



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

- Friday, November 11
Veteran's Day: NO SCHOOL
- Friday, November 18
Friday Share: Amanda, Ann, Danny, & Jada
- Wednesday, November 23
Who Counts? Curriculum Breakfast 9:15-10:15
- Wednesday, November 23
Early Release: Thanksgiving Break
- November 23-25
NO SCHOOL: Thanksgiving Break

November 10, 2016

Volume 20, Issue 8

People Unlike Ourselves

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

On Election Day I was at a school in Cambridge called Nu Vu. With the assistance of engineers and architects, the students there were creating costumes for dancers with disabilities. They also designed a game to assist children that need to insert prosthetic eyes overcome their fears. In the hour that I was there I observed students thinking about other people that operate in the world in ways they had not considered before. They learned from those people. They asked those people what they wanted or needed and the students got to work, creating better situations. The work they did was critiqued. The critiques were conversations about what the students had created, and they were truly invested in creating the best products possible to meet the needs of other people.



A peace sign made by the children in Room 108.

On Election Night the recap of the campaign resurfaced this idea of thinking about people in ways we had not considered before for me. This past campaign season showed the depths of people's values that were hidden beneath the surfaces. We didn't know the extent to which we didn't know our fellow Americans, neighbors, and family members. A veil was removed during this past election run. So now that we know more about our fellow American citizens what do we do with what we have learned?

Our Mission Statement guides us here. Democracy requires citizens with the capacity to step into the shoes of others, even those we most dislike, to sift and weigh alternatives, to listen respectfully to other viewpoints with the possibility in mind that we each have something to learn from others. It requires us to be prepared to defend intelligently that which we believe to be true, and that which we believe best meets your individual needs and those of our family, community and broader public—to not be easily conned. It requires also the skills and competencies to be well informed and persuasive—to read well, to write and speak effectively and persuasively, and to handle numbers and calculations with competence and confidence.

My takeaway is that we are being called to educate ourselves more than we might have thought we needed to with people unlike ourselves. This requires more open communication. We have to get to know each other more deeply and address our divides as our personal mission to be better humans before an external factor divides us in ways that shock us into confusion, violence, and extreme words again.

I hope this weekend you will do something good for yourself, some self care. Then I hope you plan some time to talk with or learn about someone very different from yourself.



Danae creates a Lego backdrop for her story.

KINDERGARTEN

Room 108

How do three-year-olds use their voice to affect positive change in the school community? We will be visiting classrooms over the upcoming days and weeks to teach others the song we sang at Friday Share last week: Circle the Earth (with Peace). In this way, we will spread our positive message of peace and unity throughout the building. We will also be using our voices to decide on our class name. The process of brainstorming has begun, and on Tuesday we took a field trip to the gym to watch the public voting for the presidential election. Next we will create a ballot and a voting booth to begin the primaries to narrow our list of potential class names.

-Geraldyn & Donna

Room 106

The Butterflies class has been practicing the oral tradition of telling stories. Here is Danae's story titled, *Once Upon a Time in a Far Away Land*.

Once upon a time in a far away land there was a big big big castle and a lady lived all the way on the top with very long hair. And also a prince lived all the way on the bottom waiting for her each day. The lady stepmother told her you can never come down there's dangerous down there. And her evil step sister did not know that she was not going to the royal ball. And the stepsister told her to do her hair, makeup and buy some earrings and nail polish. The princess

waiting for lots of days. The princess couldn't stand it she saw a prince that was yelling down "swing down your hair". She swing down and also a prince went up her hair and also when the prince came up they both went down to the ground and they went everywhere. And also they danced they rolled over in the grass and they went to the beach. One had red hair and the other had black hair. And also the prince couldn't stand it he had to wait for three more months and the princess came down and they ate cake, cupcakes and black raspberry ice cream. They danced together, they sing together and they talk together. They like the same game. The End.

-Kathy D'Andrea

Room 107

"I see it already!"

