



## IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

Monday, February 10th, 4:30 pm  
**Basketball Championship**  
Roslindale Community Center

February 10th - February 14th  
**February Recess**

March 2 & March 3rd  
**Family Conferences**  
(contact classroom for your specific time)

February 7, 2020

Volume 23, Issue 20

## I Think I Can

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

Growth mindset. These two words have recently become big buzz words in the field of education. The term itself was presented by psychologist Carol Dweck in her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Dweck's definition says, "In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point." (Dweck, 2015) In simple terms, you can get better at anything, as long as you think you can and you work hard at it. It is such a simple, yet powerful notion. It reminds me of the old story *The Little Engine That Could*. The phrase the engine repeated over and over again was, "I think I can. I think I can." This mindset was what brought the train success in the end.

Success is the end goal right? So if success is the end goal and mindset is the beginning, what's in between? Let me answer that question with a beautiful example.

This year, like previous years, we have a Mission Hill School basketball team. They are coached by our head day custodian, Stephen Teque and one of our paraprofessionals, Manny St. Vil. Last year was a terrible season. We didn't win one game. Only a few boys actually knew all the rules of the game and even less had a natural talent for it. The team never gelled and it was disappointment after disappointment. Success was elusive. Undaunted, Manny and Stephen reestablished the team this year to try again and again there was a mix of abilities and talent. They lost their first couple of games. Enter growth mindset. Both the players and coaches alike began to put in hard work. Hard work at practice. Hard work making mistakes. Hard work learning from them. Hard work building trust with each other. Hard work being humble. Hard work establishing a team that works to win together and not just as individuals. If we were there to witness it, I bet we would have heard, "I think I can. I think I can."



Dweck says about growth mindset that it "creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment." (Dweck, 2015) The basketball team has without a doubt been resilient. They have learned to love the game even more and accomplished great things as a team. They won yet another game on Wednesday night and have **advanced to the final championship game!** There are

many lessons to learn from their story about opening our minds to become better versions of ourselves at Mission Hill, in our homes and in life. What areas do you need a growth mindset in? As you ponder this question, just say to yourself, "I think I can. I think I can..."

*Jenerra Williams*

## CLASSROOM NEWS

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### KINDERGARTEN

#### K0 Room 108

##### Quéla, Liana, Donna & Sarah

In K0, students have been having a blast learning about the order and personality of each animal in The Great Race (the story of the Chinese Zodiac). Students are enjoying creating artwork, identifying their favorite animals, and re-enacting the story during literacy. Most recently The Burgers have brought "The Great Race" to the school yard by drawing a river with chalk and acting like the animals outside. During recess this week I heard an urgent "Look, look Ms. Quela!" - Kai was calling me. "It's the Great Race!" he explained. "WOW!" I said, "It's the river! How awesome!" It has been so exciting to see those moments when students show what they know. We just can't wait to see what The Burgers will think of next.

- The K0 Team



#### K1/K2 Room 106

##### Kathy & June

In The Cats class we have been inspired by tangrams. Here is a story Xander told after making a house design with tangrams.

*The Witch and The Wolf* by Xander Pann

*Once upon a time there was a house. Inside the house was Xander Pann. He played with his mom, his dad, and his brother. Then a witch tried to destroy his house. Then the wolf tried to blow his house down, but it was too strong. Then the witch destroyed the house with his broom. Then the house fell down. "We need to fix it up again," said Xander. Daddy added strong bricks. Mommy added, "Strong things are longer." Then they*

*build it all by themselves. Then Daddy and Mommy asked the witch and wolf to help them. Then they build it up. Then the witch and wolf said, "Sorry." Then a big water bottle came. It broke the house. Then the strong man lift the water bottle and then a big number came on Xander's house. The strong man lift the number. There was a big X and a number to destroy the house.*

Want to know what happens at the end? Come to room 106 to find out.



## K1/K2 Room 107

### Jada & Manny

We recently read another book by Nora Dooley titled *Everybody Bakes Bread*. Students immediately began making connections.

Maeve: The bread I eat at home is called Kids Friendly. We buy it but don't bake it.

Lucy: We have garlic bread. Its square and its cut in half. You bake it in the oven. It has green stuff on it and we buy it at the store.

Gio & Josue: I have sliced bread at home.

Jonathan: We buy the bread from the store. It has oatmeal (oats). Its brown and tan.

