



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

- Tuesday, May 9, 2017
School Picture Day!
- May 15-16
MCAS Math, Grades 3/4
- May 17-19
MCAS Math, Grades 7/8
- Wednesday, May 17, 2017 5-6:30 pm
Spring Music Concert at MHS!
- Monday, May 22, 2017
Grades 1/2 to Farm School
- Tuesday, May 23, 2017
Kindergarten to Farm School

May 5, 2017

Volume 20, Issue 25

Survey, Survey, and one more Survey...

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

I hope you had a wonderful April break!

We are entering the final third part of the school year and it's time to start collecting information from you to inform our goals set earlier this year and the goals to be created for next year.

Every year BPS sends home a School Climate Survey. This has always come home as a paper survey, but this year will be different. It will be sent to all families digitally, via e-mail. It is very important that MHS families complete the survey. The information is helpful to us as we work toward a welcoming school community. Completion of the survey affects the tier level we are assigned by BPS. Low participation rates in the survey translate to a low family engagement report that doesn't reflect what's happening at our school and that report is calculated into our tier. When our school receives a low tier we are not listed as a school option for some families when they enter their address into the BPS enrollment site.

A survey about MHS race relations, welcoming all, and comfort among a diverse group of people will be sent home. As a school community we engaged in two sessions of dialogue regarding race last year. So what next? This survey about race at MHS will help us determine what steps to take next. Your thoughts collected through this survey will inform Family Council and MHS staff. We want to make sure that our next steps meet the needs of our community.

As part of my evaluation, you will be asked to answer questions that are connected to my goals for the year. Your perspective is helpful to me personally, but also impacts the school. I reflect on the results of the annual survey that is connected to my evaluation. Sometimes my reflection lasts a year or two as I work to improve the job I do. The better I do my job, the better the environment your children have for learning.

I hope you enjoyed the week with your children. They are wonderful.



The MHS community enjoyed this week's Family Fun Night. Thank you to all who came out on this beautiful evening to hang out, talk and play. We had record

KINDERGARTEN

Room 108

“Can you make it roll?”

That is a question we were asking this week in 108. Students were experimenting with classroom objects and finding that some objects can be rolled easier than others. A squishy ball, a wooden ball, a crayon, our trucks and trains, and the wooden airplane all rolled very easily. Many objects couldn't roll at all. Some students discovered that there are objects that you can roll if you turn them on their side: the wooden peg people, the drum, and ourselves!

Try some experiments at home with rolling, and sort your objects into categories like we did at school!

Please join us in welcoming Aidan into our classroom! Aidan started this week and we are happy to have him and his family join the Mission Hill School community.

-Geraldyn and Donna

Room 106

Our Physical Science unit of Construction is underway. We have had weeks of challenges. Week 1 - Make a building as tall as you. Week 2 - Make a building as tall as you with 12 blocks. Week 3 - Make a building as tall as you that fits on a 1 foot by 1 foot square.

These three have been approached in a variety of ways.

Ethan: “Kathy, the blocks are not working.”

Kathy: “What do you mean?”

Ethan: “The blocks are not working. They keep falling down.”

Kathy: “Let's see what is happening.”

Ethan and I headed over to his building. He was stacking cylinder blocks on top of each other. After he had



Simeon and Angelina build using a plan.

stacked about five blocks they would fall. He would get frustrated. His eyes would get big. He would slap his hands to his sides. This behavior was not uncommon among the children in the class. We revisited the word challenge and what it meant. We even talked about what we can do when we get frustrated.

Ethan like most of the children did not give up, and was able to meet the challenge. Children watched other children while they built, became inspired, and incorporated those ideas into their own structures. Stability, steady, and balanced have been words that have been shared while children are building.

-Kathy D'Andrea

Room 107

For the next few weeks the Working Presidents will be studying matter. This week we focused on defining both mass and matter because to un-

derstand each individually you must understand them both. As a writing prompt, they were asked to define mass. Their guesses included the following: Flowers. I think it's a scary beast. A Rainbow. I think smashing pumpkins and Massachusetts. It's a planet. It's Massachusetts. It's my brother's birthday party. A sweater. It makes me sad. It's a cage. You wear it when it's Halloween. After sharing all our ideas about mass, it was defined as how much matter is in something. But what is matter? As a group we listed the following ideas: Shoes. Breakfast. Cookies. Boats. When you have a problem people say, “What's the matter?” It's if you are feeling sad or nervous. Reading a story. It's when someone says “Hey. What's going on here?” After defining matter as anything that takes up space and has mass, students realized many of their guesses were correct. Cookies, shoes, food etc. are matter. Within seconds



Ethan with his completed structure.

the class erupted with students naming the different matter surrounding them (and later on the playground). What matter surrounds you?

-Jada Brown & Kenisha Epps

Room 109

We are doing lots of building in our classroom. Students are especially engaged in constructing buildings using recycled materials such as boxes, cardboard tubes, large pieces of board, tape, and glue. As children build they are engrossed in the process of investigation, experimentation, and trial and error. Students engage in the scientific process as they create theories for how to best construct their structures. They then test out their theories when creating their structures. Often a change is needed and they will remember this in their next structure. There is lots of collaboration occurring as students share their experience and newly found expertise with each other.

