



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

- Monday, May 22, 2017
Grades 1/2 to Farm School
- Tuesday, May 23, 2017
Kindergarten to Farm School
- May 25-26, 2017
Science MCAS for Grades 5 & 8
- Monday, May 29, 2017
Memorial Day: NO SCHOOL

May 19, 2017

Dr. West

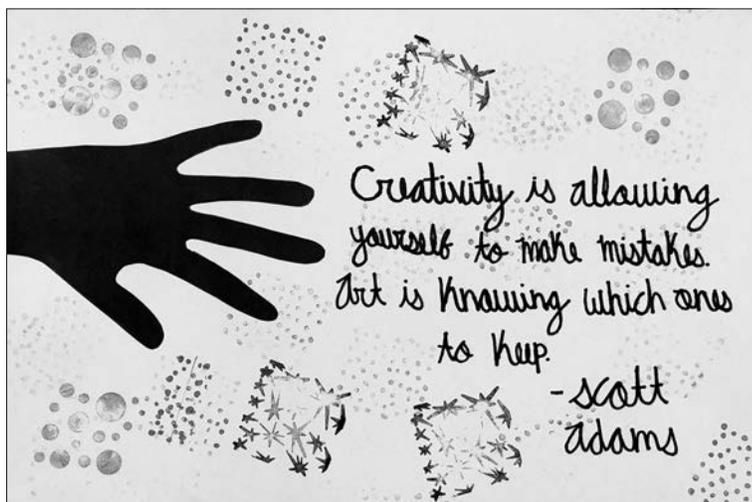
Volume 20, Issue 27

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

This week I'd like to share some takeaways from a lecture I attended that I have found useful. Dr. Cornell West was addressing a group of 8th grade students at Cambridge Street Upper School. He turned down other speaking engagements to address this group of students that were raising funds to travel to New York City. I found his words to the students helpful. I hope you find his perspective helpful too in the work you do, and I don't just mean 9 to 5 work.

A student asked Dr. West to share his thoughts about arts education being cut from so many schools. He replied, "Art should be at the center of schools to provide alternative perspectives. Art provides us with an alternative reality to the world in which we live. Refuse to be well adjusted to the status quo. Art is an essential/fundamental necessity to deal with the suffering of humanity." My note taking may have his words a bit out of order, but I think you still get the gist. Art can be a way to share a feeling or opinion about a circumstance or it can create a new vision, emotion or distraction. It has the power to engage us, heal us, and lift us up as creators and viewers. So write, dance, sing, paint, act, sculpt, draw!

Another student asked Dr. West about his willingness to be arrested so many times. He responded, "Trying to live a life in which love and decency are given to all people means that sometimes you end up on the streets speaking up for the rights of others." He spoke about moral consistency. It's the idea that we should be consistent- not take a moral stance on some things but not others. Speaking up for the rights of all humans to be loved and have a life of decency can lead to conflict because some people don't believe in this idea. Not everyone is a believer universal humanity. Dr. West has been arrested as he protested the mistreatment of other human beings. He went on to say that it's not reasonable for everyone to take action this way. We need some people to sing, others to dance and people to write. What would the world be if some of us didn't spend time using talent in other ways? We all have different ways to contribute to universal humanity- the right to love and decency for all.



As I heard Dr. West talk more about the arts I was reminded of the MHS student experience. Our hallways showcase the art our students have produced. This week we had a fantastic MHS music concert and celebrated student writers. We are a community of artists. As evidenced by our daily work to be kind, to help and celebrate each other, provide access to learning for all, and hear each other's voices, we are also a community of activists.

KINDERGARTEN

Room 108

On May 5th and May 11th The Dinosaurs went to the Museum of Fine Arts. Thanks to the many parents who came with us! We had guided tours from museum staff who worked with us ahead of time to curate developmentally appropriate, interactive and hands-on experiences for our young children. The ride on the 39 bus is pretty fun as well! Enjoy the photos and the following reflections:

Aiden - I ride the elevator.

Emerson - My daddy came!

Jonathan - I went on the 39 bus and I went downstairs on the elevator. That's very fun!

Lliam - It was so impressive. There were so many beautiful things I liked. I was so happy!

Marissa - It was so fun! I was playing with lions.

Mira - We got to pretend that we were painting the benches and we got to play an instrument.

Persephone - I went to the Museum to Find Arts and I saw lots of things - a glass tree, a courtyard, and a house. And I saw the statues.

Rowan - I saw glass of a tree and some rocks.

-Geraldyn and Donna

Room 106

This week we have been writing feeling stories. Here is a one written by James Banks, age 5.

One time there was a kid. It was Halloween and he was at a haunted house. I saw something out the window and went inside. It was red and stuck on the window. He touched it and it made scary noises ERR AAH-HHHH UUHHHHH. Then he ran away and there was something at the

door and it was scary. He saw a button and he pressed it. He thought it would make it go away, but it didn't. It made the lights go off. There was a staircase that he didn't see. He went up stairs. There was a room with a treasure chest in it. He found the key and opened the treasure chest up. There was a necklace with a diamond on it. Then he looked out the room and he saw something flying. It went through the wall. Then he wondered how it went through the wall and he tried to go through the wall. And it worked. There was a porch and he chased the flying thing. Then he saw something coming out of it. He picked it up and he could see through it. Then he looked behind him and there was something that scared him and he started crying. Then he jumped on it and he saw it fall down into a swimming pool. It sank to the bottom and it was gone. The End.