Beck: I have garlic bread at home. Its good and you dip it in garlic. It's very spicy so you have to take a break.

Will: I have sliced bread and its brown and yellow... The oven is making it rise.

Giuliany: Pizza! It have pepperonis!

Alysha: I like yellow bread.

Sometimes my mom always makes yummy stuff that I like.

- Jada Brown and Emmanuel St. Vil

## K1/K2 Room 109

### Katie & Courtney M.

What can we learn about Ancient China from folktales? What was life like in Ancient China? These are the essential questions guiding our study of Ancient China. We have selected folktales from Ancient China to help us

consider these questions. These stories involve shared characters and themes. Starting with two books that helped us bridge our study of Earth Science and rocks and ending with books that help us think about The World of Work and Struggles for Justice, our weekly read alouds are the central thread of our Ancient China study. Check out our book list below! After we read, we talk about the examples of work we see depicted in the stories. In this way we are using Evidence, our Mission Hill Habit of Mind, to consider what we know about Ancient China. Take a look at the work in Ancient China that children have brainstormed from our first folktales.

The Rock Maiden

The Jade Stone

Sagwa the Siamese Chinese Cat

The Magic Horse of Han Gan

Beauty and the Beast

Lord of the Cranes

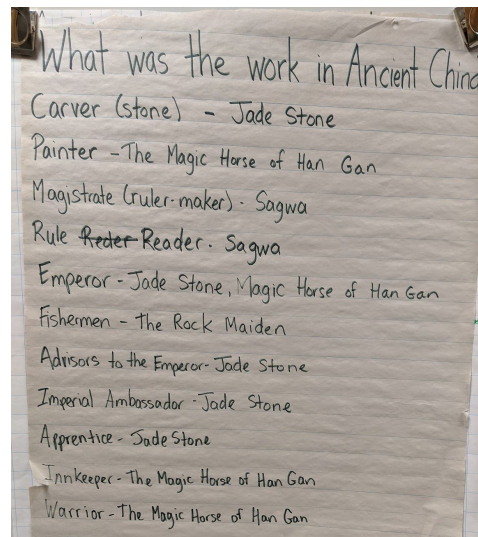
7 Chinese Sisters

Lon Po Po

The Lost Horse

Silk Road Caravan

A New Year's Reunion



## GRADES 1 & 2

### Room 210

#### Amy, Alana & Stephanie

Cocoa Kindness continues to explore the stories of Ancient China. We voted for our favorite type: fairy tale, fable or origin story. The results are in: 4 prefer origin stories, 9 prefer fairy tales and 6 prefer fables. Here are some reasons:

#### Origin Stories:

I like how origin sounds. - Kayari  
Because the Man made the earth.  
- Jonathan

#### Fairy Tales:

Because they're magic and I'm from three kingdoms. -Olivia  
Because they have a little bit of magic and they're not real. - Didi

#### Fables:

Because they have a lesson.  
- Benjamin and Hannah  
Because they're funny and have a funny lesson. - Asa  
Because they are about animals, usually. - Rowan

The stories do have important lessons, even today. We're going to be studying them much more.

And we want to thank Alice's mom for coming in and teaching brush painting to us. We also loved making the dragon puppets that she brought in!

## Room 216

### Danny, Felicia & Usra

As we conclude the Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action, I think back to some work we did over our Winter Retreat. We were looking at the *Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist, Multicultural Institution* and discussing where we believe MHS falls in this continuum. The continuum spans from exclusive (a segregated institution) to full inclusive (a transformed institution in a transformed society). My group and I came to the consensus that we were somewhere between being a passive institution to being one of symbolic change. I'm not going to lie: this is hard to write about. Being a white educator who has lived a privileged life, I know I've said the wrong thing and have been passive in moments when I saw others negatively impacting people of color in our school community. I'm trying to do better, and that means committing myself to supporting people of color (educators, families, and students) as the integral part of MHS that they are. It also means having conversations with other white folks about how we can help move our school towards becoming an anti-racist institution. I'm happy to talk more about this work with any and all who are interested.

- Danny Flannery



## GRADES 3 & 4

### Room 207

#### Amina & Ms. Hernandez

On Friday mornings, 4th graders attend Urban Improv. Urban Improv uses "An innovative approach to experiential learning that uses structured, interactive, topical improvisation focused on real-life challenges and choices."