-Deborah & Stephanie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 205

"This is so awesome!" Jediah shouted as we explored various exhibits at the Discovery Museum in Acton, MA. "I want to stay here!" Arianni commented as she worked at the collage maker's station. Eamon and Soley beamed with pride as they found 2 salamanders under a log outside. Students explored a variety of science topics such as sound, movement, construction, plants and animals. They also got to take a backpack of science supplies and head out to the treehouse and explore even more! It was a wonderful addition to our study of force and movement at school. I'm sure your children had many exciting stories to tell and joyful memories to hold onto.

-Ashleigh L'Heureux

Room 216

Part of our Science of Cooking theme has been learning about chefs who have been recognized for their innovative style of cooking. Recently we watched a video and had a discussion about Gaggan Anand, an Indian chef who wanted to change his country's cuisine by using scientific cooking techniques. Many people criticized him for "changing our food". "He was feeling really excited about his ideas" said Jack Ozro, to which Antonio added "But then he felt sad when people didn't like his food." "Why are so many people mean to chefs?" asked Théo. "Well, sometimes people can have a hard time accepting new ideas." I said. Josie then said, "But if he gets discouraged, he might just stop cooking!" Realizing now that this conver-



Emily from the Boston Nature Center, teaching about worms.

sation had become so universal in nature, I said, “That’s why it’s really important to have confidence in your ideas. People will tell you in your life that you can’t do something, but if you think your idea is good, you have to persevere and keep going.” I hope we are building a group of resilient young students (and chefs), who can persevere through challenges just like Gaggan, chef-owner of the #1 restaurant in Asia.

-Danny & JoAnn

Room 217

I have been focusing on my science instruction this year. I took a few courses in the sciences in college, but never felt fully engaged in the topics. I am naturally curious about nature and love seeing how things work, so I want to give my students an engaging entry into science that turns into lifelong curiosity that extends beyond formal education. Every Tuesday afternoon, our class works with a teacher naturalist from the Boston Nature Center named Emily. She teaches us new games and songs to learn about plants and animals. In the first half of the year, we worked with Andrew from the BNC to learn all about insects. Now with Emily, we are focused on learning the life cycle of plants. Emily brings in seeds, pots, soil, worm bins, books, and many other resources from the BNC. Even though our theme right now is physical science, our students have been working on life science all year to gain observational skills used in scientific inquiry. They are making connections between what we learn and the world around them. Mia said “Worms can slither like snakes. The worms eat dirt and apples and leaves to make new dirt. The worms keep the soil good so the



Grades 3 & 4 at the Farm School.

plants can grow.” We have a grow light and an active worm bin in our classroom for children to observe daily. Last week when we went to the Discovery Museum in Acton, we worked with Emily after and therefore spent the entire day engulfed in different science topics. Everyone can be an engaged scientist when given many opportunities.

-Kate Needham

GRADES 3 & 4

Room 203

Last week we had our annual trip to the Farm School. It is by far the most exciting and anticipated trip of the year. The weather was a perfect metaphor for our trip: full of warmth, sunshine and magnificent!

Here is what J & J’s Geniuses liked the best about our visit:

Shonnie: I got to see the cows and the goats

Simeon: brushing and feeding the cows twice

Gimar: chickens

Milo: cutting the rose bush

Gianna: we got to pet the cows

Kimberly: we got to break down the

pig house

Lee: eating leaves that taste like tarts

Anna: collecting all the chicken eggs

Maya: when we got to pet the cows

Braxton: we got throw hay down

Cyrus: walking in the forest to see plants

Peter: making a wooden box for the matches and lighter

Rui: when I saw the goats

Luis: when we built a box

Jaiden S.: seeing the electric fence

Jaiden F.: brushing the cows

Armani: playing camouflage

Typrese: feeding the goats

Until next year...

-Jenerra Williams

Room 204

Stay tuned next week!

-Cleata Brown

Room 207

Our original day to visit the Farm School was scheduled for March 10th which turned out to be a cold rainy/snowy day and we made the decision to postpone it. Kids were disappointed as we reassured them that being on the farm in such conditions would not be any fun.

Fast forward almost two months to Friday, April 28th. It was a glorious spring day with lots of sun and warm temperatures- a perfect day to be on the farm. Below are some reflections of what was learned during our visit. Today at the farm I learned:

Goats are very curious. -Amos

Eggs can be blue. -Anand

How to use to use a pitch fork. -Cole

When there are old structures you can knock them down and build new ones. -Danny

Chickens can have special eggs that are blue. -Darrius

Fifth graders get to stay over for two nights and milk the cows. -Dillon

You can use horses to remove a bush out of the ground by tying a chain around the bush and letting the horse pull it out- Euan

How to split wood. -Kevauna

Ducks quack when they are scared.

-Jahlimar

You can eat dandelions. -Jasmine

Goats are stinky. -Juel

Goats like to eat Japanese Knotweed.

