



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

Monday, April 15 - Friday, April 19
NO SCHOOL: April Vacation

Monday, April 29 - Friday, May 3
Teacher Appreciation Week
Screen Free Week

Thursday, May 2, 5:45pm - 7:30pm
Family Game Night!

**The Summer Stuff 2019 Guide is included in this newsletter.*

April 12, 2019

Volume 22, Issue 24

Outdoor Beautification Project

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

I have some exciting news to share. On April 12th an organization called *Boston Cares*, a non-profit agency that connects individuals with service opportunities, will be sending 100 volunteers from a company called *Bain*, for a service day at Mission Hill School.

This project has been a long time in the making. A while back I had mentioned to Ayla how nice it would be to have an outdoor seating option by the cafeteria landing. I thought that location in general could use a fresh coat of paint, maybe a mural, some care and consideration. I had also been thinking the courtyard location and the big playground area outside of the building could use some sprucing up. I envisioned tables for eating and some benches to make the area feel park-like. I hoped to set a *natural mood* for those spaces.



My goal was to be mindful of our neighbors, the Arnold Arboretum and Jamaica pond. I wanted to let nature inspire and inform the vision for these outdoor spaces, especially the mural and color choices. I felt the mural should depict nature's beauty through the use of trees, giving the illusion of shade through color, light and texture. I was struck by how just adding the color of the green outside the K-quad had changed the aesthetic on approach to our school. I also took into consideration the importance of working in a color palette that creates continuity and a serene impact on the viewer's eye.

The outdoor furniture wooden furniture would not only serve as seating but also be a beautiful addition to the setting and have function without sacrificing form.

Ayla encouraged a connection with Erin Rea from *Boston Cares*, we met this past summer walked around the outside of our school and generated a wish list.

I received an email in late winter saying *Bain* had chosen our school as their work site and... we would get everything on our wish list!

This is the work that will happen on Friday, April 12th:

- Mural painted of tree silhouettes outside of the cafeteria
- The full spanse of the wall outside of the cafeteria will be painted with a mural of tree silhouettes in three different shades of green.
- Stairs, and low seating wall will painted
- Eight picnic tables built and stained dark brown, with a protective varnish, for seating along the outdoor cafeteria wall
- Two planter benches will be constructed
- General cleaning and weeding on and around the bleachers and some touch up painting
- Walls painted by auditorium and courtyard continuing with
- Two tables with board games painted on tabletops in courtyard, chess and checker.
- Planter benches to create a small nook in corner of courtyard.
- Sidewalk games painted, touched up. Green chalkboard painted wall
- Continued wall painting covering existing mural by sidewall entranceway and staircases painted on all sides in shades of green.

This is a big job to accomplish! Fingers crossed it doesn't rain. If the mural cannot get painted in full on April 12th, *Boston Cares* volunteers will come back to finish in May.

I hope you can help me welcome *Bain* volunteers to our school and Erin Rea from *Boston Cares* on April 12th.

With gratitude,

Jeanne Rachko

Art teacher

KINDERGARTEN

Room 106

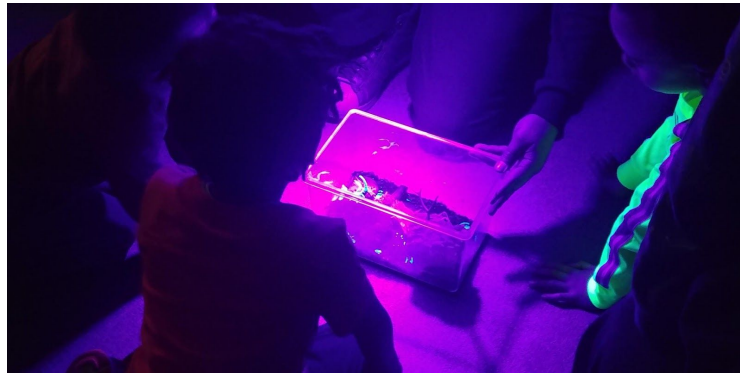
Kathy, Liana & June

In room 106 we have been diving into storytelling. We had a great conversation about what a story is and what kinds of stories there are. We also discussed the fact that there are lots of different stories. I brought up that sometimes you hear a story and you don't see pictures. At first Elijah did not think a story was a story unless it had pictures. He then changed his mind and clarified that the pictures help you to understand what is happening.

We tested the theory. We listened to *Anansi and the Moss Covered Rock*. We understood most of it and there were parts that challenged us. There were words some of us knew and others didn't, words such as moss and calabash. We then retold the story trying to see what we remembered and what we understood.

