



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

October 1 - October 12
Listening Conferences

Friday, October 5, 9:45-10:15am
Friday Share (open to all)

Thursday, October 11, 5:00-7:00pm
Governance Board Meeting #1

September 28, 2018

Volume 22, Issue 03

1,2,3,4,5 Mission Hill Brings Math Alive

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

At one of our board members meetings last year a parent explained that she knew where her kids were with reading but didn't know where her kids were with math. She was right that we, as a school, were not communicating about student math development as much as reading or other subject areas. Information about our student's success in their math work along with the need to communicate more led to a planned focus on math learning this year.

MHS Instructional Focus 2018-2019 : Consistent math performance data, feedback to students, and math instructional practices will be used to prompt and support student initiated thinking when engaging with math work.

This year students, staff, and families will receive more information about the progress our students are making in their mathematical development. Work samples, math assessment results, and student demonstrations of math understanding will be part of this year's school wide focus.

Teachers will introduce math problems, puzzles or tasks that are accessible to students. All students are invited to try the new weekly Mission Hill math problems. These will be displayed on the bulletin board on the second floor at the top of stairwell B each week. Here was last week's problem:

MISSION HILL SCHOOL MATH CHALLENGE (week of 9/10/18)

Ryan makes 6 backpacks. He uses $\frac{3}{4}$ yard of cloth to make each backpack. What is the total amount of cloth, in yards, Ryan uses to make all 6 backpacks?

Teachers will encourage student initiative and perseverance when solving math problems and puzzles. Here are some things we will do at school that you can also do at home when your child is working on a math problem.

- Seek to understand what the student is thinking
- Build on student responses to advance understanding
- Show genuine interest in the child's thinking
- Confirm the answer but shift the focus to why it's right
- Affirm their reasoning

This year students will spend more time working on math development in general. Starting in mid October each age band (grade level) will spend approximately 45 minutes more engaging with mathematical work than last year.

Wishing you all a wonderful year of math learning and fun!

Ayla Gavins

KINDERGARTEN

Room 106

Kathy, Liana & June

Our monarch butterfly larvae are eating and growing so much this week! We have been doing daily observations of their growth and habits. On Wednesday, we had just finished morning meeting when Mira suddenly shouted, "There's a bug on that baby doll!" We all turned to look at the doll that was sitting in our circle. We were stunned to see that there was a larva crawling on it! The doll was about **8 feet** away from the other larvae, which are enclosed in a net with milkweed.

There were so many ideas about how it got there, from a dramatic break-out plan to a stranger coming in our classroom and moving it there. We also discussed our ideas of why it would have left all the other larvae and the food source. Perhaps a field trip? A conflict with the other larvae? We will never know but we are keeping an even closer eye on them from now on!

-Liana

Room 107

Jada & Manny

Per tradition and in standing with The First Six Weeks curriculum, this week we asked students to draw about and share what they hoped for

themselves for this school year. Here is what they had to say:

Joy: I want to be the fastest runner in the world!

Ebi: I wish I could be the fastest person in the entire world on my scooter!

Alessandra: I wish for a toy girl that is a princess.

Josue: I wish that I could get a new scooter and that my sister plays fairy with me.

Jonathan R.: I wish I had a glider that flies up and shoots out of the cage, into the sky and catches a sparrow. It would grab the cage, bring it home and I could have a pet sparrow.

Rowan: I wish we had a boat for surprises for us. I'd be so happy forever and ever and ever and ever and ever and ever and ever!

Will: I wish to have a fruit bow.

Eddy: I wish to bring snack for the class.

Jonathan V.: I hope to eat fish because it tastes good. I want to see fish swimming!

Bilal: I hope to fight the bad guy and have a lot of powers.

G'io: I hope to get the jetpack with a parachute. I love a kite. I want to hold on to it.

Areli: I hope I will get my puppy toys.

-Jada

Room 108

Geralyn & Donna

Our K0 community has been talking about what does 'kind' mean, how can we 'be kind' and what are 'kind words'. We created a list of words and ways to be kind to each other and our visitors: we can say, "hello", "please", "thank you", "do you need help?", "we can do it together". We also discussed how we can be kind to books: If we see a book on the floor we can pick it up and put it on the shelf. We gently turn the pages. If a page is ripped, we get a grown to help fix it. We share the books. Books are for reading, not for putting in our mouths. Books are for looking at, not for hitting.

When we observe each other using kind words, being kind in action and taking care of our books, we emphasis those kind behaviors. Ask your young one(s), "How are you kind at school?"

-Donna

Room 109

Katie & Mary

Our caterpillars are hungry! The kids have some ideas about the caterpillars' eating.

"I've seen that they've been busy eating leaves... because there's a lot of holes in the leaves."

