



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

- Wednesday, May 25, 2016
Teacher Appreciation Day (see flyer)
- Monday, May 30, 2016
Memorial Day: NO SCHOOL
- Thursday, June 2, 2016 5-7 pm
Governance Board Meeting
- Wednesday, June 8, 2016
Spring Music Concert! (see page 6)

May 20, 2016

Volume 19, Issue 27

The Coalition of Essential Schools

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

The Coalition of Essential Schools is a national organization that was founded by TheodoreSizer in 1984. With colleagues, including Deborah Meier, he developed 10 Coalition principles that spoke to thousands of educators across the nation who believed in a different way of schooling. Schools and educators were inspired to actualize the principles, and a network called the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) was born.

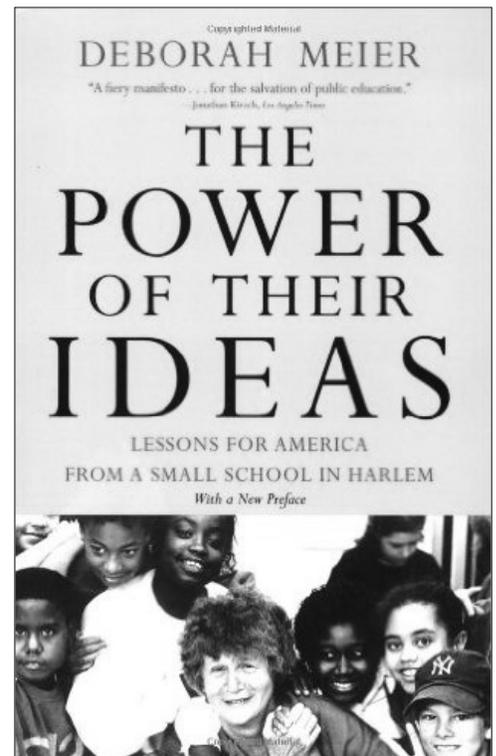
Mission Hill is part of this network, and has been since our doors opened. Our staff has attended the annual CES conference every year and made many lasting connections to other schools and educators. We've followed the organization through its early years, its prime, and now during its latest transition.

The last annual CES gathering will happen on December 2 and 3, 2016 in Providence, RI. CES is calling for progressive voices and will showcase the collection of responses at the conference through what they have titled A Year of Demonstration. Our staff will be there and I hope you will be too. If you would like to attend this with us please be in touch. You can call the main office and leave me (Ayla) a message at 617-635-6384 or send me an email and I'll forward registration information to you. There is a fee for this event.

As part of my reflection on this transition of CES, I took a look at *The Power of Their Ideas* by Deborah Meier. If you haven't read this book, add it to your list. You will have a deeper understanding of Mission Hill, as Deborah writes about Central Park East, another school that she founded. I came across this passage in her book, an excerpt from a letter she wrote to families. It reminded me of how much I value the Coalition of Essential Schools and Deborah's work within it.

"Maybe mutual respect is what we're all looking for – which means feeling sure the other person acknowledges us, sees us for who we are—as their equal value and importance. When there's enough respect, perhaps we're able to give up tight control over our youngsters, and give them more space to make their own decisions, including their own mistakes. What strikes me forcefully is how much adults and kids long for the same things."

-Deborah Meier



KINDERGARTEN

Room 108

The Otters had a fabulous trip to the Children's Museum! Many thanks to the folks who came along and helped us out. We enjoyed the perennial favorites of making lots of bubbles and experimenting with balls and ramps, we also made connections to the World of Work. Some Otters pretended to be construction workers, hairdressers, grocers, dancers and more. It was a beautiful day to be downtown and to have snack outside on the wharf. All in all it was a great day out. Enjoy the pictures!

-Geraldyn McLaughlin & Donna Winder

Room 106

The students in the Flying Birds Class have decided they want to open a store. We will be selling seedlings and gardening supplies and are currently working on the name. All of the children in the class wrote up their ideas for a name and shared them with the class. Then the elimination process began.

