



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

Monday, December 10 - Friday, December 14

Book Fair

Wednesday, December 12, 5:45pm - 7:30pm

Family Council Meeting

Thursday, December 13, 5:00pm - 7:30pm

Governance Board Meeting

Friday, December 14

Pajama Day! / Reading Morning

December 07, 2018

Volume 22, Issue 12

Japan

Dear Friends, Families, Students, and Staff,

In November I had the opportunity to spend a week in Japan. I was invited by a researcher, Professor Minoru Sawada, who has been studying Mission Hill School for the past eight years. I visited four elementary schools and returned home with a refreshed view on things, an outcome of travel in general. Here are a few thoughts for now.

1: A good art teacher highly impacts the school environment, making it a place of beauty, inspiration and thought provoking material.

I saw the power of a wonderful art teacher at the Dai-ichi Elementary School in Tokyo. By viewing an art exhibition there, I was inspired by her effect on an otherwise traditional school with a conformist approach to student learning. We are so fortunate for the culture of art that Jeanne Rachko has built at Mission Hill over the years in collaboration with other teachers. Meg Walker will carry this on and influence our artistic culture in her own way in the future. Their impact should not be taken for granted.

2: Inclusion is a global issue.

At the University of Tokyo the topic of my lecture was inclusion. This is a new idea in Japan with growing momentum due to the demand of families and concern about responses to increased diversity in the population. Parents of students with disabilities are beginning to become more vocal about the rights of their children. The passion and desire to make changes was inspiring. Questions were raised about immigration and how to adapt to change (language, culture, ethnicity, etc). We are grappling with the same questions in our US schools. It's helpful to have a broader network of thought partners to think about how to best include everyone in the most respectful ways.



3: Our MHS Habits of Work are tried and true

I visited a progressive school in Kyoto where students researched traditional Japanese slippers, consulted an expert that made them, made a plan to make them, made the slippers, reflected on the experience, and critiqued the project as a whole. These are the MHS Habits of Work (forethought, perseverance, production and reflection) in practice. This school has been in existence for over 100 years. Seeing what our Habits of Work could look like in the future for our students confirmed that we are headed in the right direction today.



This trip reminded me of the ways that the world is both big and small. I'm grateful for the connection and joint work in such a far away place steeped in tradition so different than ours here. I'm also grateful to find the similarities in the work we do as educators near and far. I look forward to our continued work together.

Ayla Gavins

KINDERGARTEN

Room 106

Kathy, Liana & June

I asked the children, "What do you think the word ancient means." Children gave a variety of answers. Melina said, "I think it means reading a book." Emerson said, "I think it means music." Jo Jo shared, "Village." and Wyatt said, "I think it means something is old."

"How will we find out what it means?" I prompted. A list of confirmations followed. Look it up in a book, on a computer, use an ipad, ask Siri, ask people we know.

The children each joined a group to investigate. Selma and Mira asked children and grown ups in the KQuad.

Donna shared, "A long time ago." Geralyn added, "Incredibly old." Wyatt looked it up in a book. In the book we read, "Very old." Jayden looked it up on the computer. We discovered, "Belonging to the very distant past and no longer in existence."

Stay tuned for our conversation about Egypt and Nubia.

