



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

Saturday, December 14
BPS Showcase of Schools
See attached flier

Friday, December 20
Trimester 1 Report Cards Sent Home
Last day of school before break begins

December 13, 2019

Volume 23, Issue 14

MCAS Update

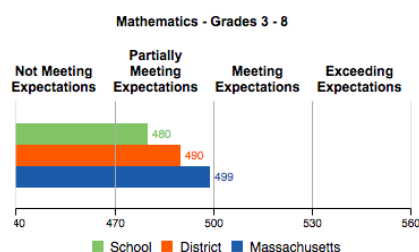
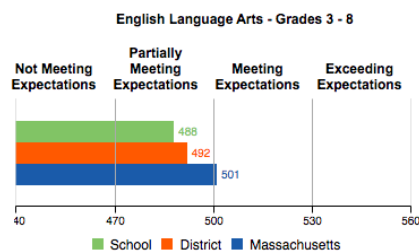
Dear Mission Hill School Friends, Families, Students and Staff,

As many of you know, prior to this school year, Mission Hill School has been designated as among the lowest performing 10% of schools on the state-mandated standardized test known as MCAS. Last year, with district support, we wrote our Transformation Plan and submitted it to DESE (The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education). That plan has been guiding our work since the spring of last year, and the impact on our spring 2019 MCAS scores is notable. You can find our MCAS data on Massachusetts Department of Education website if you search for Mission Hill School on the "School Profile Page."

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/>

2019 Student Achievement

Next Generation MCAS (Average Scaled Score)



There are lots of great data to dig into, and you can compare Mission Hill School to other schools and statewide trends. For sure, we are not completely satisfied with where MHS stands, however we are encouraged by what we now see. For example, our overall English Language Arts score for grades 3rd-8th is 488, which is getting close to the district's average score of 492. (see graph)

One way to look at our overall MCAS performance for 2019 is to look at the Criterion-Referenced Target Percentage. This number sheds light on how a school changes in performance from one year to the next. For Mission Hill School, our 2019 criterion-referenced target percentage was 76%. That is compared to 31% for 2018. This shows positive change. The DESE Glossary of Reporting Terms states, "The goal is to earn a target percentage of 75% or higher, which indicates that on average, the district or school is meeting or exceeding targets for each accountability factor."

Does this mean our work is done? No. Does this mean we are satisfied with our students' performance in all subgroups and in all subject areas? No. What it does mean is that we have turned a corner and are now heading in a better direction in terms of MCAS scores. Over the upcoming months our ILT (Instructional Leadership Team) and our staff as a whole will be looking closer at the trends in our MCAS data; our students with chronic absenteeism; and more; to help propel our school further on this journey. If you have questions about your own student's MCAS results, please do not hesitate to talk with your classroom teacher. While we fully acknowledge that judging students, teachers and schools by standardized tests is part of the systemic racism in public schools nationwide, and that it is not the best way to know what students are capable of, we also acknowledge that to "stay in the game" we need to play this game better.

Geralyn Bywater McLaughlin

KINDERGARTEN

K0 Room 108

Quéla, Liana, Donna & Sarah

On Tuesday during recess my eye was drawn to two students building a beautiful and intentional line of rocks. When I went to capture the moment I quickly realized that the rock pattern was not the end result of their play, it was the set-up for their play. The children took turns taking rocks off the end of the row and dropping them in the nearby drain one by one. Over and over again they paused to hear the splash and watch the rocks disappear in the dark. These students were unknowingly using the Habit of Mind "Connections" by engaging with cause and effect. Through their play they were learning the concepts of *concrete* and *abstract*. In that moment they believed in what they *could* and *could not* see, and that truly rocks.

-Quéla



K1/K2 Room 106

Kathy & June

In Room 106 we have been having some interesting discussions. "What do you think the word ancient means?" I asked.

Esa: When you fall off a cliff.

Ezra: From a long time ago.

Ailey: Ancient pyramids and I agree with Ezi.

Xander: Long time ago.

Jo: That things are really old and that they were built a long, long time ago. .

Walter: Really, really, really old rocks and stuff from a long, long time ago.