During their time at Urban Improv students have the opportunity to watch and participate in skits as well as sing and play instruments. The songs and skits have themes: self-esteem, healthy nutrition habits, peer pressure, etc.

Here are highlights according to the 4<sup>th</sup> graders.

I like...

Abel: acting.

Adan: putting on costumes.

Angel: acting in a small group.

Arianni: coming up with ideas for a skit.

Canei: acting in a small group.

Chloe: joining the adults in their skit.

Darby: acting in the small groups.

Emeric: being called to join the entry skit.

Freyja: acting in the opening skit.

Harmony: getting to know people.

Jacobi: talking about putting anime in a skit.

Jediah: getting to act.

Jeremy: joining the opening skit.

Kyle: doing the "Neighbor" skit.

Levi: putting on costumes.

Malia: watching the skits.

Mohamed: playing in the skits.

Neli: playing the piano.

Raymond: acting with friends.

Randolph: planning the skits.

Theo: acting in a small group.

Warlin: playing instruments.

William: planning out skits.

Wren: the beginning songs.

Check back in a few weeks to hear more about the 4th graders' adventures at Urban Improv!

- Amina Michel-Lord

### Room 212

#### Cleata & Ayan

One of the things I have enjoyed most about my first few weeks as an intern at MHS has been witnessing the rituals and routines on the level of the whole school and the classroom. I've been amazed at the thoughtfulness of the routines MHS has established to support community building. From Friday shares to weekly "kindness" notes to the daily closing reflection in Room 212 with the Black Warriors, it's clear that groups of dedicated educators and students have honed these routines over many years. (-Eric)

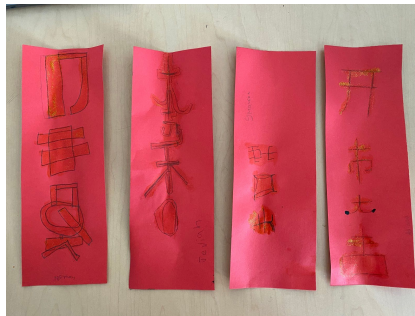


The effort to be a community is embedded in everything we do to include all voices (teachers, students, families and community). Each moment you are greeted in the hallways, staff members taking turns to serve breakfast every Tuesday, or other acts of kindness shown on a daily basis. Our determination to keep our community healthy and balanced is evident. The balance that we try to maintain at Mission Hill School is between relationship building and academic excellence. (-Cleata and Ayan)

- Eric, Cleata & Ayan

### **Room 215** **Leila & Kat**

The Wonders have been celebrating the Lunar New Year! We read the legend of the Great Race, which explains the Chinese zodiac. We also learned about the legend of Nian, the monster who used to come at New Year's until the people learned to scare him away with red signs and fireworks. We made red good luck signs to ward off Nian. Darby's mom, Cindy, came in to tell us a little about the Lunar New Year tradition in her family, and she taught us how to make delicious glutinous rice balls! Then, through trial and error, we taught ourselves how to make tasty veggie dumplings and we cooked them in a bamboo steamer. As it turns out, our wonderful students are also wonderful cooks. Xīn Nián Kuài Lè! 新年快乐 (Happy New Year!)



## **GRADES 5 & 6**

### **Room 203**

#### **Ms. Coleman & Frances**

Room 203 "Mad Skills" has finished three books and completed several essays that relate to the books. *Rock and The River*, *Roll of Thunder* and *Unclaimed Treasures*. The up and coming novel students will read is *Under The Royal Palms* a book that explains the life of a child being a native of Cuba.

The 5th graders are engaged in writing letters to other children around the United States. The program is "The Great Mail Race." After researching several states, students pick their favorite state to write to

students; who have never experienced the life challenges and educational experiences here in Boston Massachusetts. Each 5th grader filled out a questionnaire; so they could match up with children that may have similar educational and sports ideas as them. Several students wrote about their favorite subject "Theme" and explained what Theme was. Others talked about their love for sports and Massachusetts' history of being a sports state.  
-Ms. Coleman

### **Room 205**

#### **Nakia & David**

Love-Us is currently reading the book *Dragonwings* by Laurence Yep. *Dragonwings* is a historical fiction piece that takes place in a fictional China and San Francisco during the the early 1900's. The major themes are family loyalty, multicultural values, dream chasing and poverty. The main character and narrator (Moonshadow) emigrates from China to the States to meet his father Windrider, who left home to seek fortune in the "Golden Mountains" (loose interpretation of the California gold rush of the mid 1800's).