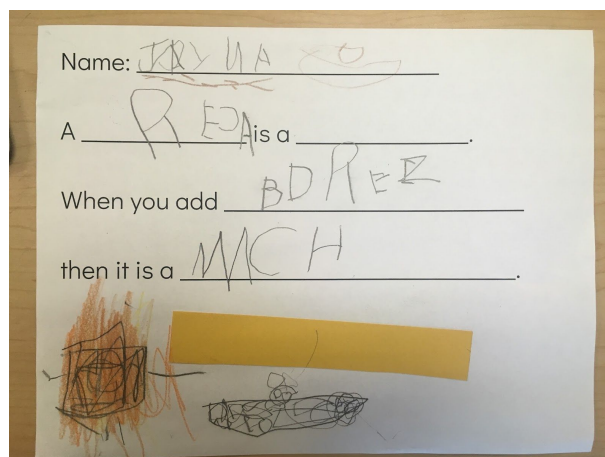
-Kathy

Room 107

Jada & Manny

Continuing this conversation about matter changing its states,

we took a closer look at water. In books like Freezing and Melting, we got to see how water can be a solid (ice), a liquid (water) and a gas (water vapor/steam). The only state we had not observed in class was gas which we remedied by using an electric skillet. We then spoke about how water changes state without our help every day in what is called the water cycle. Water from the oceans and lakes and even the puddles on our playground turn to a gas (water vapor) with a little help from the sun in a process called evaporation. We then spoke about condensation where recently evaporated water goes up to the clouds, cools down and changes into a liquid. We learned that when the drops get big enough, they leave the clouds in the form of rain (liquid) or sleet/snow/hail (solids) in what is termed precipitation. After learning a song about the water cycle, with the help of Esther (a new Mass Art student) our students



Jayna's (from 109) book page.

created a water cycle poster that represented what we now know about the water cycle.

-Jada

Room 108

Geralyn & Donna

My name is Sarah Arnold. I'm a doctoral student at Boston University and a longtime early childhood educator. This year I am volunteering in Geralyn and Donna's classroom once a week. The children and I have made applesauce several times. I bring three types of apples. I cut slices with my sharp knife, and they use dull knives to cut them into smaller pieces. The children are learning how to grip the knife in their dominant hand and use the other hand to press the blade down to chop. This develops coordination and fine motor skills. While we chop, we nibble some of apple pieces and talk. The children have noticed how different the three kinds of apples taste. We add the chopped apples to a crock pot with a small amount of water and leave it to simmer. When the apples are all cooked, the children use a food mill to grind them into sauce. The children have examined the parts of the mill, so they can see how their turning the handle moves the blade which squishes the apples through the small holes. Then it is time to eat!

-Sarah Arnold
(BU student)

Room 109

Katie & Mary

We started learning about shapes in our math curriculum. Children's first task was to notice shapes in their classroom. "A table is a rectangle." "The rug is a circle." "The cubbies are rectangles." "There's a triangle in the easel." Next, they took paper shape cut-outs and added drawings and designs to make a page for our class shape book.

Some of their shape descriptions were:

- Gio: An oval is an oval. When you add ears, then it is a face.
- Miles: A hexagon is a hexagon. When you add triangles, then it is a sun.
- Allie: A heart is heart. When you add three corners, then it is a three corner heart.
- Didi: A circle is a circle. When you add wings, then it is a flower.
- Max: A trapezoid is a trapezoid. When you add handles, then it is a laundry basket.
- Jayna: A rectangle is a rectangle. When you add batteries, then it is a machine.

We are excited to keep looking for shapes in our environment and to talk about what makes a shape a shape!

Correction: last week's newsletter insert for room 109 was authored by

Mary, not Katie. Thank you Mary for writing our newsletter!

-Katie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 205

Ashleigh & Alana

At the end of every month we reflect on the learning experiences we had together as a class. We look at pictures and do a collaborative writing project where each kid writes a few words or sentences about our learning. We hang the pictures and writing from each month on a board in our classroom. We are making a timeline of learning memories. Here are our memories from November. The students wrote:

We started writing about countries. Everybody choosed a country and learned about it. Some people knew about the countries and some people didn't. It felt interesting.

Chelsea came - an artist from MASS Art. She was really great! We got to make land art with her

at the Arboretum. When Chelsea came we learned how to do a lot of things like how to make good paintings.

Ms. Gulnoor came. She was a really good helper teacher. When Ms. Gulnoor came she helped us do stuff outside. We got to bring sleeping bags to Think Outside Thursday when it was freezing.

You can stop by our room to see memories from September and October too!

