



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

- February 1-3, 2017
Mix it Up Week (see flyer)
- Friday, February 3
Friday Share: Amanda, Ann, Danny, & Jada
- February 7 & 8, 2017
Family Conferences (contact your child's teacher for more information)
- February 20-24, 2017
February Break: NO SCHOOL

January 27, 2017

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Mix it Up (originally published 1/9/15)

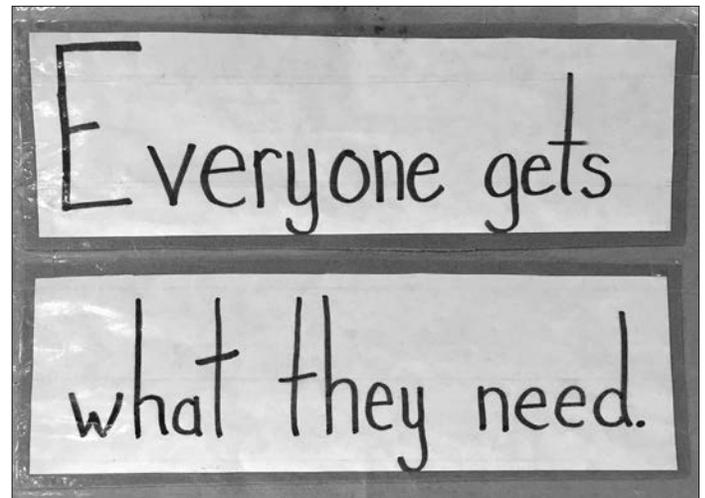
Dear Mission Hill School Friends, Families, Students, and Staff,

I'm reading a book titled *Soar* by David Banks. The author writes about lessons he learned as the founder of a series of public schools for boys. In one part of the book he describes the need for boys to feel like they belong, experience healthy competition and have positive peer pressure. These three things are about young people and their peers, but adults set the stage for these things to happen in healthy ways. When these things don't happen children may be pushed to the margins, excluded, and not reach their full potential.

We all want to feel that we belong, that we are welcomed to be present. One way to achieve a sense of belonging is to connect with people and to be known. Next week students will participate in activities that allow them to meet new students or get to know a familiar face better. We are calling this Mix-It-Up week, inspired by Mix-It-Up at Lunch Day from Teaching Tolerance. Mix It Up week will include a range of activities, providing more opportunities for students to meet and get to know each other. Connecting and expanding friendships helps everyone feel more together and less alone.

Competition can bring out the worst or the best in our children. It can drive children to desire loss for others or exclusion, or it can build a team, develop empathy, strengthen coping skills, and a climate of encouragement. What competition looks like depends largely on the influence of the environment. It's our adult responsibility to make sure all children have fair access to activities even if it means changing the rules or traditional conditions of the play. It's our responsibility to create an environment where children encourage one another to succeed and children assist when they see a teammate, classmate or community member falling behind. A spirit of encouragement goes a long way toward the success of everyone.

When children are very young, parents have the most influence. As they grow older their peers eventually take the number one spot. However, adults can and should use this circumstance for good. Adults can set the stage for positive peer pressure by providing positive or healthy activities that children will want to do together and in adult company. This includes encouraging older children to invite others into their activities. Having play dates with a variety of children is great for your child and the other children invited. The shared experiences outside of school may create stronger connections that transfer into positive peer pressure and a general sense of belonging.



KINDERGARTEN

Room 108

Cooking with children is a great way to combine science, math, literacy, motor skills and more. Language develops as children learn new vocabulary words and have a conversation with the adults and other children. Social/emotional connections are made through the sharing of work and then celebrating the results of your work together. This week we made playdough in room 108. Everyone pitched in - and now we have



The Dinosaurs make and work with playdough.

beautiful pink playdough to use in our daily work. We will be making recipes from Greece and other cooking experiences throughout the winter and spring. Please consider making a donation (such as a Stop N Shop gift card) to help support our cooking experiences. In what ways are your children helping with cooking at home? We are sending home the playdough recipe (attached to this newsletter) in case you want to try it at home!

-Geraldyn & Donna

Room 106

On Friday The Butterflies class shared their Anti -Bully Anthem at Friday Share. They worked so hard and Billy collaborated with us to put the student's words into a song. Here is just a taste . . .

When Someone Starts to Pick on You,
What do you do?
Use your words, stand up for number one
To thine own self, be true
There's a little something, something you can spread the word
Help the bully know, it's not right, (HEY)
Take your power back and stand up proud
You don't have to fight, (SAY):
"When You Bully Me, it makes me feel SAD
When You Bully Me, it makes me get MAD
Everyone Around The World, deserves to be glad
Don't You Bully Me, I'm taking a stand!"

