



## IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

Friday, October 25th, 9:45-10:15am  
**Friday Share (open to all)**

Wednesday, October 30, 6:00-7:00pm  
**Friends of Mission Hill School Meeting  
(open to all)**

Friday, November 1, 9:45-10:15am  
**Friday Share (open to all)**

October 25, 2019

Volume 23, Issue 8

### I Would Tell Her...

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

When I was asked to write about my experience with the Superintendent during her visit to Mission Hill School, I thought about all the things I wished I could have said during her visit if we had more time. In the two minutes that we were given, I felt I did a pretty good job of describing our connection to the Farm School but there was so much more I wanted to tell her about our school!

If I had more than two minutes, I would tell her:

- Students truly have a voice at Mission Hill School and they take our voices seriously. The staff not only listens to our ideas but also makes sure we have a hand in bringing those ideas to life.
- Our relationship with the staff at MHS is very special. The staff cares about us and wants to make sure we are doing our best. They actually want to know what we enjoy doing and will try and incorporate that into the school day. For instance, comic book clubs and having electives where students can share their knowledge with other students.
- The themes are interactive. We learn about themes in different ways. Through art, math, reading, etc. I would have showed her pictures of the pyramid we made last year and how we were able to make the measurements to create it.
- I would tell her when I talk about my school some people think kindergarteners are not ready to learn about ancient civilizations and Earth Science, but here we do. You have kindergarteners learning about space and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders learning about the struggle for justice.
- I would tell her how we all keep our best work and are able to look back on our growth through the years. This prepares us for our final share in eighth grade where we look back at our evolution throughout the years.
- I would show her my artwork over the years and how I have improved.
- I invited her to Friday share. I would have liked to expand on how Friday share is a staple in our community. We share our learning through art and music which connects all of us.
- I would share how our teachers not only care about our learning but also know us as individuals. They want to make sure we are making friends, that we are improving on our learning and that we have a good relationship with them. Our teachers share just as much with us as we do with them.



If I had more time, this is what I would tell her. I invited her to Friday share and I'm hopeful she will come. If you had time with the Superintendent, what would you say about our school and how would you describe our community from your viewpoint?

*Zuhri McKinney Johnson*  
8th Grader and student representative to our Governing Board

### MUSIC

#### Cara Campanelli

I'm happy to report that music is alive and well at Mission Hill! As the K0-8th grade teacher, I have enjoyed watching our students begin the school year with creativity, laughter, and of course, music!

#### Grades K0-K2

Kindergarten has been practicing "keeping the beat" through song, movement, and the creative use of the Muppet's Swedish Chef cooking videos. In addition, we've started to work with traditional rhythmic notation (think: *ta* and *ti-ti*) using our newest friend, Rhythm Robot.

#### Grades 1-4

If you've heard any rhythmic clapping in the halls, observed students gather in groups of four seemingly at random, or recognized the soft sound of students singing "tweedly-deedly-dee" to themselves at home, you've already gotten a taste of what we're working on. Using the song *Rockin' Robin*, classmates have been working together in teams to practice a clapping game. Lots of coordination, communication, and steady rhythm are required--a complicated feat!

#### Grade 5-8

Our middle grade students have been working on an introductory composition project based on parody songs. We reviewed the work of the great Weird Al Yankovic coupled with the double-parody of *Wocket in My Pocket* (a Dr. Seuss/hip-hop mash-up for the ages), and are going to be presenting our own parody songs based on the instrumental track of Old Town Road and Royals next week.

### ART

#### Jeanne Rachko & Meg Walker

In the art room, students in grades 7th/8th, 5th/6th and 1st/2nd are in the process of creating posters bringing attention to the land animals currently listed as endangered or threatened by the ICUN, the International Union of the Conservation of Nature. In order for an animal to be listed as endangered, that animal runs the risk of extinction due to any of the five following reasons:

- present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of its habitat or range;
- over-utilization of the species for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes;
- disease or predation;

- inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and
- other natural or manmade factors affecting its continued existence.

Students were introduced to the topic by discussing what it meant for an animal to be listed as endangered or threatened. Students then brainstormed ideas on what could be reasons for animals to be facing this status. They talked about how climate change could be affecting the animals' habitats. They also discussed how humans could negatively impact an animal's population due to hunting or poaching.



Once the students began to work, they looked at a list of endangered animals along with a paragraph that described that animal, its geographical location and the reasons for it having endangered status. They selected

an animal and began sketching out a picture of the animal using a reference photo. Students were also asked to write the word, “Endangered” on their poster as well as the animal’s name in an interesting, eye catching way. Once students were done drawing out their images in pencil, they were asked to outline them in marker and paint them using tempera paint.