-Kathy D'Andrea

Room 107

"Salt for snow. Blocks. England House. Flowers. A slide. A box. A rock."

After defining a solid as matter that is hard and keeps its own shape, the Working Presidents listed the above as solids. We then continued our exploration of solids and liquids in the water table after reading a story about melting and freezing. I shared with students that I had taken out a lot of ice from my freezer to fill our sand table. I inadvertently forgot the bag on my counter that day. When asked what they thought might happen, almost everyone concluded that it would be melted by the time I got home. They were correct! All the ice did in fact melt and I placed it back



Images from the Dinosaurs' trip to the MFA!

into the freezer so it would be ready for the next day.

During our meeting that morning, I told students what happened and that when I got to work I placed both the ice chunk and ice cubes in the sand table so they could finally explore. When students pulled the cover off the sand table, they discovered that the only thing there was the ice chunk surrounded by water. Immediately they deduced that the cubes had all melted. As students played with our ice remnants, one student dropped the ice chunk on the floor. We found that although the chunk shattered, the pieces retained their solid state.

-Jada Brown & Kenisha Epps

Room 109

The Kind Trickster Builders continue to build and to work on practicing kindness. This week we've had to revisit many conversations about

kindness, safety, and rules. It's not unusual for kindergartners to need to revisit these things at this time of year. The weather is nice for running around outside, they are feeling bigger, stronger, and more competent. And, with all that, comes testing out the boundaries of new found abilities and freedom. By engaging in conversations and reminders they can discover new ways to be in the world to feel powerful and successful that fit also within the bounds of kindness and safety! We are also beginning a series of scientific experiments on stability as part of our construction unit. In some ways, this is not so very different than the personal trial and error that the springtime kindergartners are trying on themselves. Happy Spring! Happy Summer!

-Deborah & Stephanie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 205

"I'm painting but not with my hands - gravity's doing it!" Madison cheerfully expressed as paint-covered marbles made trails across her paper. It was so fun to combine science and art - and we learned a lot too! We used an inclined plane and gravity to make beautiful art! We are learning about motion. We learned that things cannot move all by themselves; they need help! This help is called force. There are two types of force: push and pull. Some forces you can see and some you cannot see. We used balls and ramps to make art. When we moved the box to create an inclined plane the marble rolled through the paint. We wondered how the marble moved since we did not push it or pull it. We learned that gravity is a force that pulls things down. gravity pulled the marble down the inclined plane. Stop by room 205 to see some of our masterpieces!

-Ashleigh L'Heureux

Room 216

Last weekend I took some time to reflect on the school year so far, as well as areas for improvement I'd like to make next year. Though it is my first year as a lead teacher, it feels as though I've been at Mission Hill for years. The connections I've formed with fellow teachers, students, and families have been an incredible support as I learn and grow in my first year of teaching. With every mistake I make, I work to refine my organization and planning so that I can better help my students and their families get what they need. There have been days where I've gone home thinking for hours about how I can help a certain student succeed, or how I could



Art and Science in room 205.

CLASSROOM NEWS

better deliver a lesson. But for each of those difficult days, there have been ten phenomenal days where my students are working hard, treating each other well, and forming a classroom community that makes me proud. We have only twenty-seven days left of school, and I look forward to my remaining time with the fantastic community that is Team Rocket.

-Danny & JoAnn

Room 217

Stay tuned next week!

-Kate Needham

GRADES 3 & 4

Room 203

Stay tuned next week!

-Jenerra Williams

Room 204

Our physical science unit is in full force! We took “The Marble Challenge” to test what effect force has on an object. We have discussed friction and gravity as two basic types of force. We also observed that it was difficult to exert the right amount of energy to launch a marble to hit five marbles in a group from a launching point. Hiram observed that “every time I tried launching the marble it turned in another direction; it curved and went off the chart”. In another attempt, Sophia shared that “one challenge was that when we tried to launch the marbles the little marble went over the little hill but it curved”. Another student shared, “when I pushed the marble, gravity took its course and pushed the marble and kept on turning and missed the marbles”. Brian observed that “there was not enough friction because if there was friction the launched marble would slow down to a stop. Instead they rolled all over the place”. Noah



Students conduct the marble challenge in room 204.

said, “the surface of the launch is too smooth and that combined with smoothness of the marbles created a bunch of slipping and sliding marbles with no friction to slow them down.” Please come by anytime to watch during our physical science time.

-Cleata & Mayra

Room 207

This week we held our annual Music Concert. Children in kindergarten through middle school performed. Most sang songs while others played instruments. We have no idea what seeds we are sowing.

