



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

*Zoom Coffee Hour with Jeneralyn
for caregivers
Mondays 3pm-4pm
Fridays 10am-11am*

*Zoom Lunch with Jeneralyn
for students
Wednesday 12-12:30pm*

May 1, 2020

Volume 23, Issue 29

Phase 2

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

One of my joys, as a new grandmother and an educator, is watching my granddaughter, Riley, do new things. It is so fascinating. At times she looks really intently at something and slowly tries to touch it, eat it, etc. I can just see her wheels turning. It's equally as fascinating to watch her dive right into something, almost without thinking and see the joy or confusion that dawns on her face afterward. I bought her a sit-and-scooch elephant rider for Christmas. She is just now old enough to sit up on it and attempt to move forward. We began by putting her on the rider ourselves so she could learn to sit up alone. Then we stood her next to it and pulled one leg over it until she was seated. Last week when we pulled it out again, she held onto the handle and tried to put her leg across and sit down on her own! I wasn't expecting that so soon! She tired to no avail and gave up for a little while. Later on she came back and tried again and sure enough she got her leg over! There were cheers and claps all around as she looked at all of us like, "What's the big deal?" but then smiled at our encouragement and clapped along. Her second try was successful, because she learned something on her first attempt.



BPS is entering "Phase 2" of remote learning. Although we all had a feeling it would happen, none of us knew for sure that schools would remain closed for the remainder of the year, until Governor Baker announced it last week. Since the second week in March educators, students and their families have undergone a swift transition into remote learning with, for many, a steep learning curve. With the start of Phase 2 we will be able to build on what we have learned so far.

Geralyn and I have been on a number of calls all focused on improving remote learning. There is new professional development for teachers. There are new [remote learning resources](#) from the district. MHS, like other schools, are getting closer to a Master Schedule of learning for more consistent and equitable access for our students. Likewise, we will begin a series of Equity Roundtables, a protocol with different members of the community to problem solve around our most vulnerable students' needs. You will hear more about these in the near future. Without a doubt, families are preparing for the next phase as well!

"It is always possible to do a thing better the second time." This quote by Henry Ford brings my thoughts back to Riley and how important our "second times" are. Really the second time is just another chance at learning something new and using our previous experiences to help us along the way. So let's all commit to learning something new. Let's all commit to using the first round to make this one better. Let's all take a risk, like Riley did, to swing our leg over that scooter and land firmly in the seat of Phase 2 with the confidence to push

ourselves forward and faith that the journey will make us better.

Williams

Jenerra

CLASSROOM NEWS

KINDERGARTEN

K0 Room 108

Quéla, Liana, Donna & Sarah

As a new teacher to Mission Hill this year, there were many end of school year events that I was really looking forward to experiencing with The Burgers. Schools remaining closed until next school year means accepting a new normal for events that are meant to unite us as a school. The special thing about Mission Hill is that we have never been solely united by the walls of any given building. Buildings have changed, people have changed, but our sense of community remains the same.

These days we find ourselves united from home facing new ways of teaching and learning that will stay with us for the rest of our lives. Many of us have left our comfort zone, only to learn new skills and grow from this experience. As always The Burgers continue to teach me a thing or two such as how to play "I Spy" from home, which has become very popular in our class. While teaching early childhood is undeniably a job better done in person, I am finding happiness in the fact that technology is allowing me to keep the teaching going. Children have the unique gift of inspiring

happiness instantly and that gift is so necessary in these current times. These days at any given moment we might have thoughts of confusion, anxiety, fear, or grief, yet still, when I see a Burgers face on Zoom- at times very zoomed in- nothing else seems to matter. My heart was filled this week when a parent sent me a video of her daughter watching and reading along with a video I made. It made me feel like I was doing something right in a time when many of us are still trying to figure out what "right" is. It is moments like these that add a sprinkle of joy to our time apart.