Be sure to check in with your child about the book as we move deeper into the text.

- Nakia & David

## GRADES 7 & 8

### Room 213

#### Jenna & Courtney D.

This week the 7th and 8th grade visited the Farm School. Here are some pictures from our first day.



learned how to write a paragraph." I smiled at hearing this because this reflects my hope that students will learn basic writing skills through editing. When readers are able to easily understand a written piece, it makes it memorable. This idea connects to my next hope, that each 7th and 8th grader's "This I Believe" essay will show them the power of their voice. My mantra is that the more you practice difficult tasks, like editing, the easier the task gets. The hard work is rewarded through reader responses during gallery walks and presentations.

### Room 214

#### Kathy B. & Ayanna

*(Continued)* Two weeks ago, students shared their opinions about editing. While students love sharing writing, they do not love editing. Denise shared that she loved "writing about my favorite subject, traveling," but doesn't enjoy editing. Luis reflected that he, "liked writing whatever you wanted about life but hated the editing." Elias stated, "...I had to edit...and

## SCHOOL-WIDE NEWS

### AMAZON Smiles for Friends of Mission Hill School

When you shop on Amazon, please use [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and choose "Friends of Mission Hill School Inc." as your charity. A portion of what you spend will go to our school!

### Painting Night

Saturday, February 29th from 7-9PM at St. John's Church 1 Roanoke Avenue, Jamaica Plain. Join your friends from Mission Hill School for a night of guided painting. We will create original compositions with instruction from two MHS parents/art teachers.

Tickets at [www.eventbrite.com/e/90972438011](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/90972438011)  
Or email: [fomhs@missionhillschool.org](mailto:fomhs@missionhillschool.org)



### Survey Reminder ~ Please Participate

Parents/guardians: Please complete the parent/guardian survey (sent via email and available in hard copy at MHS front desk in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole). It should take only about 10 minutes to complete the 14 multiple choice questions, along with optional comment boxes. This survey is part of the 2019-2020 co-teacher leader evaluation process, as required by Mission Hill School by-laws and by Boston Public Schools. The survey was created by Mission Hill School community members serving on the evaluation committee: we very much appreciate your time and input into the evaluation process. Please note the survey is designed to be anonymous: your email address is NOT attached to responses. Thank you for participating!

Geralyn Bywater McLaughlin and  
Jenerra Williams, Co-Teacher Leaders

~  
Deborah Meier, Founder  
Ayla Gavins, Former Principal  
Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Superintendent



Mission Hill K-8 School  
A Boston Public Pilot School

[WWW.MISSIONHILLSCHOOL.ORG](http://WWW.MISSIONHILLSCHOOL.ORG)

*This newsletter, and an archive of past newsletters, is on our website.*



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Jamaica Plain, MA 02130  
(Carolina Avenue entrance)  
T 617-635-6384  
F 617-635-6419





**Dot House Health**  
**ASTHMA SWIM PROGRAM**  
**For kids with Asthma ages 8-12 years old**



Who: Asthma swimmers of all levels

When: **Saturday March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Where: **DotHouse Health Pool**

1353 Dorchester Avenue

Dorchester MA. , 02122

Cost: **FREE! FREE!! FREE!!! FREE!!!!**

**(Sign up today!!!)**

To register or for more information  
please contact Dirk @ DotHouse  
Health pool at 617-740-2234 or send  
an email to

[asthaswimprogram@gmail.com](mailto:asthaswimprogram@gmail.com)

**Mandatory Parent Orientation on  
February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020 @ 10 am!!!**

This program starts **March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020** and will run for 10 weeks on  
**Saturdays from 9am-12pm.**

Included in this exciting program will be:

- Asthma education
- Swim lessons with a certified lifeguard instructor
- Improved asthma management skills and confidence
- **Free American Red cross First Aid/CPR/AED course for parents!!!!**
- Lots of fun, Fun, FUN!!!

**\*SPACE IS STILL AVAILABLE\***

★ This program is made possible by the generosity of Boston Children's Hospital in collaboration with DotHouse Health Pool



**Boston Children's Hospital**  
Until every child is well™

