



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

- Thursday, March 30, 9:15-10 am
Ancient Greece Curriculum Breakfast
- Thursday, April 6, 5:30-7 pm
Family Council Meeting at MHS
- Friday, April 14, 2017
Good Friday: NO SCHOOL
- April 17-21, 2017
April Vacation Week: NO SCHOOL

March 24, 2017

Volume 20, Issue 21

Engagement vs. Involvement

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

Cleata, one of our grade 3/4 teachers, has been studying the family engagement of middle school families of color for years. She recently introduced me to a new way of thinking about family engagement in general. She clarified for me the difference between engaged and involved. She explained to me that Mission Hill has many parents that are involved. Our families show up for family conferences, respond to teachers when needed, and come to school for pick up or meet their children at the bus stop where they engage in questions about the school day. They are involved with their child- participating in school efforts because there is a benefit to their child.

What we need more of is family engagement. This is when families participate in efforts that benefit the whole school community.

Family involvement happens in as many different ways as family engagement—there are hundreds of ways to do both. Think of it this way- what can you do to help your child be successful at school? That's parent and caregiver involvement. Now think: What can you do to make our school a better place for others? That's parent and caregiver engagement.

Here are some things you can do to be involved with your student and engaged in the school:

- Connect with your child's teacher
- Look at your child's work and ask questions about what they are learning
- Work with your child on something that they find difficult
- Use your child's report card to set goals. Create a plan to meet the goal by next marking period. The next round of reports will be sent in the first week of April.
- Ask about school improvement efforts. There are several initiatives that could use support.
- Attend Family Council meetings and/or read the notes. Share discussion topics that you'd like to see on the agenda. Chances are that if there is something you struggle with others are dealing with it too.
- Volunteer. We would love to have you in our building for whatever time you can spare.
- Educate yourself about Mission Hill. Find out what a progressive school is. What does it mean that our school is democratically run? What is inclusive schooling? The more you know the more you can share and assist.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alya James".

KINDERGARTEN

Room 108

After reading and acting out many different versions of *The Lion and The Mouse*, the K0 students are now dictating their own version of the story. We have been learning about “characters” and “setting”. You will be able to read everyone’s version at the Ancient Greece breakfast for families on Thursday, March 30th. Here is a version by Rowan:

On a green mountain, the lion was going to sleep. The hunter set a trap. It was a net. The lion was trapped in the net. “Big animals can help me,” said the lion. The mouse came and chewed the net. The lion jumped out of the net, “You’re my friend today and ever!” said the lion.

Moral: Little friends can help animals.

-*Geralyn and Donna*

Room 106

Geometry has been a hot topic this year in *The Butterflies Class*. Children have enjoyed playing with blocks, pattern blocks, translucent pattern blocks on the light table, and make pattern block snakes with paper pattern blocks.

This week we read *The Greedy Triangle* by Marilyn Burns. The children loved how the shape was so greedy to have more sides. We introduced new words such as quadrilateral and nonagon. We also spent time exploring Geo Blocks.

Geo Blocks are wooden blocks of various sizes and shapes. The children made representations of cities and animals. They worked by themselves and with partners. This work will connect with our upcoming theme of physical science, when we



“Animals” created by kids in room 106 with Geo Blocks.

will be focusing on construction. We will be looking closely at how physical science is a key component to building.

Field trip dates to note : 4/27/17, 5/8/17, 5/18/17, and 5/23/17

-*Kathy D’Andrea*

Room 107

With the snow days interrupting our flow, we were able to pick up where we left off in reading the *Odyssey* and were able to complete our mosaic Greek flag. We did our best to keep the white parts white and the blue parts blue. As students examined their work, one commented that in the left corner there was a white cross and another stated that the blue and white stripes made a pattern.

Just as we have been exercising each day to get our bodies stronger to compete, with the help of our families, almost daily we have been able to experience Greek culture through food and cooking. Last week we tried Tzatziki (a dip made from dill, Greek yogurt and cucumbers). Student ratings were split down the middle. This week we tried making baklava (a desert made from phyllo dough, honey, walnuts and almonds), tiganites (a pancake/fritter), pagoto yia

paithia (Greek no cook ice cream) and spanakotyropita (spinach and feta cheese pie). We still have a few recipes to complete as our Greek journey draws near to its end.