K1/K2 Room 106

Kathy & June

This week and last week I have been trying to get outside to take nature walks. I wanted to share with you some of the things I saw and evidence that other creatures had been on the same, trail, path, and road that I walked. I first went on a trail walk. On my trail I saw many trees. On the trees there was green stuff growing. Have you ever seen green stuff growing on a tree? What could it be? Below the tree were some rocks and fallen trees with green stuff growing on it. Have you ever seen rocks with green stuff growing on it? Take a guess.

While walking down my road I heard a howling. I thought at first maybe it was a dog. I soon realized that I had never heard a dog howl like and that it was a coyote. A little further down the road I discovered some more evidence that it was a coyote. I found . . . it's POOP!

Here is a book I thought you would like. Enjoy! [One Small Place in a Tree](#) By Barbara Brenner

K1/K2 Room 107

Jada & Manny

Just before the break we were busy prepping for our Chinese banquet. Our students excitedly helped set the table with

chopsticks, Chinese tea cups, bowls and Chinese soup spoons. They enjoyed and were persistent in figuring out how to use the chopsticks to eat their rice and noodles and celebrated when they achieved success. While we have not been together for some weeks now, we have been communicating with each other in different ways. We are still hearing of exciting moments, seeing that same persistence in our students and celebrating successes through Zoom shares and telephone conversations. We started with Lucy's awesome snake find a few weeks ago. Here are a few more examples of what they have been sharing with each other:

Will shared plans for what to do with the freshly fallen snow after we read *The Snowy Day* together.

Vawn shared drawings and classwork he has been working hard on.

Beck shared constellations in his room and a submarine he and his mom made out of a large box.

Jonathan shared his craft projects made out of paper, cardboard and tape.

Stay tuned for more...
- Jada Brown and Emmanuel St. Vil

K1/K2 Room 109 Katie & Courtney M.

As we come back to virtual learning from our April vacation, I hope you were able to connect with your families and enjoy the

new weather that is beginning to surround us! We are starting to approach Spring. I have been noticing the flowers blossoming around me, the grass is greener, and a tree in my backyard is starting to bloom. This is a special time of year. New plants are growing and coming to life again as they slept throughout the winter. Are you noticing these changes too? You may if you look out your window, explore a park or take a walk outside. It can be very refreshing to take a walk and get some fresh air! This week the Rainbow Elephants were interested in studying flowers! We virtually read a story together called *Strange Plants* written by Kira Freed. If you are interested in reading this book too, you can find it on Raz Kids! We are excited to report back to you soon some of our findings! Bye for now!

- Courtney & Katie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 210

Amy, Alana & Stephanie

Seven weeks in, Cocoa Kindness students are still adventuring "in!" Here's a snapshot of the amazing learning that is going on:

Xander: I've been geocaching and playing "Santorini," a board game.

Perse: I've been painting rainbows with my family

Benjamin: I'm building a robot! And I'm reading "Ronja, the Robber's Daughter" with my mom.

Myla: I am a penpal for the Brookline Puppet Showplace Theater. You could be too!

Darwin: I have been exploring the Forest Hill cemetery. I saw a gravestone with an iron eagle on it. I climbed on top of one grave!

A long time ago, I saw Miss Ashleigh at this cemetery- alive.

Olivia: I made paper dolls of Elsa, Anna, Olaf and Kristoff. I made nachos with my dad using one of the 7 bags of tostitos we bought!

Alice: I am having lots of Zoom dance parties and playing Prodigy online. I am taking care of Blue, my pet bird.

Sabina: I have been reading to my sister. And I planted seeds in our garden- tomato, basil, broccoli, carrots and morning glories.

Yeuri: I have been playing games on my new chromebook.

Azaiah: I learned to ride my bike!

Stay tuned to hear more of the adventures of Cocoa Kindness!

