



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

Monday, March 25 - Friday, March 29
One Week, One Story

Thursday, March 28, 5:00pm - 7:00pm
Governance Board Meeting

Friday, March 29
Boston Symphony Orchestra Field Trip

March 22, 2019

Volume 22, Issue 22

Release and Transition Count Down

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

The 100th day of school is a day of celebration and having fun with the number 100. Liana's classroom events included a choice of counting treats such as 100 pretzel sticks, making a chain with 100 links, and coloring in pages with the number 100 on them. Festive beads hung from the door jam. It was clear that this was a celebration and joyous day.

I entered our 100th day of school with joy and sadness. As usual I looked forward to seeing what teachers planned for students and how engaged students would be with activities related to the number 100. I also saw our 100th day as a turning point. I would have only 80 days left as principal of MHS. I had to start thinking about how I would end my role in our school, a place that I love.

I got some good advice from friends and colleagues and some feedback from our Governance Board that informed my plan. Here's what the transition will look like if things go as expected. From April to June, I will coordinate with each classroom team to do something with each class. This might be singing a few songs, an art project, reading a story or being part of a class meeting for example. In May, there will be two Restorative Circles where students, staff and families are invited to come talk about the transition with me and each other. In June, I will take a back seat to our new leadership, giving them space to drive as much as possible while we can still work closely together.

I am excited about the added support and advocacy that I believe our students and staff deserve and will receive with having two school teacher leaders. The new leadership team will receive the gift of greater impact. They will have the honor of doing work that is rooted in honoring the brilliance of children, decency for all, development of knowledge and the perspectives of all that come through Mission Hill's doors. My wish is that our students will engage with the world in ways that allow them to learn from the limitless lessons that life and work have to teach them, and that adults in our community will learn alongside them.

What will I do next? I still don't know. It's possible that I will teach again (I did that for 12 years before becoming an administrator). Maybe I will be an administrator in another school. I've also considered working on educational issues through government or a non-profit. I will share my next job with you as soon as it becomes clear to me.

Much love to you all,
Ayla Gavins

KINDERGARTEN

Room 106

Kathy, Liana & June

One of our culminating projects for our theme is to create Egyptian Counting Books. The students first explored lots of different counting books and we listed the essential characteristics of counting books. Then they brainstormed images they could include in their books and practiced drawing them. Then in a planning document, they decided on the number sequence and what would go on each page. After completing the pages of the books, they brainstormed possible titles for their books. Some were straightforward, like "Ancient Egypt Counting Book." Then Selma suggested "One Pyramid" or "One Scarab," inspired by books like One Gorilla. Inspired by some of the legends Kathy had been reading, Elijah suggested (in a very dramatic voice) "The Legend of the Ancient Egypt Counting Book." Benjamin looked puzzled and raised his hand to say, "But if someone starts reading it, they will realize it's not a legend. It's a counting book. They might be disappointed." Then Manny suggested, "We could put a little note on the front that says 'This is not a legend.'" Everyone agreed that that would be a good solution.

-Liana



Room 107 at the National Center of African American Artists!



Students from room 108 having fun with story acting!

Room 107

Jada & Manny

A few weeks ago Joy brought in a picture of workers restoring a pyramid's wall paintings. It prompted us to look closer at the wall paintings of King Aspelta from an exhibit at the National

Center of African American Artists (NCAAA). We used our light table to do some tracings of them, used some Visual Thinking Strategies skills to think more deeply about what story was being told in the picture and made up our own stories. After magnifying our tracings, we began the 3-week long painting process for our own wall paintings. A trip to the NCAAA had it all come alive for our students as they were excited to see the real versions of their work.

My favorite part was ...

Josue-... seeing the mummy and I also liked seeing the pictures of Aspelta.

Gio, Alessandra- ... seeing Aspelta.

Jonathan V. & Wil- ... the ride on the bus.

Rowan & Kaleena- ... the gold on the gate.

Adin & Joy- ... going into Aspelta's tomb.

Jonathan R.- ... when we got surprised and there was a fake mummy.

Ebi- ... the writing and the pictures on the wall.

Eddy- ... the big golden mummy.