-Lucas

At the farm there are only girl cows.

-Michelle

Goats eat grass. -Xavier

Chickens can have zebra stripes.

-Zyel

From the above reflections it was evident that our trip was well worth the wait!

-Amina & Amanda

GRADES 5&6

Room 210

Stay tuned next week!

-Nakia & Manny

Room 215

"I am born in Ohio," writes Jacqueline Woodson, author of *Brown Girl Dreaming*, "but/the stories of South

Carolina already run/like rivers/ through my veins." It is a memoir of migration, displacement, remigration - of dreams deferred and achieved. The grand story of the Great Migration when 6 million African-Americans left the South between 1910 and 1970 replays within Jacqueline's family. Her father finds Ohio, with all of its racial barriers, much more bearable than the South; her mother misses her simpler country-life of South Carolina, and she makes the fateful decision to take her three children back. Jacqueline's life is changed forever.

The DragonFlies have begun reading/discussing/annotating this beautiful memoir in the form of a long poem. What is the writer trying to say?

Who is the writer's audience? How does the writer use language? Join our conversation by picking up your own copy and discussing your answers to these questions with your DragonFly.

-Abdi, Kat, Carlos and the Fireflies

GRADES 7&8

Room 213

When we returned from vacation, we extended the work we had done on Greek philosophers by identifying and communicating a significant aspect of what makes us who we are. After reading several examples of This I Believe essays, we wrote about experiences we had that led us to a strong belief or value. Students remembered the life of a grandmother or favorite cousin, an action they took when confronted with something they knew to be wrong, and the disappointment they felt when life didn't go their way.

The next step was to select a favorite experience and clearly identify the

belief or lesson learned. Then students connected this belief to other experiences in their lives. The intent here was to show that the belief is deeply felt and affects the decisions they make in life. Finally, they took a perspective outside of themselves and wrote about why the belief matters to others and the world.

Our class set of *This I Believe* essays is nearing completion. The powerful words of our young writers make quite a statement. Our students are thoughtful, courageous, compassionate, and not afraid to recognize how hard lessons often lead to growth.

We will take a public stand with what we believe. The essays will be bound in a class book and each student will be recorded delivering their personal statement.

-Ann Ruggiero, Elsa Batista & Letta Neely

Room 214

Things are going well in room 214. At some point last week, things seemed to fall into place. We have been really productive and engaged with the work that we are doing. We finished the booklets we made from our ancient Greece study. We started a new round of book groups and many students are reading ahead of their reading goals. I have had to ask more students than usual to put down their books when it is time transition to another activity. Similarly, many students completed the first draft of their new writing assignments ahead of the deadline.

It's hard to pinpoint exactly when the shift happened but what was the catalyst. However, it could not happen at a better time, portfolio presentations are on the horizon. I am encouraged and hopeful that this

CLASSROOM NEWS

renewed focus will continue through the rest of the school year.

-Reginald Toussaint

SCHOOLWIDE NEWS

Spring Music Concert

Come see vocal performances from Mission Hill School students, grades K-8. Instrumental Performances from the Wind Ensemble, Strings Program, and Guitar Groups.

Date: Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Time: 5 - 6:30 pm

Location: MHS Auditorium

****Students should wear Black, White or Silver****

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

Location: Spontaneous Celebrations
45 Danforth Street
Boston, MA 02130

Amazon Smile for FOMHS

Recently the Friends of the Mission Hill School (a non-profit supporting 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 this page as your Amazon Home Page: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/27-1300745> and order away!

Mindfulness at MHS



Kids have agreed that it is sometimes hard to pay close attention to each breath when sitting in meditation. This week, each class made breathing beads to help them breathe slowly and fully as they slid each bead from one end of a pipe cleaner to the other. Many children reported feeling more peaceful and calm after using the breathing beads.

Art and Physical Science



Jahzara and Neveah experiment with marble runs as in introduction to Physical Science in the Art Room.

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

Mission Hill K-8 School
A Boston Public Pilot School
WWW.MISSIONHILLSCHOOL.ORG

20 Child Street
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
T 617-635-6384
F 617-635-6419

Mission Hill School Annual Spring Concert 2017



FEATURING:

Vocal performances from your very own Mission Hill School students, grades K-8.

Instrumental Performances from the Wind Ensemble, Strings Program, and Guitar Groups.

COME SEE YOUR KIDDOs SHINE!!

Wednesday, May 17th

5 - 6:30 PM

in the
MHS Auditorium

**Students should wear Black, White or Silver

Mission.Hill.School

Concierto Anual de Primavera 2017



OFRECE:

Interpretaciones vocales de sus propios estudiantes de la Escuela Mission Hill, los grados K-8.

Actuaciones instrumentales del Conjunto de Viento, Programa de Cuerdas, Guitarra y Grupos.

Miércoles, el 17 de Mayo

a las 5-6.30 PM

en el
Teatro de MHS

Venga a ver sus hijos brillar!!

**Por Favor, Los niños deben usar ropa blanca, negra o plateada