Room 216

Danny, Felicia & Usra

It has been a challenge to be alright with the fact that we will not be returning to the school building this school year. The promise of an exciting spring to offset a challenging winter was set aside due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I had been looking forward to electives, the spring World of Work theme, whole-school events like the music concert and field day, and of course the fun end-of-year trips we take as a class. I don't communicate these thoughts

during Zoom meetings, on the Google Classroom, or in family check-ins, but know that I am feeling deeply frustrated by this situation. I try to model the attitude I hope our students will have when life throws them a challenge: to make the best of their circumstances, display flexibility and empathy for others, and work to better their lives and the lives of those around them. The Rock Stars have made us so proud these past six weeks, showing that they have learned from every time Ms. Felicia and I encouraged them to “go with the flow.” I’ll spare you the erosion and earth science puns, but our Rock Stars have been living up to their class name.

-Danny Flannery



GRADES 3 & 4

Room 207

Amina & Ms. Hernandez

Raya recently wrote the following story as part of her Ownwork (homework) packet. Enjoy!

One day aliens from Makemake saw the planet Mars. The aliens thought it looked interesting. So

they held a meeting to discuss what to do. The aliens decided to go. They packed up and they brought containers of the gas they breathed. The thing that they breathed is methane. The very next day, they set out on their journey to Mars. When the aliens got to Mars, they explored it. They found other creatures on Mars. Pretty soon they became friends. But then the methane they survived on ran out. They had to figure out how to get methane. What they found out is if they dig down into the ground they can find methane. They had to find out how to dig. So they held a meeting and they decided to have another meeting after they searched for answers. They found out that they could sharpen their claws on things. It took some more prep but then they started digging. It took hours and eventually they had to rest. In the morning they started again. It took a while but eventually they found enough to get them back home. After the creatures from Mars slept for 3 days. The aliens started their journey back home. After a couple of days of flying they got back home and after that the Mars creatures had a meeting. After meeting they decided to have a big test for any visits.

The end

-Amina Michel-Lord and Evelin Hernandez

Room 212

Cleata & Ayan

Being away from the physical classroom has created many emotions in both adults and children. Many students shared that they missed their friends and teachers. One student shared her fear of not getting to

hug her teacher again. Some are excited about being home and spending time with family. Our April “vacation” week was a welcome break from trying to figure out how to maneuver the different online platforms and finding assignments and activities that would not cause frustration for students and their families. Coming back to our virtual classroom was also welcoming to see the faces of students and hear the stories some were so eager to share. There was excitement shown on their faces and in their voices as they shared about going hiking, baking, reading, playing video games, and of course updating us all on the family pet. As our students continue to work out their emotions around their new norm for schooling, I hope that we as educators, caregivers and the greater support system will also be okay with not having all the answers; we are all figuring out how to fit into this new norm.

Room 215

Leila & Kat

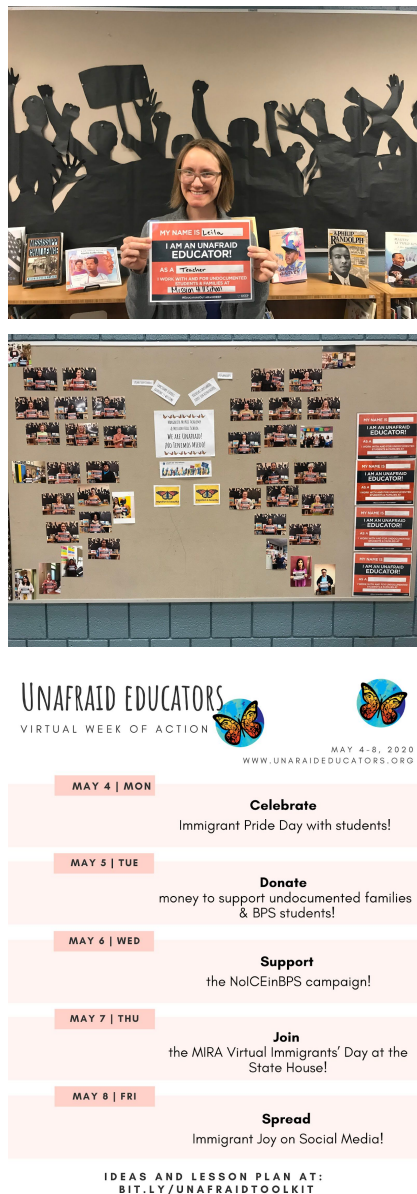
May 4-8 is the [Unafraid Educators Week of Action](#).