If a name had one or less votes it was eliminated. We then introduced new names. Liam shared the word "ultimate" with us. The children got very excited about that. So far we have The Ultimate _____. We are getting closer and this has been a good lesson in compromise and patience.

While we are working on a name we are also focused on learning how to grow healthy plants. Darby suggested we do experiments so that we can learn. We are comparing growth rates of different seeds. We are also confirming things that we think we know. So far we think plants need water, soil, and sun to grow. We will



Liam works as a hairdresser.



Ayan, ready for construction!



Kayari makes bubbles!

be testing these ideas to see if they are true.

-Kathy D'Andrea

Room 107

Last Monday the Golden Seahorses began talking about work. When asked to name some jobs, their responses focused mainly on our upcoming ice cream shop. With some encouragement, we expanded our list to include some of the following community workers: firefighter, engineer, ice cream shop workers, construction workers, teacher, ice cream scoopers and servers, money collectors/cashiers, electrical people, planters and pickers, builders, mail person, hospital workers, police officers. We then asked what they hoped their job would be when they grew up. This yielded the following responses:

Josie: Jada's assistant

Shona: A song actor

Wren: Artist, chef and a builder

Agboola: MBTA Bus Driver

Avian: Police officer, Firefighter, Chef

Jonathan: Dinosaur (Paleontologist)

Janee: Hospital worker

Emma: Doctor that takes care of animals

Jaslin: Veterinarian

Ava: Veterinarian, Chef

Jordan: Chef, ambulance driver, police officer, doctor, firefighter, construction worker, digger, take care of pigs in an animal shelter

Nikaye: Doctor to take care of animals, chef

Vidania: Gymnastics (gymnast)

Jeremy: A worker at the garage selling Mercedes Benz cars

Sophia: A big, big, big sister so that I can lose my teeth

-Jada Brown & Jo-Ann Hawkesworth

Room 109

Room 109 has decided to be The Turtles for the remainder of the year. For a while the students loved calling themselves “room 109” often chanting it at recess. It was interesting that, as adults, we might assume that they would prefer a name not a number but, to them, the number is the name!

It is nice to see how independent and comfortable the children are at this time of year. Our morning begins with independent book time. Music plays as children arrive and greet teachers and each other. Some children eat breakfast and some begin books right away: Rex and William A are on the couch sharing books and sounding out a word or two, Violet looks through a book bin searching for the perfect one to begin her day, Drew sings a song to our letter/sound book. Jeremiah excitedly discovers that a page in the middle of the book is the same as the book cover, Adelaide comes over to ask a teacher about a story sentence, Emeric and Theo sit on floor cushions discussing the merits of one page over another, Camden finishes breakfast, and William D arrives and chooses one of our “visiting books” as he joins the group.

-Deborah

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 205

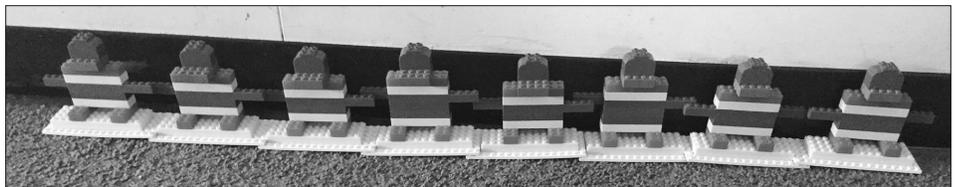
The Tiny City recently listened to the story *Brave Girl: Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909*. The story tells about a young girl who moved to America and had to work in a garment factory where she was treated poorly and paid little wages. She was a brave girl who stood up for what she believed in and led the



Children in the Tiny City classroom form an assembly line to create robots from blocks.



Juel learning how to make ceramics by hand with MHS parent, Jennifer Crowe.



Robots!

largest walkout of women workers the country had seen. After listening to the story, students shared their own thinking: “Clara was right that girls should be able to go to school.” “The people who broke her ribs should go to jail, not Clara.” “This is like struggle for justice. She helped change the rules just like Martin Luther King Jr.” “They should pay her more.” “People shouldn’t get fired just for bleeding on the cloth.” As we continue to study the world of work we also be exploring workers’ rights, unions, strikes, and fair trade.

