PARCC test?" Implying that while we cannot afford to take time to do anything else while we are preparing for portfolio presentations. I snapped back, "PARCC is a state mandated test" What I really wanted to respond was that it's complicated, they test different things and they are each important in their own way.

I agreed with Elianna that the PARCC test seems out of place right now and I wish we could administer it later in the year. In my frustration, I gave her a quick answer that didn't really answer the question. It was a good reminder that students are not the only people who are affected by the stress of juggling several different things at this time of the year.

-Reginald Toussaint, Carol East-José,
& Emmanuel St. Vil

SCHOOLWIDE NEWS

Spring Music Concert

Join us in the MHS Auditorium on Wednesday, May 20th from 5 - 7:30 pm for an evening of music with your amazing children! The concert will feature choral performances and selections from our wind, string, guitar and percussion ensembles. Refreshments, a raffle and special gifts will be provided for those in attendance!

FOMHS Meeting

"The mission of the Friends of the Mission Hill School is to work collaboratively with families, staff, community members, and neighbors to support the whole education of Mission Hill School students....The goal of the Friends of the Mission Hill School is to build relationships and to seek public and private funds to support and expand existing school programs and to create new initiatives that enhance the lives and education of Mission Hill School students, families, and staff" Families interested in learning more about the Friends of the Mission Hill School, a 501(c)(3) tax-deductible charity supporting the work of the school, are invited to the annual meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2015 at 6:00 pm in Room 203.

SCHOOLWIDE NEWS

How did Screen-Free Week go for you and your family?

Many, many community members made the pledge to go Screen-Free last week. Others found ways to cut back on screen entertainment. All classes had conversations about screen time and generated ideas for alternatives to screen entertainment. About 70 people came out for our fun-filled and screen-free picnic and game night on Thursday. The weather was perfect and the mood was light. Parents, kids and teachers relaxed and enjoyed each other's company and the lovely spring evening. Screen-Free week feedback from a few parents and kids:

"Thanks so much for Screen-Free Week! We have been slipping on our limits with the screen and this gave us the chance to scale back again - which we really needed to do."

"Screen-Free Week has been so great - thanks so much. Our kids have been doing other things and they are both in much better moods this week."

"Screen-Free Week helps you realize how much time there really is to do things you like to do."

Some of us are already looking forward to Screen-Free Week 2016!

BPS Calendar Update

It's official! There will be school on Bunker Hill Day, Wednesday, June 17th. And the last day of school for all students is now officially Monday, June 29th, which will be an early release day. Friday, June 26th will also be an early release day.

Screen-Free Week Family Picnic



Portraits of famous African Americans by 1st and 2nd graders.



Ayla Gavins, *Principal*
Deborah Meier, *Founder*

John McDonough, *Interim Superintendent*

Mission Hill K-8 School
A Boston Public Pilot School

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Teacher Appreciation Day

**Wednesday, May 27th 11:30 - 1:30
Potluck Brunch**

Call for Volunteers Please!!

We're looking forward to celebrating our fabulous Mission Hill teachers with a potluck brunch, and We Need Your Help.

Please sign up for a food dish based on your child's grade.

K0, K1, K2: Side dish or Salad
1st and 2nd: Main dish
3rd and 4th: Desserts
5th and 6th: Appetizers, dips, etc.
7th and 8th: Beverages

Can you also volunteer the day of the event?

10:30am - 11:15am Set Up Committee
1:15pm - 2:00pm Clean Up Committee
11:00am - 1:30pm Recess & Cafeteria Coverage*
* 8-10 volunteers needed here please!

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I can send the following food dish: _____

I can volunteer for the following time / committees:

Contact Meredith West at 617-416-1391 or westmerek@gmail.com with questions or to sign-up via email

Thank you!

Día de Agradecimiento a los Maestros

Miércoles, 27 de mayo 2015

11:30 am - 13:30

Almuerzo Potluck

Convocatoria de Voluntarios por favor !!

Estamos con ganas de celebrar nuestros fabulosos maestros Mission Hill con un almuerzo potluck, y necesitamos su ayuda.

Por favor, registrarse para obtener un plato de comida basado en el grado de su hijo.

K0, K1, K2: guarnición o ensalada

Primero y segundo: Plato Principal

Tercero y cuarto: Postres

Quinto y sexto: Aperitivos, salsas, etc.

Séptimo y octavo: Bebidas

¿Puede también ser voluntarios el día del evento?

10:30 am - 11:15 am Hasta Comité Conjunto

1:15 pm - 2:00 pm Hasta Clean Comité

11 a.m.-1:30 pm Receso y Cobertura Cafeteria *

* 8-10 voluntarios necesitaban aquí, por favor!

Nombre: _____

Teléfono: _____

E-mail: _____

Puedo enviar el siguiente plato de comida: _____

Puedo ser voluntario para los siguientes tiempos / comités:

Póngase en contacto con Meredith West en 617-416-1391 o westmerek@gmail.com con preguntas o para inscribirse en marcha a través de correo electrónico

Gracias!