Unafraid Educators, a group of Boston educators from across the district, are working to make school a place where immigrant and undocumented students and families are welcomed, respected, cherished and protected.

This year’s Week of Action goals are:

- Move money and resources to support undocumented families and others in need during the current COVID-19 crisis.
- Take action to make schools safe from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) through the #noICEinBPS campaign.
- Celebrate immigrant pride and uplift student stories.

One way to get involved is by contributing to the [Massachusetts UndocuFund](#) for COVID-19 Relief. It was launched last month by a coalition of immigrant service providers and advocates to provide direct assistance to undocumented victims of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Massachusetts. The MassUndocuFund assists individuals and families who have lost their wages and/or employment due to the pandemic, supporting them to recover and rebuild.



GRADES 5 & 6

Room 203

Ms. Coleman & Frances

"Mad Skills" Room 203 has met several times on Zoom for educational purposes. However, students were scheduled to meet Wednesday for a wellness check. Several of the students have expressed their concern about being out of school and not having contact with their teachers and friends. With that said, most of the students came

together on April 29, 2020, at 11:00 am. This Zoom meeting was successful for those students that participated.

Several students had the chance to express their feelings about being home. Many of them said they were bored out of their minds, and others shared how they communicated with their peers by writing letters to one another to stay connected. Others spoke about getting together with peers by playing video games through social media.

What made this meeting so exciting was students playing their instruments and showing their talents. Beatrice Graf played her violin and keyboard for everyone to enjoy. James Walsh played his piano for everyone to enjoy and Jaiden Singletary played his keyboard several times. He also played *"We are the World"* for everyone to close out the meeting.

I almost cried. What a way to end our gathering for the day! I have a special group of children and truly miss them.

Room 205

Nakia & David



Room 205 says hello Mission Hill Community!

GRADES 7 & 8

Room 213 & Room 214

Jenna & Courtney D.

Kathy B. & Ayanna

Beginning around March 15th, we started to be inundated with resources and apps for remote learning. The idea that caught my attention was from an innovative teacher, Lauren S. Brown in middleweb.com, who quickly produced a “living through history” journaling assignment. In Humanities, students respond to a daily journal prompt so when Jenna and I introduced this idea students knew what to do. They began their Pandemic Journals on March 23 and were given two response options- writing or recording in Flipgrid.org.

When did you realize that this was a much bigger deal than you originally thought?

“.....when I saw a lot of people wearing masks and gloves, and when I saw news reports of young people dying.”

“The first day I stayed home from school I thought we wouldn’t have to stay home that long but then after I started reading the news I figured out that it’s a lot worse...”

What do you miss most about school?

“I miss being with my friends hanging out and having a good time before going back home.”

“.....being with people and being able to easily ask questions.”

How will this Pandemic change the world? What is your #1 concern right now?

“My #1 concern is to never see my friend again because this is the last year with them at the

same school and I don't know if I am going to see them when we start high school. :)”

“My concern is that I don't think kids are getting the help that they need”

“This will change the world because this small virus has killed more people than hurricane katrina and 9/11 combined. When we get older this will be a major historical time and our kids will be learning about it in school.”

What are you so sick of already?

“.....everyone speaking about it/ Washing my hands all the time /Not seeing my friends in person”

SCHOOL-WIDE NEWS

Update on support from Alyssa Alvarado, our School Psychologist

Alyssa Alvarado, our school psychologist, is available to any of our students that are having a difficult time during the school closure. In addition to support for the students, she is able to consult with parents regarding their child’s behavior or mental health. If you are interested in support please contact her via email at aarpino@bostonpublicschools.org or google voice: 781-613-3292.