Students will continue to explore endangered and threatened and protected animals, looking at those who live in the seas as well as the air. We will work in three different mediums to create awareness about these **endangered** species as well as **threatened** sea life and **protected** birds. Tempera paint, oil-pastel with watercolor and collage will be used in this series.

There are multiple organizations and conservation groups that have provided protection for species and ecological education. Many illustrators, authors and

artists have dedicated their lives to creating awareness for these issues through their work. They brought attention and activism to help mammals, birds, insects, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and plants we have never heard of that are struggling to stay alive.  
-Jeanne & Meg

## SPEECH THERAPY

### Alexia Salata

During our sessions with the kindergarten students, we learned about the Life Cycle of Apples! Students listened to a story about the different parts of the apples’ life cycle, and then using visuals they were able to sequence the story and retell it in their own words. By doing so, students were able to: work on their ability to listen and process auditorily presented information, show their understanding of the story by sequencing the presented pictures, answer *wh*- questions and then formulate complete sentences to explain each step. This was such a fun activity for everyone!

On a different note, October was AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) awareness month. AAC includes all of the ways we share our ideas and feelings without talking. People with severe speech or language problems may need AAC to help them communicate. There are two main types of AAC—unaided systems (gestures, body language, facial expressions, and

sign language) and aided (some sort of tool or device which can be basic or high-tech) systems. Communication is a right for all!  
-Alexia



## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

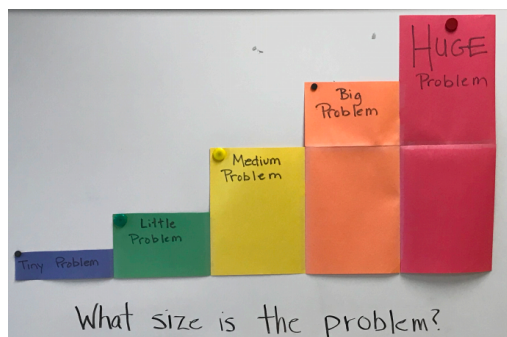
### Marion Sitomer

This is year two of the school-wide use of the Zones of Regulation at MHS, a for raising awareness of changing feelings and arousal leading to increased behavioral control and problem solving skills. The zones are: blue - low key/low energy; green - focused, safe and ready to learn; yellow - energy rising, starting to get silly or irritated, and decreased ability to stay on-task; red - out of control. Much of the program is geared toward younger children, but as a K - 8 school we are striving to make it accessible to everyone. A concept that all ages can relate to is The Size of the Problem. Identifying the magnitude of a problem, from a broken pencil to a car crash, can help you make the right-sized response, from brushing it off to getting appropriately upset or taking swift, strong action. We’re starting to emphasize this specifically in the middle school classrooms. You can use this concept with your child (of any



age) when their feelings and actions seem to be a mismatch for the situation.

-Marion



## LEARNING COACH

**Vanessa Allaway**

This summer BPS offered the opportunity to attend a training program in the Orton-Gillingham (OG) approach to reading instruction. Many MHS staff members have attended the training over the past few years and I was eager to experience this rigorous training too. The OG approach paved the way for the multi-sensory approach to reading instruction. It has been around since the 1930s; it is not an intervention fad. OG is language-based, direct, explicit, structured, sequential, and yet very flexible in how you can implement its strategies and approaches into daily reading instruction. One of the foundations of OG is the three-part drill, which is a three-step process that serves as a reading and spelling review of previously introduced sounds and skills. It includes 3 methods of review: visual, auditory, and blending. For the visual part,

students look at previously learned sound cards and say the sound they see. The auditory method involves teachers asking students to spell the sound they hear often, using a sand tray for a multi-sensory experience.

During the blending section the teacher presents students with conventional language patterns on a blending board. The patterns presented make up words that are a combination of previously taught sounds and skills. Students either segment the sounds they see, then read the whole word, or read the entire word out loud and all together. [Link to a video of three-part drill](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCaNXAFpZZQ)

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-Vanessa

## LEARNING COACH

**Priyadarshini Kumar**

As a new staff member of the MHS community, I have set two important goals for myself. First and foremost, I need to build relationships and trust among all the students I work with. Second, I need to do my job in teaching and supporting my students with their educational goals. In my mind, one does not happen without the other. In this week's newsletter, I am going to focus on the importance of building relationships and trust among students.

One way I have addressed this goal is by greeting everyone that enters the school in the morning while I am outside for bus duty with a friendly smile and a warm

“Good morning”. It is my goal to learn the name of every child in the school by the end of the year, regardless of whether I directly teach them or not.