I shared that Anansi stories come from Africa and traveled to many parts of the world such as the United States, Jamaica, and Trinidad. We are starting to investigate how and why stories travel.

-Kathy



Dragon Kitties (room 107) observing the scorpions under ultraviolet light-Picture by Linda Whalen



Dragon Kitties (room 107) draw the statue of King Aspelta at the MFA-Picture by Sarah King

Room 107

Jada & Manny

In connection to our study of Nubia, the Dragon Kitties made several trips the Museum of Fine Arts in search of artifacts,

specifically a statue of Pharaoh Aspelta. As we turned the corner of the adjoining museum rooms, our students immediately recognized the statue from our book and were awestruck by it's massiveness.

Student Reflections: My favorite part of our visits was ...

Will, Jonathan R. & Alessandra- ... finding the statue of King Aspelta and drawing it.
Abubakar- ... the pyramid house like at school.
Josue- ... mummies. The mummies didn't scare me.
Rowan & Kaleena- ... the jewelry.

We also looked at the various animals and fish that were around during ancient Nubian times and created watercolor washed line drawings of them. A scavenger hunt at the Franklin Park Zoo helped us see about 20 land animals from Nubian times up close.

Student Reflections: My favorite part was...

Bilal, Adin & Eddy- ... the lions.
Jonathan V. & Kaleena- ... seeing the ostrich.
Josue- ... playing on the playground.

Ms. Sarah was determined to have us see one more animal. She coordinated with her

Dowdy-Nava (founders of the Art+Bio Collaborative) to come in with, of all things...their pet scorpions for us to observe! We learned that scorpions are arachnids, have 8 legs, eat insects and glow under ultraviolet light.

-Jada

Room 108

Geralyn & Donna

We have been learning about the difference between true stories and pretend stories - fiction and non-fiction. Our first few books for this theme were fiction books such as *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn which we used to talk about empathy. This week we introduced a true story, *The Case for Loving: The Fight for Interracial Marriage* by Selina Alko and Sean Qualls, which we are using to talk about equity. The Lovings were married legally in Washington, DC and were arrested at their home in Virginia, where at the time interracial marriages were illegal. The Lovings took their case all the way to the Supreme Court and won! Using the true story of the Loving family is something we introduced very carefully. We decided to edit a few parts that might be too scary or confusing for our class. So if you are reading the book at home, please know that we decided to cover the pages that

depict the police coming in the night, as well as the sentences about slavery. We are not keeping this book on the general book shelf, but rather on display up high so that we can be aware of where, when, and who is reading the book. This true story is very relevant and appropriate to our study - especially since Ms Donna has a family connection to the Lovings. We are taking our time with these big concepts, and are finding many ways to talk about empathy and equity in our own classroom.

-Geralyn

Room 109

Katie & Mary

109 has begun studying our spring theme *Struggles for Justice: African American Experience*. Our study is focused on the inventions and innovations of 10 African Americans. Our 10 inventors and innovators are:

Lonnie Johnson invented the Super Soaker, born 1949.

Dr. Patricia Bath invented the laser for cataract surgery, born 1942.

Alvin Ailey innovated modern dance, born 1931.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr innovated nonviolence and civil rights movement, born 1929.

Audrey Faye Hendricks innovated children's participation in the civil rights movement, born 1954.

Katherine Johnson invented the math to get the Apollo 11 to the moon, born 1918.

Ella Fitzgerald innovated "scat" singing, born 1917.

George Washington Carver innovated alternating crops and soil replenishing and invented peanut butter, born 1864.

Harriet Tubman innovated the Underground Railroad "conductor," born 1820.

Sojourner Truth innovated abolition and women's rights, born 1797.

We invite you to learn more about these individuals with us!

-Katie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 205

Ashleigh & Alana

As we begin to explore African-American history we have started to talk about the words struggle and justice. Here

are some of the students' initial thoughts. We will continue to explore these words and

CLASSROOM NEWS

Danae: Struggle is a word that means something is hard for you. You're not able to do it, but you have to keep trying.

Ella: In books it talks about white people and black people have to be in a different school. Black people don't have good schools. White people have good schools. That's not nice. Now they both go to the same school.

Ada: Struggle means having a really hard time. You think you can't do it, but you probably can, you just need to keep trying.

Rex: I have this game on my iPad, a character says, "justice will prevail."