-Ashleigh

Room 216

Danny & Felicia

"At teacher-powered schools, the teachers are not waiting to be asked what should be done. They're picking up the reins and making the changes needed for student-centered learning." From Friday through Sunday I attended the Teacher-Powered Schools conference in Boston. As a new teacher ambassador for the TPS initiative, I wasn't quite sure what the weekend would bring, but I quickly found myself energized by the collective spirit of the educators at the conference. To be in company with teachers from across the country who have fought to have just a bit of autonomy within their schools was a humbling experience, because I have been fortunate to work at a



Photo from the 2018 Teacher Powered Schools Conference!

teacher-led school for my entire teaching career. There are so many teachers out there who know what can help their students succeed but have to go against their better instincts because of directives from people far removed from the classroom. We cannot forget at Mission Hill that every freedom we have was hard to obtain, and they are much easier to lose. So many educators look to Mission Hill as an example of the success schools can have when teachers are trusted with their students' learning, so we must work every day to uphold that image and lead the transformation of our nation's schools.

-Danny

Room 217

Kate & Kat

No news. Check back next week!

GRADES 3 & 4

Room 203

Jenerra & Mayra

This weekend I had the pleasure of attending the Teacher Powered Schools Conference here in Boston. It was held at the Hyatt Regency hotel in downtown and was organized and put on by both Education Evolving and The Center for Teaching Quality. A large group of Mission Hill staff attended the conference on both Saturday and Sunday and a

number of us ran workshops as well.

I always enjoy this conference because most of the participants there are teaching, running, and/or supporting teacher-led schools. Because of this, every conversation, workshop and presentation is more meaningful and applicable to my daily work. It is always well worth the time to be there!

The last time I attended the conference was 2 years ago in Los Angeles, California where Ayla and I not only attended but to our surprise received the Extraordinary School Award on behalf of Mission Hill. This year, I got to present the same award to The Wildlands School in Wisconsin! The conference will be held again in 2020 in Minneapolis, MN. I am already looking forward to attending!

-Jenerra



Students from room 212 during the Chemistry Curriculum Breakfast

Room 207

Amanda & Amina

"Miss Amanda, when are we going to pick a class name?" This question was asked frequently throughout the Fall. I believe a class has to grow together as a community before we are able to choose a name that would match who we are. Last week, I felt like we could handle it. The students and teachers in our class have grown together as a community, we have cultivated strong friendships and have lived by our classroom agreements. In the first step discovering our class name, students thought about names that would represent who we are. They suggested, "The Investigators," "The Kind Kids," "Persevering People," "Lively Learners" and many more. All of the names had a strong connection to who we are and could represent us well as a community. It was difficult voting processes to bring 13

names down to the 1. Our new class name is the Lively Learning Squad! This name represents us well! We are a community who is passionate about learning and becomes energized by learning new things

-Amanda

Room 212

Cleata & Ayan

This fall has been one of new discoveries during the exploration of our chemistry

theme. The Panthers have been discovering who they are as scientists. In a reflection on who is a scientist, Madison shared that as a scientist, you do experiments, ask questions and make observations. Nathaniel agreed that as a scientist you ask questions but you also try to solve problems. At our recent chemistry curriculum breakfast it was evident that the Panthers are scientists in their own right; they were able to independently present some of the science discoveries they made throughout our chemistry research and projects. Students were able to share with friends and families how to make a lava lamp using oil, water, food coloring and bicarbonate tablets. Another group presented how to make molecules of compounds like salt, water, ammonia and sugar. A third group explained and demonstrated how to make butter in a mason jar. Overall the Panthers are excited and proud of themselves as scientists!

-Cleata

GRADES 5 & 6

Room 210

Nakia & Kendall

I was recently having a conversation with colleague about students assessing themselves as writers. It happened to be during report card madness so I figured I'd give the kids a shot at grading

themselves. I handed out blank report cards and told them that they needed to justify their comments and/or numbers with evidence.

Literacy:

"I am very excited about Wonder, my personal narrative and finishing my farm school story. I like how my writing has come along and I feel pretty good about myself.."

"That'll be a "Four"

"The persuasive essays weren't the easiest, but I did my best. I've really liked the free writing because I got a really good idea for it. I'm sort of annoyed because we haven't started wonder yet, but we're probably going to start it soon."