Even though our theme has changed, our mission has not. The children, while learning about Ancient Greece, will continue to work on their desire

to stop bullying. Another project we have worked on is our book and we will let you know when that is finished as well.

-Kathy D'Andrea

Room 107

"Who is president today?"-Kaysha

While our students are still invested in our Who Counts theme, this week we officially announced that now that the inauguration is complete and our new president is Donald Trump, it is time to jump into our study of ancient Greece. In order to get an introduction about what it was like to live during ancient times, we begun the theme by reading the story Hour of the Olympics from the Magic Tree House series. We then began talking about fables, which we defined for students as a short tale to teach a moral lesson, often with animals or inanimate objects as characters (dictionary.com). As we listen to the fables during rest time, our students often try to figure out what the story is trying to teach us.

In addition to these literacy based experiences, we have begun the hands-on cooking portion to our theme. The first Greek recipe we made was Koulourakia (pronounced koo-loo-rahk-yah), otherwise known as Greek butter cookies. As we set the ingredients out on the table, students excitedly proclaimed, "I'm doing the butter!" "I'm doing the sugar!" "I wanna do the eggs!" Once the cookie dough was made, it was time to roll the dough, form them into bows and place them in the oven to bake. The smell of cookies permeated our room and the Working Presidents gave this recipe a thumbs up.

-Jada Brown & Kenisha Epps

Room 109

Stay tuned next week!

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 205

This week we began searching for answers to our questions connected our study of ancient Greece. Students are working in groups and using the Mission Hill Habits of Work and Habits of Mind to guide their research. Some students are studying Greek architecture. Others are studying ancient Greek games and some are studying art. Another group is researching ancient Greek food. You could ask your child what they are studying and what they have learned about their topic so far. Students will be working in their research group for the next couple of weeks building up to create artifacts connected to their research. We hope to show you some of our works-in-progress at our upcoming family conferences on Tuesday, February 7th.

-Ashleigh L'Heureux

Room 216

After two weeks of learning about continents, oceans, and countries of the world, Team Rocket has begun our deep dive into life in Ancient Greece! We are designing a map of Ancient Greece and building projects connected to buildings and Greek myths. Our discussion this week for Project Time focused on quality vs. quantity in our work. We are trying to prioritize quality (how detailed the project is) over quantity (how big the project is). When we have five days of Project Time to work on something, we should each work on making one project the best it can possibly be. So when Theo and Nico told me "We're done with the Temple of Hephaestus" I asked what they could do next to make their temple of wooden blocks look more like the temple they were referencing in a book. They are now drawing the designs of Greek columns on pieces of paper and taping them to the outside of the blocks. Likewise, even though Théo spent



Theo works on a map of ancient Greece.

two full days just coloring in the water on our map of Ancient Greece, he understands that there is much more work to do before the map is of the quality we want it to be. In other words, we're thinking this week not just about how to work hard but how to work well. Come on by and look at our works in progress!

-Danny Flannery & JoAnn Hawkesworth

Room 217

The Women's March was an inspiring, motivational event that brought millions of people together. In Boston alone, over 100,000 people marched. In room 217, Freyja, Julia, James, and Emeric and I all marched along with our families. My sign that reads "Women's Rights are Human Rights" now sits proudly on top of our bookshelf. It was incredible to feel the connectedness and common feelings of love, support, and inclusiveness between all of the demonstrators. On Monday morning, I showed my class a video of Sophie Cruz, a six year old who spoke at the Women's March on Washington in D.C. My students couldn't be-



Theo and Nico build the Temple of Hephaestus.

CLASSROOM NEWS

lieve that someone their age spoke in front of 500,000 people. “She is brave and has courage, she wasn’t even nervous” commented Emeric. “She is amazing, amazingly awesome, she wasn’t even scared one bit” said Evan. Mia noticed “She’s only 6 and she knows how to speak in English and Spanish a lot, and I’m six and I can too”. They were all impressed and agreed when Wren said that “Sophie wants everyone to fight for their rights and love each other.”

-Kate Needham

GRADES 3 & 4

Room 203

Relationships. This is something I value, not only at Mission Hill School but in my life. Relationships for me, as I assume for many, help sustain me and help me to become the best person that I can be. Relationships are at times difficult, not always easy but they’re always meaningful - whether we can see that immediately or not.