"I'm seeing that they are growing so big because they're always busy eating those leafs."

"[I know they've been eating] because they are on the leaf and because they're climbing up."

"You see this caterpillar? That caterpillar is chewing. It's kind of like... I wish I had a magnifying glass."

"I see that they're very still... It looks like they're sleeping, but I actually think they're dead."

"They're definitely not dead."

What are the caterpillars doing on those leaves? Are they eating? Crawling? Dead? As I reflect, I recognize this as a discussion of **evidence** - MHS's Habit of Mind asking how do we know what's true and false. In our community, children are learning to discuss with each other and express their thinking. These critical processes are the foundation for an exciting year of inquiry and challenge!

-Katie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 205

Ashleigh & Alana

Although things may seem slow and sometimes self-explanatory



One of the caterpillars from the room 109 community!

at the beginning of the year, we always take time to discuss routines and expectations. One of the things we focus on in first and second grade is independence and stamina. Students are encouraged to try things on their own before asking a teacher for help. We learn strategies and want students to practice using those strategies, learning different ways they can have some productive struggle with a task. This also connects to the Mission Hill Habit of Work: Perseverance. Every year we read *Gumption!* by Elise Broach. The students love this fun book and it inspires them to stick with something even when it feels hard or even when they just don't feel like doing something. We have especially been working on independence and having gumption during our read to self time. This is a time when students read just right books and teachers have reading

conferences with students. After talking about what read to self time looks and sounds like, we started with everyone trying 3 minutes of reading. Each day we added a few more minutes of practice and kept track of our progress with a bar graph near our morning meeting. Our class was very motivated to continue increasing the time. "Let's try 10 minutes tomorrow!" "I think we can do 12 minutes!" We have finally reached our goal of everyone reading just right books for 20 minutes!

-Ashleigh

Room 216

Danny & Felicia

What is Room 216 studying for our fall chemistry theme? BUBBLES! Everyone was so surprised and excited when the topic was introduced, and we quickly began showing how much we know about bubbles! Yarian showed everyone how he could make bubbles with his wand by spinning in a circle, and Simeon and Isaac did their best to keep bubbles from being popped by the fence. Anish and Yaniel laughed when they made a bubble stuck to the inside of their bubble wand, and Lola loved it when a bubble landed on her arm. Our questions about bubbles showed the many amazing places our theme will go as we explore the chemistry behind bubbles. Violet asked "Do bubbles have to be round?" Janee

wondered “How do you make bubbles smell like fruit?” Greta asked “If you sprinkle sand on a bubble, will it pop?” Misael asked “How do bubbles fly so high without popping?” We are very excited to explore these questions together as we become bubble experts in Room 216!

-Danny

Room 217

Kate & Kat

Sometimes you need to take a break! You might be upset that your mom is going out of town and you won't see her for a few days. You might feel sad that someone didn't want to play with you at recess. You might feel frustrated that the math work feels too hard. Maybe you didn't sleep well last night and just need some peace and quiet to feel ready for school. Room 217 has a new peace space this year. It is a cozy, enclosed nook that has cushions, blankets and pillows. When you go in you can drape a sheer curtain across the entrance. There is a clipboard with paper and a box of crayons. There are a few favorite books like *Amazing Grace* and *Strega Nona*. There is a teddy bear. We have been practicing taking some space and taking care of our needs and our feelings. Many students are already able to self monitor and realize when they might need a little time in the



Lola enjoying bubbles during science!



Vania spending time in the peace corner in room 217!

The peace corner in room 203

peace space. It is a welcome addition to our classroom.

-Kate

GRADES 3 & 4

Room 203

Jenerra & Mayra

This year the staff agreed that every room should have a peace corner - a place where children can go when they need time alone for whatever reason. We also agreed to use a program called the Zones of Regulation to help children identify what emotions they may be feeling, what their body is feeling/doing in that moment and how to regulate it. Last Friday was the International Day of Peace. In the days leading up to it, we read books and talked about what peace is, what makes us feel peaceful and how we can have and share peace at school. All this work led up to the grand opening of our peace corner on Friday! A carpet, pillows, a small lamp for reading, a mirror for seeing your emotions, plants as a sensory tool for calming down and more were revealed. We are all excited about our new space! Stop by to see it for yourself and maybe even find a quiet moment of peace.

-Jenerra

Room 207

Amanda & Amina

Many think lunch and recess is a time for play and eating and not much more. However, there is much learning taking place during these important times of

the day. During recess children develop friendships both old and new. Students make connections and learn about others. During an exciting game of tag, children negotiate rules, learn how to play fair, etc.