"Literacy was good because i like when we was reading when the women bragged the boy in her House .I put a 3 because i listen more."

Math:

"In six grade math we are working Gcf (greatest common factor) and Lcm (lowest common factor) and multiplication and time tables. I'm doing pretty good and am learning how to do everything and am getting better."

"Math is good because i get to learn more . I gave myself a 2 because i get detracted."

"That'll be a "Three""

Theme:

"Not so good"

"I thought the chem stuff was great, I thought that our project turned out pretty good and I'm thinking of proposing to my other group members about doing the science fair."

"My project with Edgar and Maurice was magnetic slime and we worked hard on it and the reaction was so cool."

Community Member/Habits of Work/Habits of Mind:

"I think that I have bonded with a lot of the 5th graders through football and me being the quarterback, and I have stuck to my friends from last year."

"for habits of mind we are doing journaling and it's sooo fun."

"I feel as if I deserve a 3. I don't necessarily feel as if I have done anything extraordinary to get a 4 but nothing that would throw me under the bus either."

"Something that's going well in Community is sitting to different places to sit at lunch, and to talk to other people. And that thing when that sixth graders eat with the other sixth graders."

"Look at all those 3's."

-Nakia

Room 215

Abdi & Courtney M.

This week our students will participate in our first MHS Chemistry Science Fair. I am reflecting on the learning our students are doing and my own learning too. One question I have is: why is my class struggling to articulate the underlying concepts in chemistry in the experiments we have done? Our students were eager to combine substances to produce sensational reactions: the lava lamp with Alka Seltzer tablets; or elephant toothpaste created by combining yeast and hydrogen peroxide; or Coke and Mentos creating a soda geyser; or the volcano that erupts by pouring vinegar on baking soda; or the electricity that is produced when potato (yes, the vegetable), copper and zinc electrodes come into contact. Students chose these experiments after researching them. They were thrilled to work with their peers. We were safe. We took care of each other and the materials. We were resilient when the experiments “failed.” Chemistry theme truly enlivened our classroom, affiliating students to Room 215 giving them something to look forward to on a weekly basis. The thrills are integral to learning, and so are

the ideas underlying them. It is the ideas that expand to other ideas. I will make time in the next weeks for each group to talk about the ideas expressed through their experiments.

-Abdi

GRADES 7 & 8

Room 213

Jenna & Natel

High school selection season is upon us! This week we took 7th and 8th graders on their first high school visit, to Brighton High School. It was quite a trek to get out there (an hour and a half on the bus) but when we arrived students were very excited to see the school. We met with guidance counselors and students who represented different facets of the school. The high school students took us on tours and our students got to ask many questions, ranging from “what is your math curriculum?” and “how many students get college scholarships?” to “how is the food” and “can girls play football?” Upon arriving back at school, students reflected on the visit and shared an excitement about upcoming trips. We will visit three more schools before the break, New Mission, Boston

Community Leadership Academy and Another Course to College.

-Jenna

Room 214

Reginald & Frances

“We wager 2600.” Yelled a member of the F.B.I Watchers.

I asked “Are you sure it’s a good move to wager all your points?”

Amishai replied, “Yes, Reginald. We want first place or bust!”

We were playing Jeopardy as a way to review reading materials before the next writing assignment on major religions of the world. Playing these kinds of games are often tricky. They are fun but sometimes people get caught up in the game and the whole point gets lost. Worst, people get very competitive and yell insults or worse at others. This time none of these things happened. There were a few questions that students knew and got right away but there were many that required a quick review of the text. Most importantly, at the end of the game, most people had smiles on their faces.

-Reginald

Ayla Gavins, Principal Deborah Meier, Founder Laura Perille, Interim 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
--	---	--

Family Council Meeting



Wednesday, December 12th

5:45 - 7:30 p.m.

Mission Hill School Library

Babysitting and dinner will be provided.

Please RSVP to

familycouncil@missionhillschool.org

by December 10th



Concejo de Familias



Miércoles, 12 de Diciembre:

5:45 – 7:30 p.m.