-*Jada Brown & Kenisha Epps*

Room 109

We had two amazing trips to the MFA. We visited in two small groups to maximize the learning of the trip. Each trip was great! With the small groups students were able to see the art well, listen to my stories about it, ask questions, and enjoy the museum. For the some of the students, the trip on the bus and tromping up to the big museum doors was just as interesting as seeing inside. While waiting for the bus we played “I Spy”, sang songs, and talked about how the bus system works.

At the museum we were greeted by the museum staff, who welcomed us and told us the rules, then we stashed our coats in large rolling bins, used the rest rooms and were ready for our adventure. We followed the map to the Ancient Greece section and focused on ten pieces that I’d identified on my preparation visit.

After viewing, we sat on the floor with clipboards and everyone drew

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a picture of a memorable piece they had seen.

-Deborah & Stephanie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 205

Written by the White Wolves:

“Come see our play of Pandora’s Box next Thursday at 9:30am. We’re doing a play to show people what ancient Greece is about. It going to show what ancient Greece looked like. And to show what we’ve learned about ancient Greece. It’s a play about how the Greeks would make up solutions to how things are in the world. It’s about how all the bad things came into the world - and hope too!”

This play is about the Greek myth Pandora’s Box. Myths are stories that are made up to explain why or how things happen. The ancient Greeks were very curious. They wondered how things happen so they made myths and one of the myths is Pandora’s Box and that’s what we’re going to be performing.

-Ashleigh L’Heureux & the White Wolves

Room 216

This week we took a field trip to a nearby dance studio to watch Isadora Duncan’s *Narcissus*, as performed by Neli’s mom Avery! We even got to learn some of the dance moves! Here are the students’ reflections on the trip.

I liked:

When I was hopping and skipping

-Nico

When we split up into groups -Natalia

Watching the dance-Antonio

Practicing the dance-Gabriel

Drawing and dancing -Theodore

Playing the game-Milan

Freeze dance-Moxie

Playing the game at the end- Jack Ozro

When we were watching Ms. Avery do the dance-Darby

Freeze dance-Ava

The wind when my mom was waving her arms-Neli

When we drew-William A.

When me and Ms. Avery did the dance-Josie

When we were drawing and practicing the dance-Théo

When we were skipping-Abel

Playing the game and drawing-William D.

-Danny & JoAnn

Room 217

Students are continuing to work on our presentation of Greek myths through theatre. We began our work by re-writing the myths into kid-friendly, simplified versions.

Now, small groups are creating short, adapted versions of some of the

Greek myths we read.

Kids are incredibly creative in how they choose to represent settings, characters, costumes, and props. A chair with clouds taped to it has transformed in to Mount Olympus, from which the goddess, Queen Hera, can look down on her husband Zeus trying to meet Io. A bright blue swivel chair has turned into both a cave where Echo now resides in shame, and a cradle where baby Hercules (the Greek version of Hercules) sleeps. A canister of dried apricots from snack was transformed with paper and colored pencil into Pandora’s tempting jar. The class can’t wait to show their families the play at our curriculum breakfast.

-Kate Needham

GRADES 3 & 4

Room 203

All of the third and fourth graders are in the process of writing Greek



The United Kates rehearse for their Greek Myth theatrical performances.

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myths. We have been working on them for a while now and in Room 203 we are getting closer to a finished product. J & J's Geniuses are working hard and are in different phases of writing. Some are still writing their first drafts. Some have begun the editing stage. Still others are typing them and doing final revisions.

Last week our authors finished the covers to their books with Jeanne in the art room and they look great! We also began to do illustrations that will accompany their text. Students are really excited and into their myths! When it's time for working on them there is never a complaint. In fact, there was a day last week when Typrese couldn't work on his and he said, "Aw man! I really wanted to do that today!"