The importance of positive teacher-student relationships can have a lasting impact on a child. First, It can improve academic success. When students view teachers as partners in their learning, this can turn the relationship into a collaborative partnership where they work together to achieve a common goal. Next, it can help to alleviate behavior problems. By building stronger relationships with students, teachers can overcome behavioral issues by allowing students to take ownership and feel empowered to make choices that will allow them to be successful. Finally, it aids in the growth of students in non-academic ways. Teachers not only support students' academic growth but also physical, emotional and spiritual growth. When teachers take time to build stronger relationships with students, they gain a deeper understanding of students' needs and what motivates them to succeed. By keeping these factors in mind, building trust and rapport amongst students can only have positive benefits.

-Priya

## LEARNING COACH

**Joel Webb**

Phonological Awareness

In her book *Phonological Awareness* (2010), Yvette Zgonc

defines phonological awareness as “The understanding that our spoken language is made up of words and that our words are made up of individual units of sounds called *phonemes*.” It is important because this ability is highly correlated with reading and spelling success. Here at Mission Hill, we assess and teach phonological awareness to make sure that students are set up to be successful. Phonological awareness contains many skills, such as being able to identify individual words, rhyme and modify phonemes. We teach these skills through interactive and fun games which are often connected to literature. Your child may not be ready to learn some of these skills yet but you can always help them learn a Mission Hill favorite rhyming song: *Down by the Bay*. Have fun!

*Down by the bay, where the watermelons grow  
Back to my home, I dare not go  
For if I do, my mother would say  
Have you ever seen a \_\_\_\_\_  
<insert animal doing rhyme here>  
(e.g. “snail taking out the mail”)  
Down by the bay*

## Before School

**Jane Bolt**

Hello, everyone,  
The Before School Program is off to a great start. The students are really enjoying their morning free time. I’m learning all the different personalities, likes and dislikes of the K-quad, as well as the older students. It’s been such a productive and fun time, and I want to thank Mission Hill

School for welcoming me with open arms.

Our staff members Tianna and Nelly are super awesome to work with. When it comes to group activities they have great coordination skills. Tianna is very good with putting arts and crafts projects together for the children, and they especially love doing Origami with her. Nelly is just wonderful whether she is in the gym keeping them safe, or outside on the playground. Both are vital assets to the program.

In the upcoming months we would like to add some reading comprehension and science activities to the program. We hope to keep this positive energy flowing all school year long and strive for success!  
-Jane Bolt, Director



## From the Nurse Georgie Marks

Because flu season is around the corner, this month’s column is on Asthma. Why? Because in addition to allergies, colds and flu are major triggers for asthma issues. What is asthma? Asthma is a medical condition in which your airways narrow and swell, producing extra mucus. Students with asthma come into the nurse’s office with symptoms of wheezing, rapid breathing,

coughing, shortness of breath and/or chest tightness.

What triggers asthma? In addition to colds and flu, respiratory infections, cold air, pollen, dust mites, mold, pet dander, stress, exercise, and some medical conditions are some of the common triggers.

Asthma can’t be cured, but it can be controlled. Always contact your health care provider if you think you or your child has undiagnosed asthma, or if asthma symptoms get worse. For students with asthma, it is important to work with health care providers to develop an Asthma Action Plan. What is an Asthma Action Plan? An Asthma Action Plan is a detailed, individual medical plan for managing your asthma with medications, instructions for monitoring asthma and managing an asthma attack, at home and away.

If your child has asthma, should they have medication available at school in the event of an asthma attack, or to prevent an attack? If you speak with your health care provider and they want your child to have medication at school (inhaler, spacer, nebulizer, etc) we need to have: 1. A signed parent/guardian consent form to administer the medication to the student, 2. An asthma action plan and prescription for the medication from your health care provider and 3. The medication. If you need for your student to carry his or her medication in their backpack we need permission from: the health care provider, the parent/guardian, the classroom teacher, and the school nurse.

There is a form to be filled out for this to happen.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns. Contact me if you need for medications to be given at school because a student's asthma is acting up, or if they need to be monitored during the day at school. This week expiration dates on all medication will be checked and

parents/guardians will be notified if new medication is required. School number is 617 635-6384, fax # is 617 635-6419, email is: [gmarks@missionhillschool.org](mailto:gmarks@missionhillschool.org) .  
-Georgie Marks, PhD, APRN, AE-C

## From a Family

We are interested in connecting other adoptive families at Mission Hill School. If interested, please reach out to Antonio Ocampo-Guzman at [ocampito68@gmail.com](mailto:ocampito68@gmail.com)  
Thanks so much,  
-Max, Doug & Antonio



Geralyn Bywater McLaughlin and  
Jenerra Williams, Co-Teacher Leaders  
Deborah Meier, Founder  
Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Superintendent

Mission Hill K-8 School  
A Boston Public Pilot School  
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