Biblioteca del Mission Hill School

Tendremos baby-sitting y comida.
Por favor, avísanos si vas a venir antes
del 10 de Diciembre
familycouncil@missionhillschool.org



It's Dinner and a Board Meeting!

Upcoming Meeting Dates: 1/3/19 2/28/19 3/21/19 5/30/19

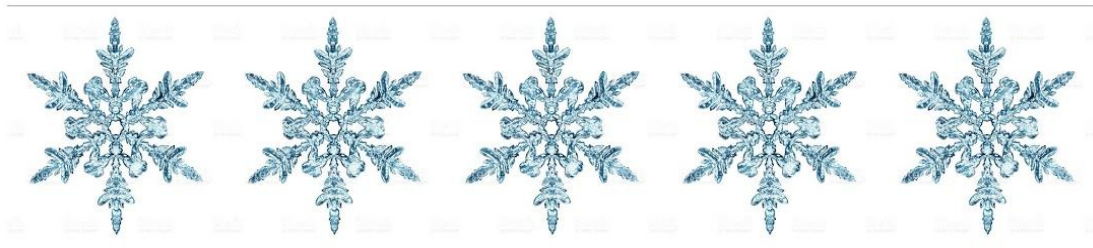


Hello Mission Hill families!

You are and have always been welcome to attend our Board Meetings. Please consider this your official invitation to come out and meet our board members, hear a little about important conversations in education, learn about ways to support our school and hopefully consider being a member in the near future. We consider your presence valuable so both dinner and childcare will be provided.

Please **RSVP for childcare at 617-635-6384.**

We hope to see you there!



When: December 13, 2018
Where: Art Room (2nd Floor)
Time: 5:00-7:30 p.m.

¡Es comida y una reunión de la junta directiva de consejo de la administracion!

Fechas de la reunión próximas : 1/3/19 2/28/19 3/21/19 5/30/19



¡Hola familias de Mission Hill!

Ustedes siempre son bienvenidos a asistir a nuestras reuniones de la junta directiva. Por favor tengan en mente que esta es su invitación oficial para que conozca a nuestros miembros del consejo, escuchar conversaciones importantes de la educación, aprenda sobre modos de apoyar nuestra escuela y considere ser un miembro del consejo en el futuro. Consideramos su presencia valiosa, por lo tanto, se proporcionarán comida y cuidado de niño. Por favor RSVP para el cuidado de niño al 617-635-6384.

¡Esperamos verle allí!



Cuando: ueves, 13 de diciembre de 2018

Dónde: Cuarto de arte (2do piso)

Hora: 5:00p.m.- 7:30 p. m.



It's Family Reading Morning ...and Pajama Day!

Come join us and begin your day reading...in your pajamas! Whether you bring your favorite book or snuggle up with one from our collections, we look forward to sharing this special time with you! If your child attends the before school program, reading will begin at 8:00 a.m. in the cafeteria. If your child arrives at 9:15, reading will happen in classrooms. Please consider joining us for this event as well as our weekly Friday Share beginning at 9:40 a.m. in the auditorium.

When: December 14, 2018

Where: Cafeteria and Classrooms

Time: 8:00-9:30 (12:30)



Can you think of a better way to start your day?



¡Es la Mañana de Lectura Familia ...y Día de Pijamas!

¡ Acompañarnos y comienzan su día leyendo en sus pijamas! ¡Si trae su libro favorito o se arrime con uno de nuestras colecciones, Queremos compartir este tiempo especial con usted! Si su hijo(a) asiste el programa antes de la escuela, la lectura comenzará a las 8:00 am en la cafetería. Si su hijo llega a las 9:15, la lectura será dirigida en los salones. Por favor, considere acompañándonos para este evento, y también nuestro Compartiendo Viernes semanales comenzando a las 9:40 am en el auditorio.

Cuando: El 14 de diciembre del 2018

Donde: Cafetería y Salones

Tiempo: 8:00-9:30 (12:30)



Pensarías en una mejor manera de comenzar su día?