Griffin: I agree with Jo.

Melina: The word ancient is something that is old like a pyramid.

Selma: Something that is very old.

Forest: Things that were made a long time ago.

Leora: There were slaves.

Jayna: Ancient times, a long time ago.

Ceajae: I don't even know.

Later, we continued our conversation. "What do we know about China?" Stay tuned for what we think we know and what we have experienced.

-Kathy & June

K1/K2 Room 107

Jada & Manny

For the past few weeks, each of our students has chosen one

celestial being to observe and create for the solar system mural in our classroom. Here is a little they know about each one:
Beck: I know Mercury is yellow. It is the smallest planet in the solar system.

August: Neptune is blue. It has 13 moons.

Giuliany: Earth has one moon.

Jonathan: There is a giant storm on Jupiter. You can see it because it's the right color. It is called the Great Red Spot.

Gio: The sun has a lot of heat.

The sun is a star.

Alysha: Venus looks like the sun. It is the second planet from the Sun.

Josue: Pluto is a dwarf planet. It is farthest from the sun.

Abubakar: The moon is all the way up with the stars.

Will: Uranus is icy. It is the seventh planet from the sun. You can fit 15 Earths inside Uranus.

Raven: Mars is the red planet.

- Jada Brown and
Emmanuel St. Vil

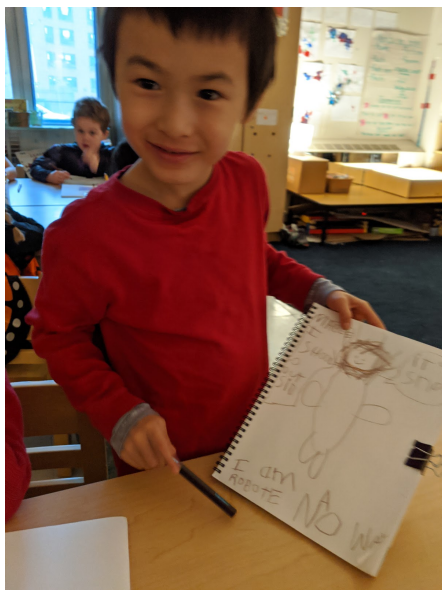
K1/K2 Room 109

Katie & Courtney M.

Last week we had an exciting visit to the school book fair! Children picked books and were delighted to start reading! The teachers also picked some new books for the classroom, thanks to the families from Room 109! One of our new books is a Gerald and Piggy book called Harold

and Hog Pretend for Real! We giggled as we read this book on a snowy Friday afternoon and tied it to our writing workshop lesson on speech bubbles. Speech bubbles are wonderful writing tools for conveying dialogue and tone. The children experimented with adding speech bubbles to their writing. Pictured is Aaron's writing which reads (he used invented spelling), "It's snowing. Maybe I should go outside. I am a robot. No way." Like magic, the speech bubbles transformed our illustrated stories into stories filled with invented spelling and dialogue! Thanks Mo Willems and Dan Santat!

-Katie



GRADES 1 & 2

Room 210

Ashleigh, Alana & Stephanie

Cocoa Kindness has started a project this week focusing on adjectives that describe them from A to Z. They have all been

focused and having fun on finding new words. Look out for these posters, they will soon be posted on our walls :).

In math we have started our theme of the week "Odds against Evens." Students are learning all about even and odd equations and how we can break even numbers into pairs. We added our newest chant for remembering our evens: 2, 4, 6, 8, who do we appreciate!!!

Kids also enjoyed reading the book "Steven Even and Odd Todd" for Read Aloud which includes silly rhymes with even and odd number of things. This week 210 has started the introduction to maps and understanding maps. They have also been creating maps on their own including maps of the classroom. Coco Kindness has been discovering countries and learning all about the 7 continents of the world. They all enjoyed learning the 7 continent song that helps them remember all 7 continents. If you have a chance stop by 210 and have a Coco Kindness member sing you the song!