As a young girl, I discovered my love for music at a very young age. I sang to myself all the time. I joined the 100-voice chorus in elementary school and discovered my love for performing! I also played the violin for awhile as well as learned to play the piano so that I could accompany myself as I sang. In fifth grade I was chosen along with nine classmates (including Jonathan Knight from New Kids On The Block) to

participate in the Boston Opera Company’s production of *Othello*. Little did I know, way back then, that singing would afford me so many more awesome opportunities. I sing at church on a regular basis. I sing at MHS. I have sung at weddings to celebrate couples uniting together. I have sung at funerals as families said goodbye to their loved ones. I had the honor of singing at the memorial service for the Late Senator Kennedy. I have traveled to South Africa and Barbados to sing. I even sang behind Mariah Carey in front of thousands at the TD Bank Garden! I LOVE TO SING!

Someone preparing for, or even performing during the concert this week may have discovered that music is their passion. Who knows what that passion will develop into? Who knows what opportunities will be afforded by that passion? Only time will tell.

-Amina & Amanda

GRADES 5&6

Room 210

Stay tuned next week!

-Nakia

Room 215

On Thursday, 5/6 students, aka Fly*Nation, took the final writing prompt assessment for this year. In the coming weeks, Nakia and I will read, reflect and compare each student's writing sample to their first sample in September. We will use the Mission Hill Writing Stages to look for each student's development as a thinker and writer. A careful assessment of a writing sample begins with a question, what is the writer trying to communicate? The MHS Stages provide qualitative, precise indicators of writing conventions and skills, ranging from subject-verb agreement and paragraph coherence to voice and freedom of expression. The strength of the Stages is its utility in different writing contexts. Teachers and students will sit together and compare both samples, describe individual writing process, use of strategies, habits of work, and areas for improvement. Writers need readers to ascertain how close they are to achieving their purpose for writing, the effects on their words on readers, and where the writing might go next. For me, when my students readily use material experiences from their own lives to expand their perspective on an assigned topic and their language gets close to their humane voice we will have achieved something together.

-Abdi

GRADES 7&8

Room 213

"I don't play video games because

Spring Music Concert 2017



everyone else plays them. I play them because they make me feel like myself and they make me feel I'm in the zone..." "Ever since I was a newborn, everyone wanted to keep me. Every time my mom took me to a family member house, they will always ask to keep me. I was the cutest thing ever when I was a baby." ... "Now, I have got to mention the candy cane cookies. They were the first thing that I have any recollection of baking and very good at that..." "When I learn a new dance it's kinda hard for me to get at first. Then a few min-

utes later, I got the hang of it faster than a cheetah running..." "Before every class, we start off with doing call and response so we can call back the steps we had learned the week before, back into our minds. Then we do stretches to loosen our muscles before we dance..." "What is that smell? Oh no not again! Did I burn the muffins? Please, please, muffins, don't be burnt! No such luck, I have once again burnt the muffins."

Intriguing? One of my favorite tasks is working with the 7th graders as they begin their Beyond the Class-

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room Portfolios. We ask students to share with their portfolio committees an out-of-school experience or passion that has helped them to grow. An essay and a demonstration/artifact accompany their reflective oral presentations. Who doesn't enjoy sharing a special interest or passion with an appreciative audience?

-Ann Ruggiero, Elsa Batista & Letta Neely

Room 214

I really like the progress we have made this year as readers. In the beginning of the year, most of the students did not identify as readers. However, as the year progressed many of them have changed the way they think of books and their relationship with books. Throughout the day, I overhear conversations about books as students share what they are currently reading and/or make book recommendations to their classmates. They also compare books to TV shows.

One of the best indications of how we've have shifted how we think about books was evident during a conversation I had with Richard. As we were transitioning to the meeting area for our end of the day meeting, Richard asked me, "Reginald, do you want us to finish this book by Monday?" I replied, "yes" and he went back to what he was doing.

Given that we started reading our new books two weeks ago, I expected some grumbling. It is clear that we have shifted to view reading as something we do, not as an insurmountable challenge.

-Reginald Toussaint

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

SCHOOLWIDE NEWS

Mission Get Down!

Please come out for a night of music to support MHS! The evening will feature Billy Buss Trio, the Teachers' Choir, and Louder Than Milk! Light refreshments will be served and drink tickets will be available for purchase. All proceeds go to support the Mission Hill School.

Date: Fri, June 23, 2017

Time: 7:00 PM – 11:00 PM EDT

Location: Spontaneous Celebrations
45 Danforth Street
Boston, MA 02130

Amazon Smile for FOMHS

The Friends of Mission Hill School, the fundraising organization for MHS, became an official recipient of the Amazon Smile program. If you order from Amazon with FOMHS as your home page, the school will receive a small percentage of the proceeds. Simply set your Amazon Home Page to: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-1300745> and order away!



Kindergarten students create spin art in the art room during the Physical Science curriculum.



Images of the first Connect 4 tournament at MHS. Julia Briggs took top place for the children's division and Danny Flannery was first in the adult category. The schoolwide championship will take place on Friday at Friday Share.



Student judges, reading the One School, One Story submissions. Stay tuned next week to read all about the winner!

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