Emma: Justice means doing something for good. Doing good is like justice.

Danae: Justice is like freedom, like you're being free.

-Ashleigh

Room 216

Danny & Felicia

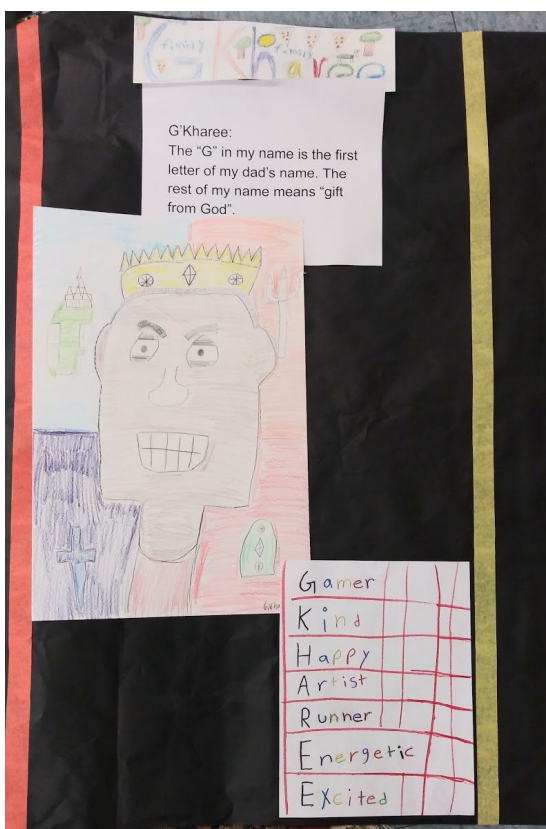
No news. Check back in two weeks.

Room 217

Kate & Stephanie

questions we have about them as we read more books, look at

photographs, sing songs, and talk to experts.



We have begun our new theme, the African American Experience: Struggle for Justice. The start of a new

Photos submitted by room 203

theme is always an exciting time of the year. We began by thinking about our own identity.

We made silhouette self portraits in which we drew our personalities and characteristics inside. We also made silhouettes of our hands on skin tone paper and wrote what we stand for inside. We are learning two new songs *If I Had a Hammer* and *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. The

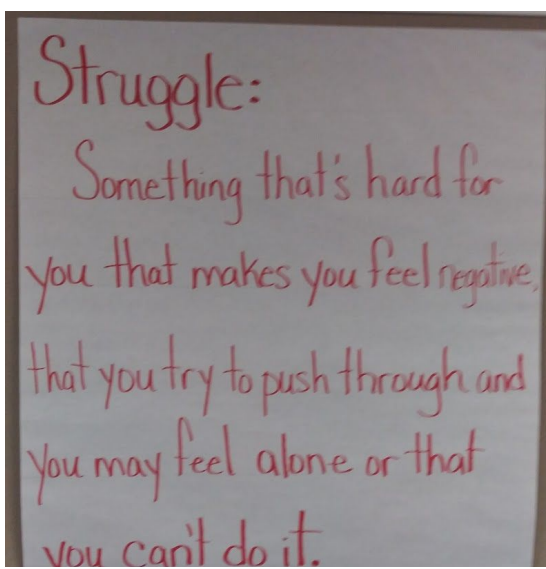
students are doing so well we are just about ready for a few more songs. We have been reading books about Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr. and Ruby Bridges to acquaint ourselves with the Civil Rights Movement.

When we read a book about a person or an event, we add the information to our Black history timeline which spans a whole wall in our classroom. Each student will help to draw a picture of an historic event on an index card. They then will find out the year the event occurred and find the appropriate location on the timeline to add it.

-Kate

GRADES 3 & 4

Room 203



Jenerra & Mayra

As we begin our Struggle for Justice theme, we have focused
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on our names, how we got them, the importance of them. We connected that to the names of

others and the struggle they experienced with their names. Below is artwork and



photographs connected to names and our definition of struggle. Stop by room 203 to see all of our work.

-Jenerra

Room 207

Amanda & Amina

Last week, families and friends were invited to our Kingdoms of the Nile curriculum breakfast. It was a wonderful celebration of hard work and knowledge learned. Check out some of the photographs of the projects The Lively Learning Squad completed.

-Amanda

Room 212

Cleata & Ayan

No news, check back in two weeks!