-Ashleigh L'Heureux

Room 212

This week we have been tending our garden and writing up our recipes. The lettuce and the scallions are up and we are looking forward to making our own salad. After our visit to

the Farm School one of our questions was who grows our food and how does it come to us? One thing is certain- it takes some work to grow your own food! We are also busy illustrating our recipe book so at the end of our unit families can enjoy all our great recipes.

-Suzanne Brown

Room 217

On Tuesday afternoon, room 217 turned into a chocolate factory. After reading another chapter of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and watching a video of the assembly lines at Hershey’s factory for inspiration, the student workers were ready. I was the boss of this factory. I chose the three types of candy (in reality, copied printouts of some lollipops and taffy’s), how large they needed to be, what colors

CLASSROOM NEWS

they needed to be colored in, and the order I wanted the three candies in the box. Each child was in charge of one crayon color, one scissor, or one glue stick. They could not stray from their work and could not make any changes in the production line. The assembly line worked busily for about 20 minutes. I walked around for quality control. At the end of the 20 minutes I handed out the hard workers their pay checks (in reality: their project time choice card). Here are some of the workers' thoughts while on the job: Romeo thought the assembly line was cool, he put all three candies in each box. It was hard at first to put it in the right order, but it got easier. He liked that all you had to do was glue, glue, glue. Cole liked the assembly line. He enjoyed collecting all the candies from the different tables and bringing them to the "boxing area". Alize wants to do a factory another day. She liked all of the candies. Evan would you like to do an assembly line again with real candy. Damarion thought the assembly line felt boring and that that is how factory workers feel. Gerson wanted to do more jobs, he didn't like that he only did the cutting. His hands got tired from cutting the whole time. Julia and Jackson liked the assembly line so much that they kept working it even after our factory closed down for the day. Jackson said "it was nice to all work together in groups and to get something done together".

-Kate Needham

GRADES 3 & 4

Rooms 203

This past week at our Professional Development we had open studios. In the same vein as local art open studios, people got to think about



Factory workers in room 217-becoming bored with their work!

what they were good at / passionate about and not only show their work but teach it to others. We experimented with this last year with great success and agreed to do it again. These mini gatherings were for things like making handbags and the one Abdi and I shared, making bread and spread!

Abdi wanted to share his inquiry thinking about bread making and was seeking a partner. I was seeking help to share my jam making and a partnership was born. Abdi baked three different types of sourdough bread and share the process, tips, and many other things he has learned thus far as a bread maker. I made two types of spread during the PD - hummus and bacon jam.

The results were so satisfying! Not only was the bread and spread quite delicious and filling but the connections that we got to make as colleagues and friends filled us in a meaningful way as well. Here's to good food and great colleagues.

-Jenerra Williams

Room 204

One of the questions asked in the interviews that I have sat in this year was "What do you bring to the Mission Hill Community?" It has taken resilience and a sense of humor on my part to work in a complex environment where so much nurturing takes place and a constant reminder that it's okay to take risks as a learner and be ready to fail and try again! As I reflect on my time so far at Mission Hill School, I realize that it's time to say goodbye to some folks who have been instrumental in making my year a pleasant one. Ms. Yesenia our student teacher from Wellesley College has been with us since last fall and has become a valuable member of the Bee Squad and this week we had to get used to the idea that her time with us has ended. Mr. Danny, although his semester has ended, has decided that he wants to stay with us until the end of the year. He has been a diehard member of the Bee Squad since January. So on behalf of the Bee Squad I say thank

you to Ms. Yesenia and congratulations on her upcoming graduation class of 2016. Thank you, Mr. Danny for your commitment to 3/4 team and congratulations on obtaining your master's degree!

-Cleata Brown



Yesenia from the Bee Squad works with Keysha.