This week I had the opportunity to speak with four students, two of them I know quite well and two I’m just getting to know better. The conversations that we had were important and meaningful. In fact I would call them special. Each of us shared important things about our lives as people and school community members and I know that the conversations we had helped them to reflect and grow as people. I did as well. As a bonus, it deepened our relationships. I will never look at those students the same way, nor they I. It is always amazing to me how one honest and sincere conversation can be the spark of a beautiful relationship that can last for a little while or even a lifetime.

Relationships. It is one of the things



Xavier, Zyel, and Cole build Ancient Greek structures.

we do well at Mission Hill School and I am grateful for the opportunity to establish and grow them in such a caring and nurturing place.

-Jenerra Williams

Room 204

Stay tuned next week!

-Cleata & Mayra

Room 207

As we entered the new year we will started a new theme, Ancient Greece! All third and fourth grade students learned overarching information about Ancient Greece. Students read myths, read articles, created mosaics, researched inventions, researched clothing and much more. We asked students to choose an area of interest that they want to become an expert in for the remainder of the theme.

Here are areas that the Be Kind Work Hard Squad want to become experts in:

- Amos- Places, want to learn about the landscape
 - Cole- Architecture
 - Kevauna- Food
 - Jasmine- Cooking
 - Michelle- Making food
 - Juju- Making food
 - Anand- Architecture, what kind of building they made
 - Danny- learn how to make greek food
 - Euan- Culture and Architecture
 - Dillon- Science and medicine
 - Lucas- Archimedes the greek scientists
 - Zyel- Sports
 - Xavier- Cooking
 - Jahlimar- Food
 - Lenardo- Architecture
 - Darrius- Cooking
- Amanda & Amina

GRADES 5&6

Rooms 210 & 215

Few characters in Western literature achieve a level of transcendence that their names evoke a universal experience, an idea. Odysseus is such a character, the hero of Homer's *Odyssey* who comes to symbolize a long journey full of adventures and misfortune, an odyssey. 5th and 6th graders met Odysseus as they read last week, and predicted the kind of journey he was about to embark on, after craftily winning the war for Troy by giving the Trojans a gift of horse, honoring their bravery in battle, feeding their ego and spelling their doom. A 10-year war just ended, and a 10-year journey on the Aegean Sea that should have taken mere weeks to get home. Why does it take him so long to get home?

Why 10 years? What does Poseidon and arrogance have to do it? Why does Odysseus honor the goddess of wisdom, Athena, and yet idiotically announces his name after he has blinded the one-eyed Polyphemus, who cries to his father, Poseidon, to take revenge against Odysseus? Students mapped their own 10-year journeys to now, and the 10 years ahead to young adulthood. What lessons might Odysseus offer us? Do we need wisdom and knowledge (an Athena) for the journeys before us?
-Fly*Nation - Abdi, Kat and Carlos

GRADES 7&8

Room 213

"Look at all the words I didn't know!" "I found one - furiously." "Should I use a dictionary every time?" "No, try to figure out what it means by what you're reading. Look it up if it doesn't make sense."

These are snatches of student conversation as we started reading new books related to our Ancient Greece



Xavier writes with kapla blocks.

theme. During our study, we are paying particular attention to language - where it came from, how we use it, and how we can increase the number of words we know and use. One of our essential questions is "What words derived from Greek (and Latin) will I add to my oral and written vocabulary?"

I love the attention kids are giving to the language in their books. Here are some words they have identified as new to them: soothsayer, firebrand, quarrel, surpassed, hearth, livid, abode, atrocious, harried, lament. Aren't those great words?

We watched a short video that helped us to understand that as people in early times travelled and fought, new words became part of existing languages. We learned words in each of the layers of the English language: Anglo-Saxon (bird, freckle, run, skin), Latin (construction, distract-ed, project), and Greek (photog-

raphy, thermometer, atmosphere, microscope).

-Ann Ruggiero, Elsa Batista & Letta Neely

Room 214

There was a buzz in the room. Students moved with a purpose. A few asked if they can come up to work during lunch. They are getting ready to present their research on Ancient Africa.

We are took a small detour from United States history to learn about former African Empires. As we begin our study of the first Africans to arrive in the English colonies, I wanted to reorient the way that students typically think of Africa and Africans. Too often, students walk away from learning about slavery with the idea that Europeans were able to enslave Africans because they were a superior civilization. I hope that by learning about some of the African Empires, our students will have a bet-

ter context for how slavery evolved in the United States.

Though necessary, I worry that there won't be the kind of deep understanding I expect from students. I will continue to think about ways to incorporate African contributions to United States history throughout the year.