-Stephanie

Room 216

Danny, Felicia, Destiny & Yuliza

This week, The Rock Stars have been learning about maps, oceans and continents. We learned that there are many different types of maps which are used for different purposes. One of the maps was a floor map. We went into Kat and Leila's room as well as the library and created floor maps of those rooms. The students designed

detailed maps that included a key to help guide the reader on what is located in each of those spaces. The keys included math materials, books, tables, etc. with symbols that represented each item. We also created a class world map that is color coordinated with our Seven Continents Song that we have been learning. The song shares a little information about each continent, like how Asia has more than half of the world's population. The song also lists the continents from largest to smallest.

-Yuliza Valentin

Here we have Joy, Wyatt, Elijah, Anish and Airlie putting in the details to our class map.

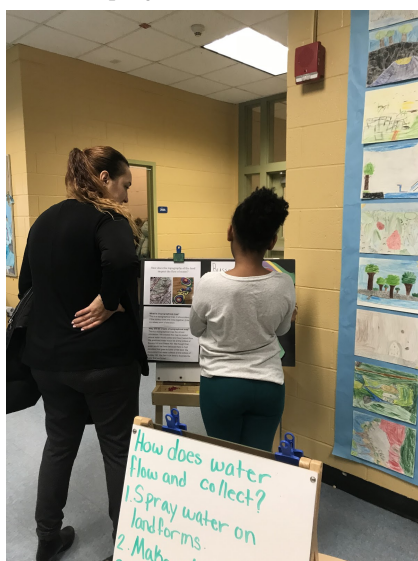


GRADES 3 & 4

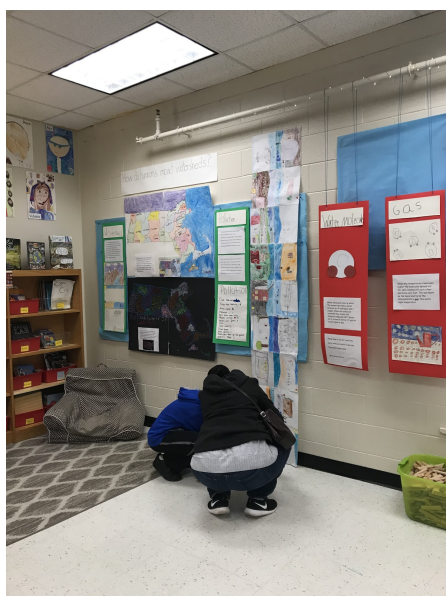
Room 207

Amanda & Amina

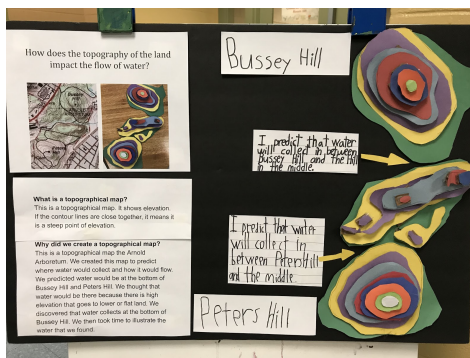
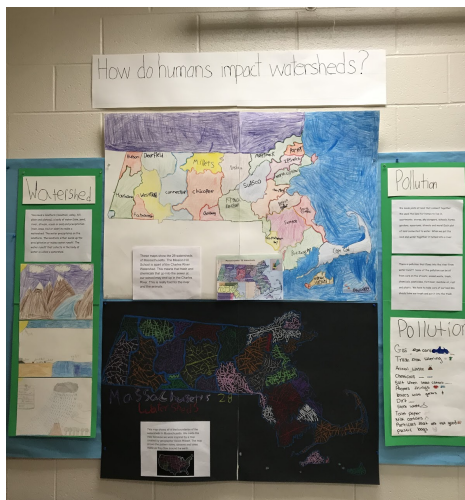
We recently had our curriculum breakfast for the Earth and Space Science theme. It was a wonderful way to celebrate student learning! Here are some photographs of students sharing their learning and projects that were displayed in Room 207.



Malia and Abel sharing work with their families.