Room 207

A few weeks ago we decided that connected to our World of Work theme, we would use recycled items to make products to sell. Students worked on business plans to pitch ideas to their classmates. Their plans included the name of their company, descriptions of their product, materials needed, and why their product is useful. Some companies created where Music and More, Puzzles and co., and Cakalicious. After they made their pitches, they fielded questions from their classmates. Some companies grabbed the attention of the audience members by asking questions, "Do you like making music?" or, "Do you like cake?" Others shared facts about how they would make

their products. After hearing all the business plans we had a secret ballot vote. Stay tuned for the announcement of our class company. We identified three teams needed to create a successful company; marketing, economics and creators. Look forward to reading the first advertisement created by our marketing team next week!

Amanda & Amina

GRADES 5&6

Room 210

Recollections are coming! Here are a few first drafts of self portraits guided by Jeanne

-Nakia, Manny, & Elsa

Room 215

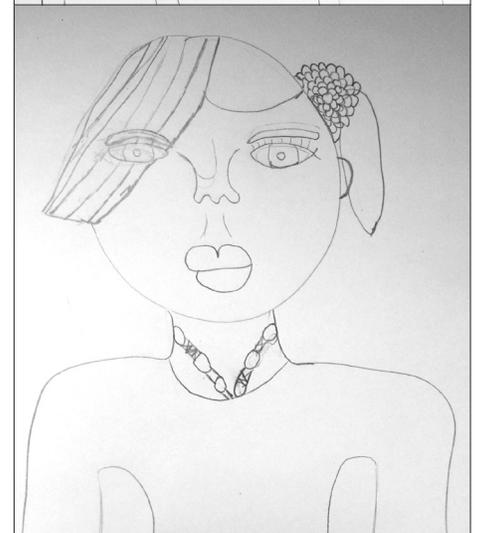
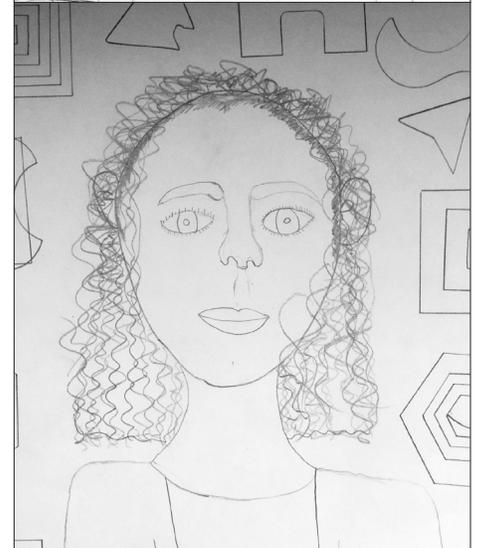
The World of Work theme is taking off for the FireFlies. Students research their own questions, as we investigate gender-based inequalities in the workplace. We have taken an interest in the invisible, behind-the-scenes work that people do that benefits us. "Fast Fashion," a new term to describe the excessive rates of consumption, has revealed to us the environmental and human costs of cheap production. As a class, we have a deep ethical core; we respond to human rights violations and we do not equivocate; we seem to possess equal amounts of courage and rage. I will share more of our unflinching look into the world of work next week.

-Abdi and the Fireflies of 215

GRADES 7&8

Room 213

With two weeks of PARCC and MCAS testing and ongoing portfolio preparations, our days are full. The time is passing quickly and the end



Beginning drafts of Recollections self portraits by CJ, Brianna and Anais (top to bottom).

of the year will soon be upon us. Summer plans are taking shape, as opportunities for camp and summer jobs are researched and secured. But we haven't yet finished this school year. For some, focus and deliberate work plans have never been more successful. These kids work independently, keep track of assignments, ask to conference as needed, and are excited about and proud of the work they are doing. But for others, deadlines come and go and work remains unfinished. These kids stray to other sites on the computer, are reluctant to act on feedback, and seem to believe they'll somehow be ready without the needed preparation. We think hard about what supports each kid needs, and also about how to help kids learn the consequences of choices they make.

We do know that hours of late night into early morning video game play and social media use do not help anyone to be at their best the next day. Please help us by monitoring screen and device time, talking at home about schoolwork, and encouraging good eating and sleeping habits.