During lunch children are learning how to navigate conversations- how to make connections and voice their thoughts and how to wait their turn to enter a conversation. Some may be working on how to balance chatting with friends while getting food into their bellies. Others are learning about themselves and their eating habits. A super picky eater may learn to try a new food and discover they now enjoy a food they thought they didn't like. Learning happens all the time and some of our most important lessons may not take place in the classroom.

-Amina

Room 212 Cleata & Ayan

Our Science Unit is off to a great start! The Panthers discussed who they are as scientists and as well as who is a scientist. Students were asked "What word comes to mind when you hear the word science?" "What is the meaning of science?" Here are some of the responses. A scientist is: "A person who use chemicals", "Someone who studies about world life and the

earth", "Someone who does experiments", "Someone who is smart at everything".

Some words that came to students' mind when they hear the word "science" are, genius "me/you", Science, intelligent, questions, hypothesis, biologist. What is the meaning of science? Our words of the week were science/scientist. We discussed what we think science means and what is the part of speech. Students recorded the meaning of science according to the dictionary and their own understanding of the word in their Word of the Week Journal. They then created an illustration along with sentence after which they designed self portraits of themselves as a scientist. Please come by room 212 to see our self portraits as scientists.

-Ayan & Cleata

GRADES 5 & 6

Room 210 Nakia & Kendall

Generating classroom names is always an interesting process. It begins free and fun, kids coming up with the most ridiculous ideas they possibly can. As they began to think about their identity as a group, and what name they want to represent them, the tone changes a bit. They still offer up funny and unique options, however they are more intentional with them the second time around. You

hear this through casual conversation about the names as well as in their persuasive paragraphs, both for and against the names they wanted. Students are reminded of earlier discussions about the importance of names, and them sharing where their names are from.

After several pieces of writing and eliminations here is what we are left with: Future US, We Don't All Like Blue, Evolve, ZEN, NKV Nerds, Team Tween, Two-Ten Tweeners, Always Forward, Forward Always, Cool Nation, School Bus, The Dream Team, Sagacious Scholars, Movement, Tween Team, The Dino 25, 210 Football

-Nakia

Room 215 Abdi & Courtney M.

We have our class name; we are Major Skillz! Our process involved brainstorming names. We came up with 25 names. We narrowed the list by voting to ten names - students could vote for all their favorites. We voted again to narrow the list some more. On Friday, we came down to the final 2 names: Tofu Ninjas and Major Skillz. 16-5 was the vote in favor of Major Skillz. The exercise of coming up with a class name is intentionally tied with academic skills and learning: brainstorming, writing persuasively to convince classmates, making speeches.

And voting. And accepting the outcomes of a vote is a relational process. In the coming weeks and months, we will learn what our name means to us - and how our class identity will coalesce around our new name.

- *Major Skillz (with a "z") and their teachers, Room 215*

GRADES 7 & 8

Room 213

Jenna & Natel

During our morning meeting we have been reading and analyzing "quotes of the day", with the goal of improving our critical thinking skills, practicing sharing and listening in a large group and (hopefully) learning some words of wisdom. At first, students were hesitant to share but seem to be getting more comfortable as our classroom community grows stronger. One day this week, we discussed the quote:

"You can't unscramble eggs"-
John Pierpont Morgan

Debate ensued! Students argued that some actions cannot be undone while others stated that despite the fact that they've been through challenges in their life, they have managed to put themselves back together. It was very interesting to hear different students' perspectives and to see students become passionate about sharing their opinions. It reminds me that, no matter the role we may have in the classroom, we all have a lot to learn from each other.

-Jenna

Room 214

Reginald & Frances

There was a collective gasp from the room. A few of the students, like Julius and Mekhi almost jumped out of their seats. One student blurted out, "That's the kid snatcher." While another one exclaimed, "I would have run out of the room."

They were responding to an important part of in, *The Golden*

Compass, our whole class book. As usual, we are starting the year by reading a book together, as a class. I've added a new wrinkle this year, instead of reading the book out loud we are listening to an audiobook. The class has responded very positively to the audiobook. It could be because each character is read/acted out by a different voice actor. Another reason could be the narrator, Philip Pullman, is the author and he really brings the book to life. However, I'm guessing it's because it's a good book, it's well written, moderately paced and it has great characters.

Reading a book together is a great experience. A shared experience. We get to see and sense how we all respond to certain parts of the book, in the moment. Most importantly, we get to ask each other questions and make meaning together.

-Reginald

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 617-365-6384
F 617-635-6419

Where's My Bus?



Did you know that you can track your child(ren)s school bus?

Go to:

<https://schoolbus.bostonpublicschools.org/>

You will need the following information:

parent/guardian's last name

student ID#

student birthday

For other questions, comments or concerns regarding your child(ren)'s school bus, please contact the Boston Public Schools Transportation Department: 617.635.9520