Zooming with Jenerra and Geralyn (Jeneralyn)

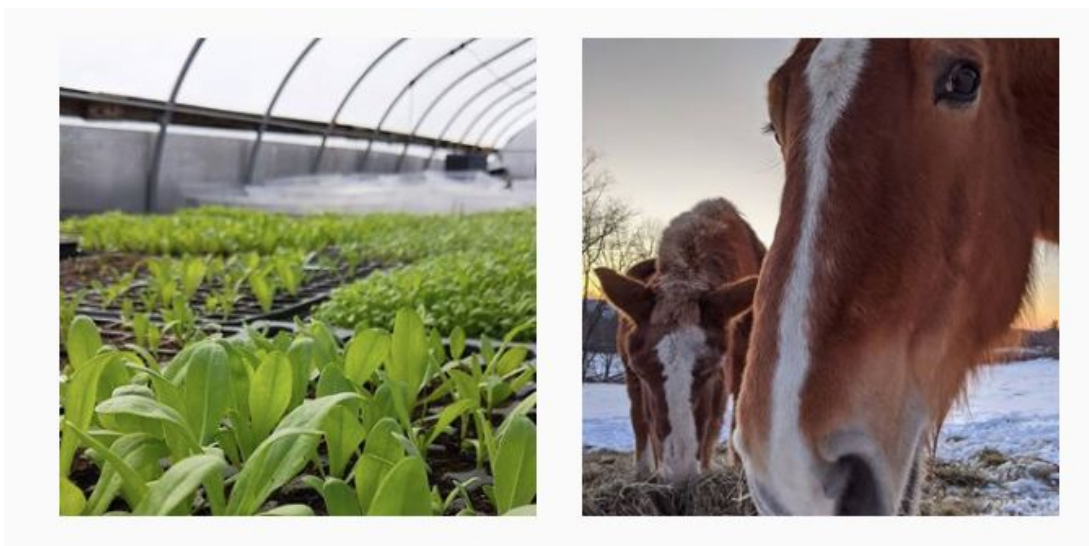
As part of Phase 2, families are welcome to join Geralyn and Jenerra for a Zoom Coffee Hour on Mondays from 3:00pm - 4:00pm and Fridays from 10:00am - 11:00 am. Drop in for a few minutes or stay as long as you like. This will be a chance to connect, ask general questions, share ideas, and support each other. Students are invited to lunch with Jeneralyn on Wednesdays at noon. Again, these are optional and all students are invited. Check your email for the Zoom details, or write to us at gmclaughlin@missionhillschool.org or jwilliams@missionhillschool.org. You can also text Geralyn at (617)906-1053.

News From The Farm School

We really miss the youth energy on the farm right now, but we are committed to maintaining this beautiful and bountiful space for all the children that will come in the months and years ahead: the staff is busy chopping wood, planting seeds in the greenhouse and forking over the vegetable beds while also keeping all of the animals on the farm healthy and happy. And just as is happening at other schools across the country, we are working on imagining how to create and share virtual experiences from here with our school communities - doing our best to post regular videos from the farm on our [Instagram page](#).



The COVID-19 pandemic could not have been foreseen and its impacts on our lives, schools and programs are still unfolding — we remain tremendously grateful to all of our visiting schools for their very real partnership and support: thank you.



Special Website from Our School Nurse, Georgie Marks

I hope you are all staying healthy during this difficult time. I miss you all and hope you can use this site as a resource for health related questions or for those who just want to check in.

CLICK HERE For [Nurse's Virtual Page](#)

<https://sites.google.com/bostonpublicschools.org/muniz-mhsnurses-office/>

-Georgie Marks, PhD, APRN

Chromebook Repairs, Learning at Home, Food Distribution Locations and More...

Check out <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/coronavirus> for a ton of resources available to you on the BPS coronavirus website. You can report a damaged Chromebook, find the latest list of food distribution (school-based and citywide) locations, and access the latest information related to coronavirus and school closure at <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/coronavirus>.

Geralyn Bywater McLaughlin and
Jenerra Williams, Co-Teacher Leaders

~
Deborah Meier, Founder
Ayla Gavins, Former Principal

Mission Hill K-8 School
A Boston Public Pilot School

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This newsletter, and an archive of past

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

Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Superintendent

newsletters, is on our website.