-Reginald Toussaint & Frances Pearce

SCHOOLWIDE NEWS

Family Council News

The next Family Council meeting is Thursday, February 16th at the school from 5:45-7:45pm. Also Urban Improv will be returning to MHS for a caregiver program on Thursday, March 9th from 6-7pm. Babysitting and pizza will be provided for both, please RSVP for babysitting to familycouncil@missionhillschool.org.

Make New Friends and Keep the Old!

Everyone at school will participate in our MIX IT UP week, February 1, 2, and 3, 2017. On Wednesday and Thursday mornings everyone will be in a "mixed up" groups with different adults and students from many grades. We will have breakfast and try some fun activities. On Friday there will be a special MIX-IT UP slideshow at Friday Share.

Family Corner

At the Governing Board Meeting in December a parent representative, Sarah Rocha, and a few Mission Hill staffers began a conversation about what inclusion means and how it affects Mission Hill classes. This is the second column to address some questions.

How do students get Special Education services?

The process starts with student being referred for an evaluation. The evaluators look at the student's academic strengths and needs and if anything may be inhibiting their access to the curriculum. If a student is found eligible for Special Education services an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is created for them. This plan specifies the services the student will receive, how often they are given and who will provide them. Students can receive services both within the classroom and in small groups with specialists. Specialists include speech and occupational therapists, learning coaches, counseling providers and ESL teachers.

What are class ratios?

The Boston Teacher's Union recommendations for inclusion schools are 6 Special Education seats for every 20 seats in a classroom. Boston Public Schools doesn't have a standard recommendation.



Greek astrological symbols with mosaic design elements from the Art Room. Top to bottom: Josmarie's Pisces and Nora's Leo.



Emeric's fable, from the Art Room.



Romeo's fable, from the Art Room.

<p>Ayla Gavins, <i>Principal</i> Deborah Meier, <i>Founder</i> Tommy Chang, <i>Superintendent</i></p>	<p>Mission Hill K-8 School A Boston Public Pilot School WWW.MISSIONHILLSCHOOL.ORG</p>	<p>20 Child Street Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 T 617-635-6384 F 617-635-6419</p>
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MIX IT UP 2017!

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MIX IT UP week, February 1, 2 and 3, 2017.**

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If you have any questions – ask your teachers!





HOW TO KEEP YOUR ASTHMA UNDER CONTROL THIS WINTER

The cold and flu season is upon us and this is the time of year when asthma symptoms -- coughing, wheezing or shortness of breath -- can worsen. While we can't control the winter weather, there is a lot you can do to control your child's asthma, regardless of their age, and to help them stay healthy.

PREVENTION WORKS! BE PREPARED!

If your child hasn't seen his/her doctor about his/her asthma this season, make an appointment to:

- Help ensure that your child's asthma is controlled
- Adjust your child's controller and/or rescue medications as needed
- Update your child's Asthma Action Plan, as needed – this care plan can help you know when and how to use each of your child's asthma medicines. Keep a copy nearby and give one to your school nurse/teacher
- Make sure you have up-to-date and enough medication when and where you'll need it* (i.e. home, school, with other caregivers, etc.)
- Get a flu vaccine for your child—it's not too late! The flu vaccine is the best way to protect your family from influenza, which can worsen asthma symptoms.

Know the early warning signs of an asthma attack so you can catch it early and prevent an emergency or very serious situation. When in doubt call 911.

Prevent triggers that can make asthma worse:

- Breathing in cold air: Use scarves and neck warmers to keep your child's neck and face covered.
- Colds and influenza: Wash your hands frequently and avoid people who are sick or coughing.
- Cigarette and other tobacco smoke: Don't smoke in your car or home and use a separate "smoking jacket" that you leave outside of your home. If you are interested in learning more about quitting smoking contact the Massachusetts Smokers' Helpline: 1-800- QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)
- Dust mites in your home if your child is allergic: Use dust mite-proof mattress and pillows covers, use a HEPA vacuum to clean floors, and frequently wash comforters and children's stuffed animals by heating them in a hot clothes dryer for 20 minutes every week.

*Note: It is very important to make sure your child has enough of his/her prescribed daily and emergency asthma medications. Be sure to get refills and ensure the proper medications are on hand and not expired. The medication may save your child's life. A spacer helps to make sure the medicine reaches your child's lungs properly. No matter how old your child is, your support is important. Please help ensure they have proper medication and are taking their medications properly. Even if your child feels or seems okay, it is important that they stay on their controller medications as prescribed.

Ask your doctor or local pharmacist if you need medical advice or support.

All students and parents should contact their doctor and school nurse for more information.

For additional information visit bphc.org/asthma



January 2017