-Jada

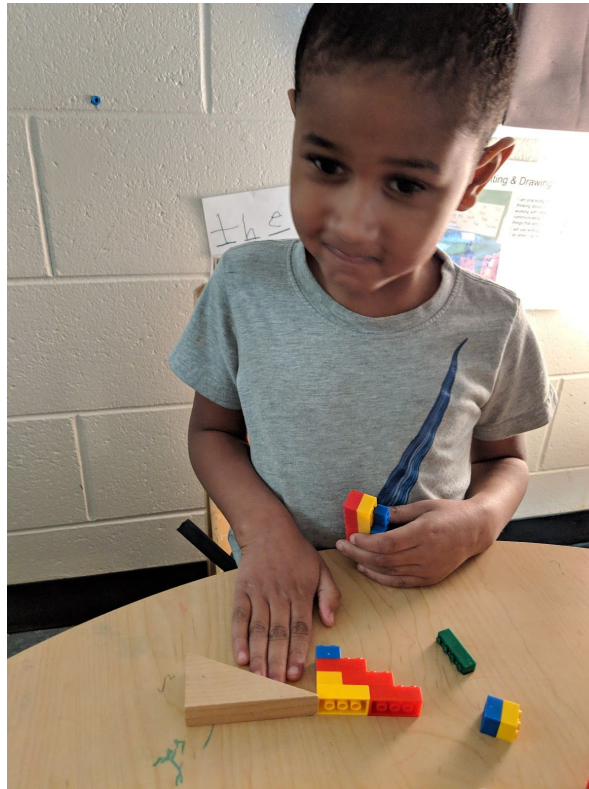
Room 108

Geralyn & Donna

This winter we've been having fun with storyacting. In February we acted out one of Benjie's

story for the whole school at Friday Share. Lately we've been acting out stories inspired by the animals found along the Nile - especially a folktale called the Hare and the Water. We've been acting out antelopes, giraffes, elephants, lions, snakes and more. One dilemma we had is that August really wanted to be a tiger in the story. Alas, tigers are not native to Africa. Our storytelling helper and volunteer, Sarah Arnold, had the idea that Tiger could be visiting from far away. So that is how we've adapted the classic folktale for our class.

-Geralyn



William, from room 109 building three dimensional shapes with blocks!

Room 109

Katie & Mary

The Rainbow Butterflies have been studying three dimensional shapes. One of our investigations led us to build our own blocks out of legos. Each child chose a three-dimensional shape to replicate using legos. William chose a triangular prism, and used 6 legos in a stairs layout to resemble the triangular prism. Because the legos were only shaped as rectangular prisms, he couldn't make an exact match for his triangular prism. Still, he was creative and precise as he built with the small pieces and matched the angles and dimensions of the triangular prism. He visualized the angles

of the triangular prism even with open spaces in his shape.

By doing this activity, children learned a lot about three dimensional shapes. They paid attention to the edges, angles, and relative sizes. One of the words they learned is *face*, meaning the flat surface on a three dimensional shape. Children made comparisons between different shapes and analyzed them to combine and make new shapes.

-Katie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 205

Ashleigh & Alana

No news. Check back next week!

Room 216

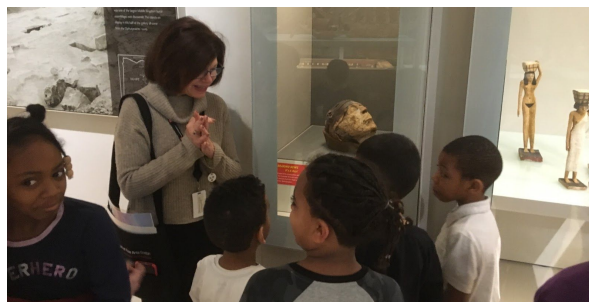
Danny & Felicia

This week we wrapped up our Kingdoms of the Nile theme by returning to the Museum of Fine Arts for a guided tour. One of the first things our tour guides asked us was "What do you know about Ancient Egypt?" The Dragons had so many great things to share:

"There's gods that have powers." - Elian

"People could actually go in the Nile. I thought it was just for animals." - Violet

"There's false doors leading to a tomb." - Misael



Student from room 216 at the MFA!