How do humans impact watersheds? (photo below)



How does the topography of the land impact the flow of water? (photo above)

Room 212

Cleata & Ayan

Recently during debate practice, I asked our debaters to share what debate means to them. Here are some of their responses:

Debate to me is fun; you get to learn so much about politics and the world outside of my community. You get to spend time with your friends and it's super fun to argue. -Moxie
It means studying people's opinions and the problems going

on in the world and how you can solve the problems. -Chani
It is fun learning about the negative and the affirmative. You do not get to use your phone.

-Josiah

Debating helps me to expand my public speaking and become a better reader and speaker. -Jack Ozro

To me, debate means that you get to listen to other people's opinions about a specific topic and you get to see both of the opinions from different perspectives. -Denise

I think debate is a little boring, but it helps me to read faster. -Jaiden S.

Debate allows me to interact with a unique and diverse group of people and recognize perspectives I would otherwise never consider. - Amishai, past MHS debater.

Amishai debated with the Mission Hill Debate club for two years until he graduated. He continues to debate in high school but visits Mission Hill on Mondays to work with current debaters.

-Cleata and Ayanna (debate coaches)

Room 215

Leila & Kat

I recently took some time to reflect on last year's Kingdoms of the Nile theme. On Sunday, I attended an Ancient Nubia teacher workshop at the Museum of Fine Arts. Last year, MHS students visited the MFA to examine the collection of Ancient Nubian artifacts. However, they

were surprised to find that the majority of the collection was not on view. Until recently, racism and Egyptological bias led many scholars, including MFA curators, to highlight Ancient Egypt's accomplishments and downplay those of the Ancient Nubians. This year the MFA began the process of correcting the record, beginning with a new show, [Ancient Nubia Now](#), which showcases an incredible collection of Nubian artifacts and is transparent about the collection's biased history. In my workshop, I listened to four of the world's leading Ancient Nubia scholars share their latest excavations and discoveries. There is so much new information about this incredible society! It's a reminder that history is evolving and changing as our understandings change. I encourage you to see the show, and think about which history "facts" have changed.

-Leila

GRADES 5 & 6

Room 203

Ms. Coleman & Frances

Mission Hill Students in room 203 (aka Mad Skills) will be presenting on Friday, December 13, 2019 during Friday Share. Their focus for the theme this semester is the "Solar System." The goal was to teach each and every one of the students about astronomy, which is the study of everything in the universe to "law of the star" as well. Every student picked their favorite planet and designed a costume

to wear to present at Friday Share. They even picked a theme song from Michael Jackson's hit list, "Earth Song." The student's real concerns were global warming and how humans can adapt to helping with saving the environment, which is a statement that will be during their presentation.

-Saadia Coleman



Room 205

Nakia & David

Here are our latest installments of End of the Week Reflections. As always, these are the kids words unedited. Enjoy.

Something I am really excited about is...

"I'm really excited about performing a dance at Friday share on the 20th."

Something that went well this week was...

"typing felt slightly faster and easier."
"I got in less trouble"

Something that I feel that went well this week was...

"Our class finished the book we were reading. Then we answered questions about The book and I

felt like it went well and I did a lot of writing"

"Something that I think went well is the Flocabulary videos that we did as a group. I think that our group works well together and we've developed a good way to split up the parts and we are learning the song pretty quickly. I also really like the song that we are doing because it's about changes in the environment."

I would feel more comfortable if...

"we went to the gym more"
"I could do my work at the office"
"We had more recess outside."

One thing I wish went better was...

"my attitude with david"

Something I learned this week was...

"that book reports are hard."
"what affects climate"
"Never get in a fight."
"How to tell dimensions without building"

-Nakia, David and Love Us

GRADES 7 & 8

Room 213

Jenna & Courtney D.

One of the most exciting parts of being a teacher is when the roles switch and the teacher becomes the student. I had the privilege of being able to take on this role during our theme presentations last week in which students shared their "Inquiry Research

Projects.” Students selected their own research questions that were related to our theme of “Earth and Space Science” and then researched their questions, wrote papers and presented their findings through a visual presentation, the creation of a model and an oral presentation. I learned so much! For example, I learned about the impact of a rogue planet coming into the solar system, the probability of exoplanets in other galaxies being able to support life, how the world will look like in 250 million years due to plate tectonics and the history of alien sightings in the United States. If you want to learn more, ask a 7th or 8th grader to share their

project; you are sure to learn something new!
-Jenna & Courtney D.