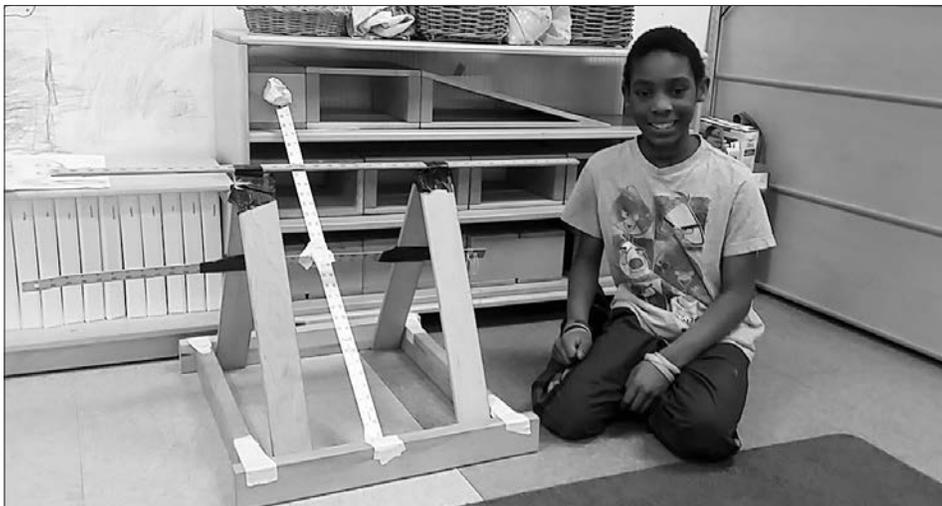
We all share Typrese's excitement about myth writing and can't wait to share our finished product at our upcoming Ancient Greece Curriculum Breakfast, Thursday, March 30th at 9:15AM. See you there!

-Jenerra Williams

Room 204

Stay tuned next week!

Cleata Brown



Braxton's Greek catapult.



Students traveled to see the dance Narcissus performed by a MH family member. Here, students practice some elements of dance.

Room 207

Throughout the Ancient Greece theme, we had a goal for all students to write and publish a myth. First, we had to read many myths to become familiar with the language and elements. We identified that myths are timeless, teach a lesson/moral, have gods/goddesses and much more. Then, students thought about all the ways they could add each element into a myth. Ideas started to flow as a student shared, "the beginning

could start with...not so long ago."

They also came up with, "as the story goes, long ago and far away and much more." We collaborated to brainstorm more ideas to fall into each element. We then organized our myths by choosing a setting, characters, conflicts, morals, etc. With all this planning complete, students were eager to write. The goal is for all students to have a published myth by curriculum breakfast. Pop in to the Be Kind Work Hard Squad for some good reads!

-Amanda & Amina

GRADES 5&6

Room 210

Here are a few of our recent end of the week reflections.

Something I am really excited about is...

"The weekend."

"Well this week was weird cause of the two days off but i was excited about how we got only 3 days out of school but im excited for the weekend cause im going to see my cousins

on Saturday.”

Something that went well this week was...

“Football i have been getting better at catching the football and my speed”

“Math. I am getting more confident in my math work, and am able to understand most things now. Also, I feel like Abdi is working more at letting us work in the ways we work best at, For me working on my own.”

“HOMEWORK!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I loved the homework so much great job Nakia! The homework was so interesting and I loved the variety!...”

I would feel more comfortable if...

“People stop acting like they are the boss”

One thing I wish went better was...

“Only The Fact That We Missed Days.”

“I wish that i could be better at writing.

”Next week I am going to try to...

“not get mad easy

Something I learned this week was...

“something that i learned this week was that the Athens do not like the Spartans because they had a lot of wars.”

-Nakia, Manny & the 5xAtion Class

Room 215

So we are nearing the end of our reading of Homer’s Odyssey. Students are enjoying the reading so much that quite often the story feels real. Is Odysseus real? What about Polyphemus, and Circe who turns sailors into pigs? I don’t think I have successfully provided an answer. At first, I thought that to define what a myth is I had to dispel the realness of Odysseus. I said something like, a myth tells some things about the people who created them, so he is as



MHS Debate team! Read all about it on page 6!

real as say Wolverine is real to us. My answer is changing, more nuanced, probably less interesting. I let the question - is this real? - hang in the air longer than before. How would you answer this question? How do you explain creatures that live in a far off island beyond the horizon of what is knowable to the Greeks - like how we explain life on distant planets beyond what is knowable to us?