"Egyptians go to the afterlife, to the Land of the Two Fields"-

Janee

"Ammit is a demon who eats your heart if your heart weighs more than the Feather of Truth."-

Jazmyn

"Canopic jars are where you put organs."- Ethan

"I know the names of the gods."- Simeon

"You put organs in canopic jars."- Lola

"Egyptians believe that when the sun goes down, it fights an evil monster, and if the sun doesn't win, evil will take over the world."- Raya

"When you wrap a mummy, there are a lot of steps."- Nikaye

We look forward to growing as learners in our final theme of the year, The Struggle for Justice: The African-American Experience!

-Danny

Room 217

Kate & Stephanie

On Monday, Parker's dad Chris brought in his coworker Alfred. Alfred grew up in Egypt and now lives in Boston. Chris had arranged for him to come in and talk to us about life in modern Egypt. We spent months learning about Ancient Egypt so it was great to hear about modern Egypt to give us more context. We were delayed due to a snow

day but on Monday finally got the opportunity to host him. He wore a galabiya, a loose fitting ankle length shirt traditionally worn by both Egyptian men and women. He brought papyrus for us to see and touch as well as a scorpion encased in plastic. He told us what it looked like in Egypt and how close the pyramids were to where people live and work. Students showed off all that they had learned about Ancient Egypt, answering his questions and making connections to what he was saying. What an awesome learning experience for our class!



-Kate

3rd and 4th grade students attended a play about the Freedom Riders at Massasoit College!

GRADES 3 & 4

Room 203

Jenerra & Mayra

To kick off our new theme, Struggle for Justice: The African-American Experience,

the third/fourth grade team went to Massasoit College to see a play! Freedom Riders is set in 1961 as two young women from Harvard try to decide if they should join the Freedom Rides of the 1960s. As the play unfolded, we met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, Bobby Kennedy, Theodore Roosevelt, W.E.B. Dubois and many others who fought both for and against our nation's struggle for Civil Rights. The play was great and our students were captivated. After the play the audience got to ask questions. "How long have you been acting?" "What did you do to learn about your character?" "Was it hard to get

ready for the play?"

"How do you relate to your character?" It was a great discussion and the best part of all is that at the end Mission Hill sang "Oh Freedom" for the cast at the end. It was a great learning experience that I'm

sure will be re-visited with our work in the coming weeks.

-Jenerra

Room 207

Amanda & Amina

Fourth graders' time at Urban Improv has sadly come to an end. Here is what they say they learned from their workshops:

I learned:

CLASSROOM NEWS

Geneva- peer pressure is doing something that someone else wants you to do

Majadi- about using your imagination

Soley- what peer pressure is

Moxie- peer pressure is not yourself pressuring you but someone else pressuring you

Eamon- to think before you act

Jack Ozro- it's important to eat nutritious food

Evan- you really need your family

Antonio- always eat healthy

G'Kharee- not to be mad

Madison- you shouldn't look down at yourself; you should keep trying

Marian- sometimes things can be unfair

Josiah- what pressure means

Natalia- not to peer pressure people

Gerson- always have self-confidence no matter what

Thatcher- what peer pressure means

Kaia- when people are trying to peer pressure someone else they often use the word 'cool'

Brenden- how to be healthy

Nathaniel- I want to figure out when friendships are going badly

Beatrice- you should always do what you think is best and not what other people think

Fabian- don't care what other people say, just take care of yourself

Gabriel- to always be kind and respectful

-Amina

Room 212

Cleata & Ayan

Last week the 3rd and 4th graders took a rough bus ride to see a theatrical production of the history of the African American experience with segregation in America. Students watched as 6 actors presented narratives of various civil right activists' experiences in their struggle for justice and equal rights of African Americans to vote and to become 1st class citizens in America. One highlight for me was the opportunity for students to see that black and white people fought side by side for fair treatment of black people in America. Students had the opportunity to talk with the actors about their own experiences and processes in preparing for their roles. The students of Mission Hill School shared their connection to the songs used in the production and even sang one freedom song for the actors. My hope was that students would see themselves as activists for their needs as well as the needs of others.