Last Thursday 107 had the great opportunity to visit the John F. Kennedy Museum. As we prepared for our visit, we made flags, created our replica of the oval office, made personal campaign posters and got acquainted with the presidential seal. When we got there, our scavenger hunt for each of those things begun.



Ways to be Peace, from Room 108.



Checking out Kennedy Campaign Headquarters.

Before we walked into the museum, our students started pointing excitedly saying, "Look! The seal!" They were right! The seal was prominently hanging behind the glass windows. After a short film about John F. Kennedy, the hunt continued. We found all the things on our scavenger hunt and added more as we went along. We saw golden eagles, a replica of George Washington's swords, beautiful jewelry gifted to Jacqueline Kennedy as well as patriotic outfits and hats similar to those in our classroom. As we left the museum portion we walked into a beautiful room made of glass windows. We saw a gorgeous view of outside along with a large sailing boat. As we walked further into the room, several students looked up and yelled, "It's the flag!" It was the perfect way to end our day.

-Jada Brown & Kenisha Epps

Room 109

Our classroom has focused on kindness and community during this theme. We continue to discuss

these themes. During our community study we thought and talked about many of the different places in a town, or neighborhood, that we might visit. In each of these places there are helpful and kind people! We looked at our list of places and voted to choose two of them to make into classroom structures. The two buildings that won are: A Hospital and A Restaurant. We decided that the restaurant would be a JP Licks. One of our very talented parents is Bonnie Duncan, a gifted puppeteer. She visited our class and worked with students to construct our two buildings. Through this process we learned about community, learned about voting, and collaborated to a final project. Now we are learning how to play together inside these exciting structures. We are happily accepting child appropriate donations for the hospital and the JP Licks Restaurant.

-Deborah & Stephanie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 205

A couple of weeks ago, we had a special visitor from Boston Arts Academy. Marvin spent the morning with us reading with students and playing math games. We also learned that Marvin is a musician who plays the saxophone. Many of the students formed connections with him and were jumping into his arms or giving him high fives as he had to leave. A week later, we were happily surprised to see Marvin back in our classroom! This time he brought his saxophone. It was perfect because we also had art that morning with Jeanne. As the children created flags with messages, Marvin played his saxophone. At first, students stopped their art in awe at the music, and then it became



Room 107, under the Presidential Seal.

the perfect backdrop as they continued working. Thank you, Marvin, for sharing your passion and talents with us. We hope you visit again!