*-Fly*Nation - Abdi, Room 215*

GRADES 7&8

Room 213

What is it about the Pythagorean Theorem that makes it live on in the minds (and hearts?) of former math students? Recently, when I told Reginald that we were working on the Pythagorean Theorem in 8th grade math, he smiled widely and said, “Oh, I love that! I always like that

part of the math portfolio.” Another adult said, “That’s that a squared plus b squared thing, right?” And even a 7th grader exclaimed, “Ooh, I’ve heard of that!”

So, yes, the Pythagorean Theorem describes a relationship among the sides of a right triangle, where a and b are the legs and c is the hypotenuse. $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ The hypotenuse is the side of the triangle opposite the right (90°) angle, and the longest side in the triangle. Given any 2 side lengths, we can use the theorem to find the length of the third side. The theorem can be used to find distances in real life situations.

When we work with the Pythagorean Theorem, we bump up against many other cool math ideas. Remember radicals and the symbol $\sqrt{\quad}$? How about terminating and non-terminating decimals? And the relationship

between equilateral and 30-60-90 triangles? How about the wheel of Theodorus and its pattern of irrational numbers? That last idea is a great connection to our Ancient Greece theme.

Check out the 8th grade math portfolios in June if you want more memories from your days as a math student.

-Ann Ruggiero, Elsa Batista & Letta Neely

Room 214

It seems as though the entire school, including 214, are writing myths. We started writing myths last week by brainstorming natural phenomena. Then each student chose a phenomenon that interested them and wrote as much as they knew about it. Then we plotted our story using a plot narrative outline. Some students used these pre-writing strategies as a guide to writing their first drafts while others took their writing in a different direction. A few, like Ella, decided to write their own versions of well known myths. Her myth begins...

“One day, there was this beautiful talented girl named Ariella. Her special talent was to sew. With a needle, thread and fabric nothing could stop her. Some people thought she was immortal. If you told her you needed a dress in three days, she would make you a dress in three hours. Okay, maybe 5 or more hours depending on how fancy you want it to look. When you see her sew, she is mostly in the zone, nothing can stop her. You could try to get her full attention, she will look at you and listen,

but her hands keeps moving.”

Does it sound familiar? Yes, she is retelling the myth of Arachne. Although it's familiar it's original and full of Ella's voice.

-Reginald Toussaint

SCHOOLWIDE NEWS

MHS Debate Team News

The MHS Debate Team finished out the season in style at the City Finals which were held at Cambridge Ridge and Latin. We wore out new blue sweatshirts. They say, “Debate This” on the back. Ella, Zac, Charles, and Anais all moved from Novice to Junior Varsity throughout the course of the season. The topics for this year were: Human Rights and Factory Workers in China and Trade, the South China Sea, and China. Many of the team members felt like they became much better speakers, learned new vocabulary, and learned how to do cross examinations. We look forward to next year!

Camp, Camp, Camp!

Camp Season is upon us. Check out the Summer Programs page under Family Resources on the MHS website. Courtney updates programming with new information throughout the year. If you'd like her assistance, fill out the Summer Is Coming survey found on the Summer Programs homepage. She also has a Courtney's Corner page with year-round resources and city-wide events.

Get your camp physical!

Don't forget that camps all require a medical examination by a licensed physician within 12 months preceding camp. This is a state requirement

for all children attending camp, so book your child's appointment now. Remember, Georgie needs updated copies of physicals as well, so drop a copy in her mailbox after your appointment.

Scholarships available!

Looking for scholarships for summer opportunities? Courtney has a limited number of scholarships available to various programs throughout the city such as Hale Reservation and Farm School. Contact her immediately to be considered. Most programs also offer financial assistance but it may be a separate application. Always ask if they do!

Family Council News

Please join us for our second Urban Improv Family Program, which will take place on Thursday, March 9th, and the next Family Council meeting, which will be held on Thursday, April 6th. More details to come!

Babysitting and dinner will be provided for the meetings. Please RSVP for babysitting: familycouncil@missionhillschool.org

Curriculum Breakfast!