GRADES 5 & 6

Room 210

Nakia & Kat

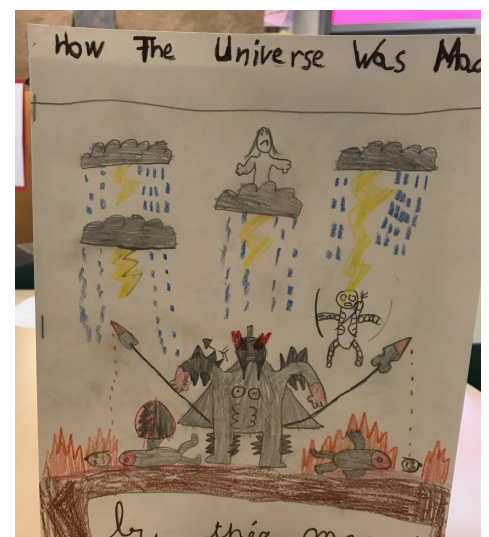
No news. Check back in two weeks.

Room 215

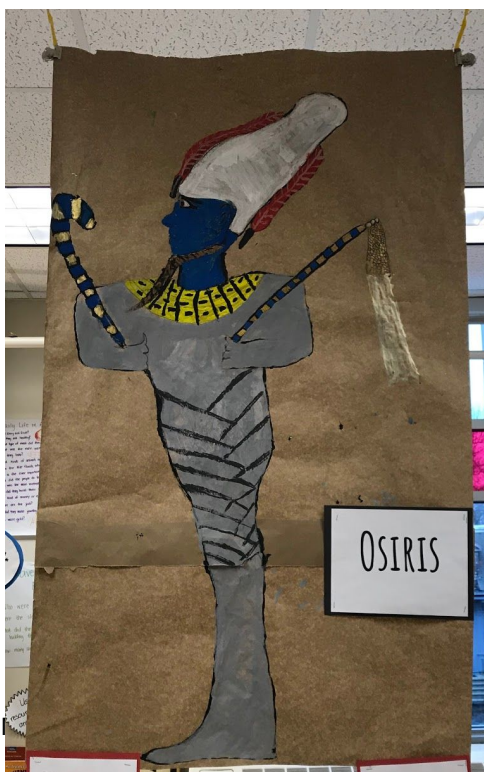
Abdi & Courtney M.

Semester 3's theme: the struggle for justice through the African American experience is getting started. Skillz Evolve (the 5/6 classrooms) will use the sights and sounds of the modern Civil

Rights Movement as their



Photos (above and below) submitted by room 207



era. Who are African Americans, and how long have they been in the United States? What major strides towards freedom and justice did they undertake between 1955-1968? What do their struggles and triumphs mean for us today? Expect to see your child researching images and song lyrics - they might ask you questions to see if you are familiar with the music. Boycotts, voting rights, speeches, Black Panther Party lunch programs, poetry and marches make up the rich tapestry of a people who would not settle for anything less than their human rights. Major Skillz will relive this time of unprecedented historical changes through the journey of Sam Childs, the fictional 13-year old boy in the novel, [The Rock and the River](#). Read along with us. There is

homework every night; there's plenty to see and hear.

Urban Improv started for both grades on March 29th, on Fridays.

-Abdi

GRADES 7 & 8

Room 213 Jenna & Natel

During the past week, we have been watching the documentary, "Eyes on the Prize", to build our background knowledge of the Civil Rights Movement as we prepare to begin reading Melba Pattillo Beals's memoir, *Warriors Don't Cry*. In this novel, Melba tells her story about her experience as one of the Little Rock Nine and their integration into Central High School following the landmark *Brown v.*

Board of Education case which outlawed segregation in schools. Through the viewing of this documentary, students gained some basic understanding of the events that served as the catalysts for the Civil Rights Movement, such as the murder of Emmett Till and the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Students were very engaged in the documentary and had many questions about the different people, places and events that are featured. I am eager to see how this excitement will grow as we delve deeper into these topics this week and begin reading *Warriors Don't Cry*.

-Jenna

Room 214 Reginald & Frances

No news. Check back in two weeks.

Ayla Gavins, Principal
Deborah Meier, Founder

Laura Perille, Interim Superintendent

Mission Hill K-8 School
A Boston Public Pilot School

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IN CELEBRATION OF SCREEN FREE WEEK

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

SPONSORED BY
THE FAMILY COUNCIL



THURSDAY, MAY 2ND
5:45 PM - 7:30 PM
AT MHS LIBRARY



Game Night & Pizza will be provided.
Please RSVP to familycouncil@missionhillschool.org
by Tuesday, May 1st