Room 214

Kathy B. & Ayanna

As we begin to think about next term, we asked students to reflect on what they’ve learned, and how they’ve grown this fall in Humanities, Theme and as a 7/8 community member. Most students felt that they’ve improved in their writing. They provided evidence of this through citing their journal entries, the many paragraphs they wrote to answer the MH writing prompt, and the research paper they wrote about their inquiry statement in Earth

Science. Many say they feel their handwriting has gotten better too. Challenges lie in the areas of research, annotating and summarizing which were part of our Earth Science unit. Others feel that they struggle to understand what they read. Spelling is a concern, but luckily they are all invited to participate in the MH Spelling Bee on Jan. 30 at Mission Hill. This is the first round towards being a part of the National Spelling Bee in Maryland, May 24-29th, 2020.
-Kathy B. & Ayanna

SCHOOL-WIDE NEWS

MHS Family Fund - For Families Experiencing Financial Insecurity

Between now and winter break, we are collecting money to provide gift cards for Mission Hill School families currently experiencing financial insecurity, so that they may provide gifts and necessities for their family. You can contribute any amount via Venmo to @MissionHill and put Family Fund in the memo. Gift cards will be purchased for distribution by our Co-Teacher Leaders.

If you would like to purchase gift cards, you can drop those in the office. Please note how much the gift card is worth. If your family is experiencing financial or food insecurity and would like assistance, please let Jenerra, Geralyn or your classroom teacher know. The names of families who receive donations will not be shared with other families.

If you want a receipt for tax purposes, leave your name with your donation or note that in your Venmo transaction. Thank you!

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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F 617-635-6419

You can find this newsletter, and an archive of past newsletters, on our website at <http://www.missionhillschool.org/resources/newsletter/>.

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Please join us!

BPS SHOWCASE OF SCHOOLS

Saturday, December 14
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Boston Latin Academy
205 Townsend Street
Dorchester

**Transportation
will be available!**
See back for pick up
locations and times.

Explore your school options at BPS!

Meet with school leaders, teachers, and specialists from every BPS school and discover the unique offerings for your child, like focus areas in academics, specialized programs for art, music, dual enrollment at local colleges, athletics and more!

Visit bostonpublicschools.org/register
or call (617) 635 - 9046



TRANSPORTATION FOR THE SHOWCASE

Shuttle Stop:	Neighborhood:	Pick up time:	Depart from Showcase:
McKay K-8 School 131 Cottage St	East Boston	9:30am	12:00pm
Burke High School 60 Washington St	Dorchester	9:30am	12:00pm
Condon School 200 D Street	South Boston	9:30am	12:00pm
Jackson Mann School 40 Armington St	Allston	9:30am	12:00pm
Irving School 105 Cummins Hwy	Roslindale	9:30am	12:00pm
Harvard Kent School 50 Bunker Hill St	Charlestown	9:30am	12:00pm
Mildred Ave School 5 Mildred Ave	Mattapan	9:30am	12:00pm

Visit bostonpublicschools.org/register
or call (617) 635 - 9046



BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

¡Por favor acompañenos!

EXPOSICIÓN DE ESCUELAS DE BPS

Sábado, 14 de diciembre de 2019
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Boston Latin Academy
205 Townsend Street
Dorchester

**¡Habrá transporte
disponible!**
See back for pick up
locations and times.

¡Explore sus opciones escolares en BPS!

¡Reúnase con líderes escolares, maestros y especialistas de cada una de las escuelas de BPS y descubra las ofertas únicas para su hijo/a, como puntos de enfoque académicos, programas especializados de arte, música, inscripción doble en universidades locales, deportes y mucho más!

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TRANSPORTE PARA EL ESCAPARATE

Parada de Bus Trasbordador:	Vecindario:	Hora de recogida:	Hora de salida de la Exposición:
McKay K-8 School 131 Cottage St	East Boston	9:30am	12:00pm
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