-Ashleigh L'Heureux

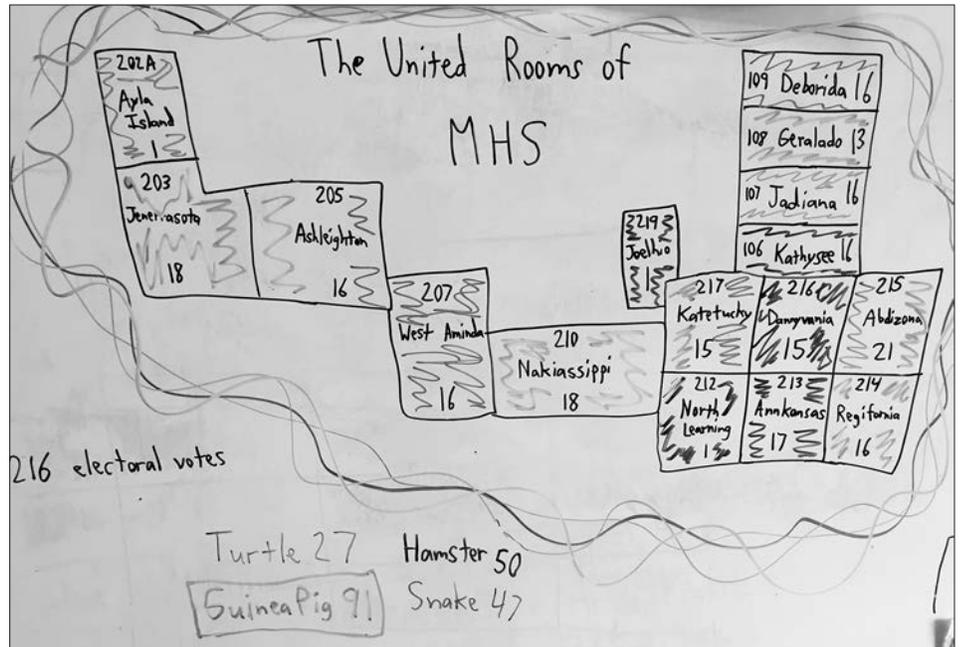
Room 216

The students of Team Rocket conducted a school-wide election for a new classroom pet. On Monday, we nominated ideas for a classroom pet and selected our four favorites: turtle, Guinea pig, hamster, and snake. Students then spent the entire week of Project Time registering voters across the school, making posters to advertise their favorite choice, and constructing an electoral map for the upcoming election. On Friday we frequently updated our electoral map as votes came in from classrooms around the school. Although hamster took an early lead after winning rooms including "Dannyvania" and "Joelhio", Guinea pig quickly gained ground after winning "Jenerrasota", "Regifornia", and "Geralado". By about 2:45, it was

CLASSROOM NEWS

clear that no other pet could reach the number of electoral votes that Guinea pig already had. Students who had nominated other choices gave concession speeches, such as when Darby said “Even though I’m sad that turtle didn’t get a lot of votes, I’m really happy that Guinea pig won because we’ll still have fun.” Théo, who originally nominated Guinea pig, then declared victory, saying “I want to see the Guinea pig right now! I’m serious, I really want to see it.” We eagerly await the newest member of Team Rocket, our Guinea pig named Mew!

-Danny Flannery & JoAnn Hawkesworth



Room 216's Electoral Map of MHS.

Room 217

On Monday, the United Kates visited the Boston Nature Center. Our teacher naturalist, Andrew, from the BNC showed us around their walking trails. Kids skipped, ran, and jumped down the trails. We began

by reviewing living and non-living things with a fun relay game. Andrew then gave us two plastic bins, one to place living organisms and one for non-living objects. Students set to work searching under logs and in bushes. Dead leaves, pebbles, dirt

and sticks found their way into the non-living bins. Many bugs were found, millipedes, centipedes, grubs, and spiders. From our insect song, we knew that insects have a head, a thorax, an abdomen, six legs and sometimes wings. Students determined that we found many bugs but no insects.

-Kate Needham

GRADES 3 & 4

Rooms 203

This week our Occupational Therapist Anne Trecker did a session with J & J's Geniuses on the body regulation zones and the “P.A.W.S.” system. She went over each zone, got their bodies moving! In her discussion was also the explanation of P.A.W.S. – Please Activate Waiting System. The yellow zone (caution zone) is when you use PAWS. With PAWS students learn to stop, evaluate the situation and then made a decision about their next best move to get back to the green or just right zone.



Collecting the living and non-living at the Boston Nature Center.

I asked each Genius to share what their P.A.W.S. action might be to get them back to the green zone. Here are their responses.

Braxton – walk away

Jaiden – ignore the distraction

Maya – walk away, tell a teacher

Arillis – mindful breathing

Typrese – go be alone, count to 10

Gianna – walk away, trapeze

Lee – leave me alone corner

Kimberly – go outside, mindful breaths

Rui – take a break (play with something)

Simeon – listen to an audiobook

Armani – think about something else (like home)

-Jenerra Williams & Ji Yun Park

Room 204

Stay tuned next week!

-Cleata & Mayra

Room 207

On Friday mornings, 4th graders board a school bus and head to Reggie Lewis to attend Urban Improv. Urban Improv uses “An innovative approach to experiential learning that uses structured, interactive, topical improvisation focused on real-life challenges and choices.”

During our time at Urban Improv children have the opportunity to watch and participate in skits as well as sing and play instruments. The songs and skits have a theme- self-esteem, healthy nutrition habits, peer pressure, etc.

Here are highlights according to the 4th graders. I like...