-Cleata

GRADES 5 & 6

Room 210

Nakia & Kat

Here are a few of our End of the Week Reflections. Enjoy.

Something that went well was...

- "Something that went well is that i almost got out of get right group and we played fishy fishy."
- "Something that went well this week is I improved in was equivalent fractions. At the begging of the week. I feel like I know the equivalent fractions. I could improve in equivalent fractions. I think I got the basics down for equivalent fractions."

Something that I think would improve the class is...

- "showing how smart I am"
- "Something that would improve the class is if we could spend more time organizing the classroom in a thoughtful way."
- "I've learned that I have to learn discipline."

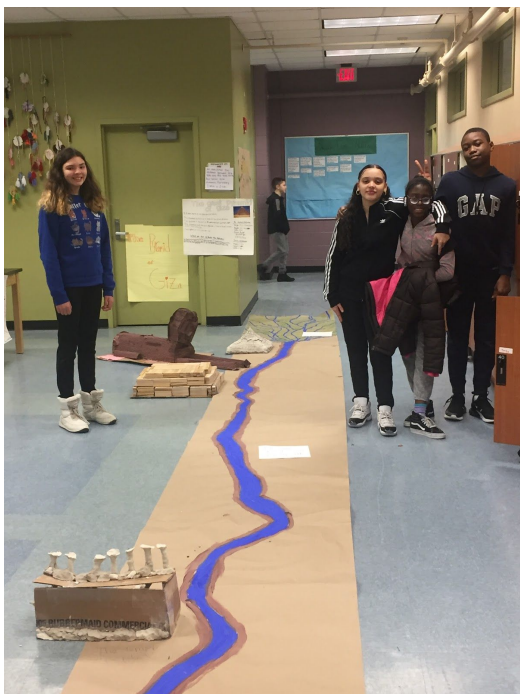
Next week I am really looking forward to...

- "Next week I am really looking forward to the curriculum breakfast. I am really looking forward to the curriculum breakfast because I am excited to show my family and the families of my peers my work."
- "going to the rocket park"
- "My week was good once again because more of my friends got out of boot camp we played

more fun games and that was my week.”

-Nakia

CLASSROOM NEWS



Room 215

Abdi & Courtney M.

No news. Check back next week!

GRADES 7 & 8

Room 213

Jenna & Natel

Our “Kingdoms of the Nile Curriculum Breakfast” went great! Please see pictures of students displaying their final projects!



hieroglyphs and other Nubian symbols.

Room 214

Reginald & Frances

On Tuesday, we visited the The National Center of Afro-American Artists. We took a tour of the museum. We were lucky enough that our tour guide was Edmund Barry Gaither, the museum’s director and curator. He pointed out some of his favorite works of art, many of whom were by artists from Boston. The last part of the tour, and the highlight for many, was the exhibit, “Aspelta: A Nubian King’s Burial Chamber.” The exhibit is a replica of Aspelta’s tomb. Many of what we have learned over the last few weeks was brought to life as we walked around the room surrounded by



The museum trip was a perfect transition from the civilizations of the Nile theme to the African-American struggle for justice theme. What better way to frame the history of African-American history than in the art of African-Americans. A special bonus, we also saw artwork of Bostonians.

-Reginal

Ayla Gavins, Principal
Deborah Meier, Founder

Laura Perille, Interim Superintendent

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It's Dinner and a Board Meeting

Upcoming Meeting Dates : 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: March 28, 2019

Where: Art Room (2nd Floor)

Time: 5:00-7:00 p.m.

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

Fechas de la Reunión próximas: 5/30/19



¡Hola familias de Mission Hill!

Ustedes serán siempre a sido 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, aprende sobre modos de apoyar nuestra escuela y considerar ser un miembro del consejo en el futuro. Consideramos su presencia valiosa por lo tanto se proporcionarán comida y cuido de niño. Por favor

RSVP para
puericultura en 617-635-6384.

¡Esperamos verle allí

Cuando: El 28 de marzo de 2019
Donde: Cuarto de arte (2do piso)
Hora: 5:00-7:00 p. m.