Come join us next week for our Ancient Greece Curriculum Breakfast! Come celebrate all we have been learning about this fascinating ancient culture during the past few months. It's a potluck, so bring a theme-inspired or non theme-inspired dish to share with our community

When: Thursday, March 30

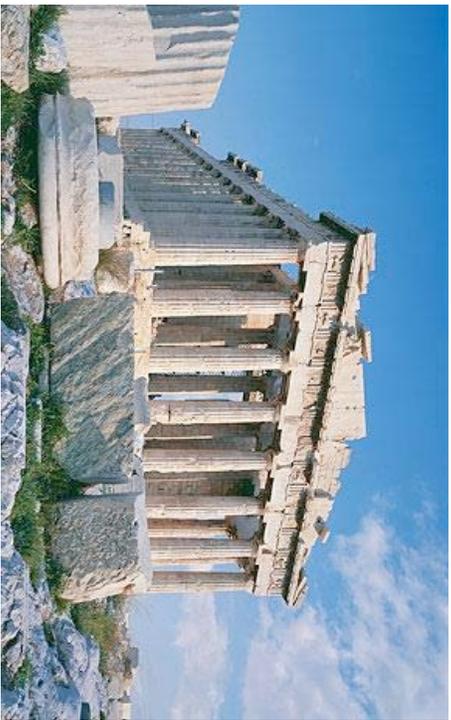
When: 9:15-10:00 am

Where: KQuad and Second Floor

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

Mission Hill K-8 School
A Boston Public Pilot School
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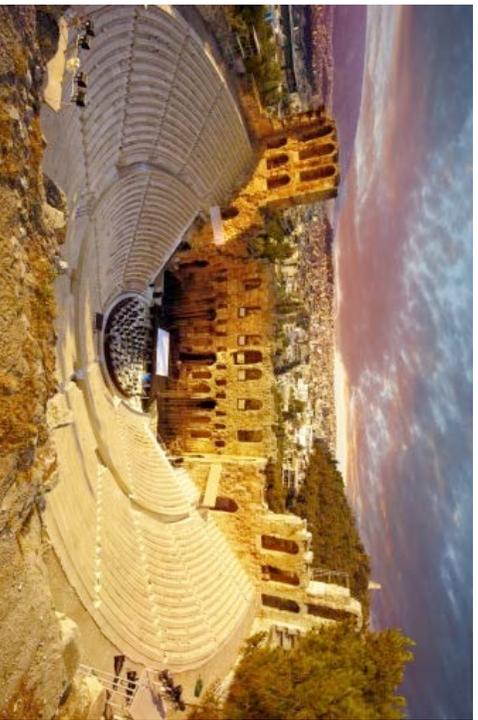


Ancient Greece Curriculum Breakfast



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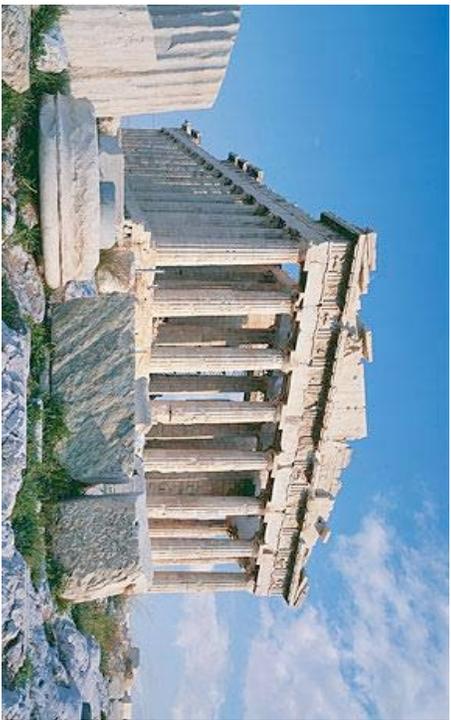


Date: March 30, 2017

Time: 9:15-10:00

Where: K-Quad and 2nd Floor

See you there!



Antigua Grecia

Desayuno del Currículo



Venga a celebrar todo que hemos estado aprendiendo sobre esta cultura antigua fascinante durante los últimos meses pasados.

Es comida de desayuno, así puedes traer un plato inspirado o no por el tema para compartir con nuestra comunidad.



Fecha: El 30 de Marzo de 2017

Tiempo: 9:15-10:00

Donde: K-quad y 2do piso



¡Los veremos allí!