Adler-acting

Amos- we get to act things out

Anand- we act out scenes and sing songs

Anna- so much acting

Arillis- the acting

Braxton-learning from it and it is fun

Brian- singing the songs

Chani- acting

Dillon-you get to dress up in costumes

Euan-we get to act out parts of life

Gianna- acting

Jahlmar- watching everyone act

Kevauna- singing

Keysha- that you get to dress up

Kimberly- singing and acting

Lenardo- the pianos

Liam-we dress up as different things

Lucas- watching everyone act

Luis- singing

Maurice-we wear special clothes (costumes)

Maya- acting and the costumes

Michelle- that it is funny

Nate-you get to put on funny costumes

Noah- the songs

Peter- all of it

Rui- doing the acting

Simi- acting

Typrese- doing the acting

Xavier- the costumes

-Amina & Amanda

GRADES 5&6

Room 210

Stay tuned next week!

-Nakia & Manny

Room 215

On Monday, the DragonFlies (our new class name!) created a large banner/flag with Jeanne and Soaad. Here's what freedom, voice and democracy (and beauty and equality) means to our students:

Freedom is...

Doing what you love

Dance... Dance is dance

Life

Making your choice

Happy

To have fun

Peace!!

Peace and Emotion is (Emoji

symbols)

Freedom means Art

Freedom means like if you were in jail and you got out.

It is like freedom.

Freedom means having a choice

Voice is...

When you are heard

Speak out

When you talk for yourself

Talking is voice for Rights

Voice is freedom



Anne Trecker working with J&J's Genius's, exploring body regulation zones.

Democracy...

Is Voice

Shapes our world

*People shouldn't be afraid of
their government*

Equality is Equal

Beauty is a way to show your feelings

-DragonFlies, Kat, Carlos and Abdi

GRADES 7&8

Room 213

Significant Digits, written by Walt Hickey from FiveThirtyEight, is a "daily digest of the numbers tucked inside the news." I enjoy reading the eclectic collection of numbers culled from news about the world in politics, sports, medicine, nature, and every other topic imaginable.

There is a natural connection between our school-wide fall theme of Who Counts and quantitative literacy. This week, I presented several sets of numbers to the kids. There was a lot of interest and many connections. We will continue to find significant digits, or meaningful numbers, to include in our theme research projects.

How do you make sense of the numbers in your world? What are the stories behind those numbers? Here's a task to do at home. How do you make sense of this progression of numbers related to populations?

Room 213: 20 people; MH School: 240 people; Boston: 667,137 people; Massachusetts: 6,794,422 people; United States: 324,929,742 people; World: 7,350,556,965. Please share your thoughts (quantitative reason-

ing) with us.

-Ann Ruggiero, Elsa Batista & Letta Neely

Room 214

I woke up in a new world on Wednesday. Donald J. Trump won the presidential election and will be president of the United States for four years. As I tried to make sense of it all, I recognized that my students will also be struggling to make sense of it. I shifted my plans for the day to provide opportunities to discuss the election results.

In the process of discussing the potential impact of Trump's presidency with my students I learned more about them and how they view the world. I realized that some students struggle with differentiating between the fictional world they encounter in movies, TV shows and the real world. More specifically, they see movies such as "The Purge" as an example or warning of something that could happen in "real life". To them, Donald Trump's election is confirmation that something is wrong in the world.

I walked away from the conversation being more aware of media that my students consume and how they make sense of them. Most importantly, I am reminded that I need to make time to learn more about them, their fears and their hopes.

-Reginald Toussaint & Frances Pearce

SCHOOLWIDE NEWS

Election Day Bake Sale

Many thanks to all of the MH fami-

lies who baked, ran errands, set up, organized, sold goods, and generally supported the school with the most successful bake sale to date! We truly appreciate your hard work!

MHS Family Directory

Every year, the Family Council helps to compile a schoolwide directory, to facilitate and encourage communication between MHS families. In the next week, expect to receive a phone call, email or text from a MHS caregiver, asking you to fill out a form to be included in this year's directory.

Faces of the Project Room



Yedial shows his hand-sewn pillow and Warlin wears his button necklace.



Alize builds and programs her first Lego robot.

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

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