-Ann Ruggiero & Letta Neely

Room 214

It's always difficult when students feel that the PARCC (or MCAS) exams gets in the way of their portfolio preparation. This week, as we began to take the PARCC their frustrations have boiled over.

"Reginald, isn't portfolio more important?"

"Why did you all have us take this test when portfolio is in two weeks?" I agreed with them that the seems out of place to take a high stakes test right and I wish we could take it at a different time. I explained that the PARCC test is a federal and state mandated assessment and we have very little flexibility around when to it can be administered. Furthermore, I reminded them that in high school they will have to earn a passing grade on a version of this test in order to get their diploma.

My takeaway from that conversation is that as a school, it's worth discussing the timing of the portfolio presentations if we have to administer the state exams in May again next year.

-Reginald Toussaint

SCHOOLWIDE NEWS

New End-of-School-Year Dates!

School will now OPEN on Bunker Hill Day, June 17. June 23 and 24 are early dismissal days. Friday, June 24 is the new LAST DAY of school.

Teacher Appreciation

There will be a Teacher/Staff Appreciation Day Potluck on Wednesday, May 25th. Families are asked to contribute to the lunch as they are able. Bring contributions to the teachers' lounge the morning of the event.

K0 - K2: Entrée

Grades 1-2: Side dish or Salad

Grades 3-4: Dessert

Grades 5-6: Drinks

Grades 7-8: Paper plates, cups, plastic

utensils

We also need help setting up/cleaning up after and watching the kids during recess and lunch so the teachers can enjoy their meal. If you are able to help with either please contact Rachel at 617-905-4646.

Reminder from Nurse Georgie

Cleaning out winter clothes and moving in summer clothing? The nurse's office is looking for sweat pants, shorts with elastic waists, and plain T-shirts for students who need an emergency change of clothing. Please consider donating if your child has outgrown any of these items. Thank you!

Shoes! The warmer weather is here and some students have been wearing flip flops and open-toed shoes. Please have student wear sneakers or bring them for wellness and recess. We have had a few scraped toes and knees from falling when running and stubbing toes during recess with sandals.

Spring Music Concert!

The annual Spring Music Concert will be held on Wednesday, June 8th from 5-7:00 pm in the MHS Auditorium. Enjoy vocal music from all of our students as well as performances by instrumental, wind, string, and guitar groups. Keep an eye out for a form from your child's teacher, about staying at school on that date for a special classroom pizza party!

Ayla Gavins, *Principal*
Deborah Meier, *Founder*
Tommy Chang, *Superintendent*

Mission Hill K-8 School
A Boston Public Pilot School
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Please help celebrate MHS teachers and staff!



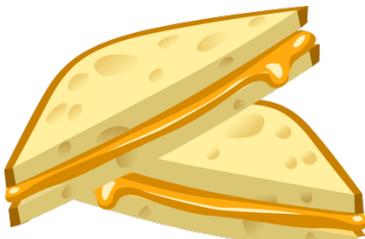
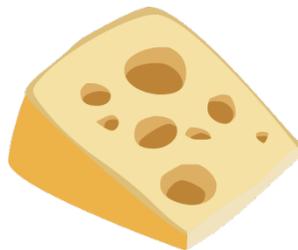
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Por favor, ayudar a celebrar los maestros y el personal de MHS!



Habr  un profesor / D a de Apreciaci n Potluck el mi rcoles 25 de mayo.

Se les pide a las familias para contribuir como se muestra a continuaci n para el almuerzo. Llevar contribuciones a la sala de profesores de la ma ana del evento .

K0 - K2: Entr e

Grados 1-2: guarnici n o ensalada

Grados 3-4: Postre

Grados 5-6: Bebidas

Grados 7-8: Los platos de papel, vasos, utensilios de pl stico

Tambi n necesitamos ayuda para configurar / limpieza despu s y viendo a los ni os durante el recreo y el almuerzo por lo que los maestros pueden disfrutar de su comida. Si usted es capaz de ayudar con cualquiera p ngase en contacto con Rachel al 617-905-4646.

