



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

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

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

Thursday, May 28, 5:00-7:00pm
Virtual Governance Board Meeting (open to all)

May 15, 2020

Volume 23, Issue 31

Greatness

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

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."
- Coretta Scott King

I find this quote interesting, as "greatness" is so often NOT measured by compassionate actions, but the exact opposite. Greatness is far too often equated with the individual conquests, wealth, status, and misplaced power of a person that makes others invisible. Mrs. King, however, invites us to think of greatness in different terms. She introduces the notion of community and acts of kindness. Greatness defined in these terms coincides with who we are as a school community. Now, more than ever, we are working towards our greatness - to make the members of our community not only visible but taken care of.

In that vein, I'd like to lift up our incredible staff. You may know your child's teacher and the awesome things they do. You may know a few other staff members that you've seen, talked to, or interacted with in some way over the school year. It is however, the greatest gift, to know them all and to work with them everyday. Their collective work, dedication, know-how, strength, compassion and love is how our school is not only surviving this pandemic, but is thriving. Our school community, as many have said, extends beyond the walls of 20 Child Street and these folks are the reason you feel that. Even in the midst of all that is going on for them, they still make sure to lift others up. Here are a few examples:

Courtney M, Kathy D, Sarah, Kathy B, Leila, Danny and Geralyn delivered Chromebooks to students.

Meg sent the staff [Some Good News](#).

Liana made masks for one of her families.

Saadia and Georgie delivered food to families.

Alexia sent us a homemade hand sanitizer recipe.



Every staff member has done many acts of kindness during this time. These are just a few examples of how they go above and beyond to make sure that their students and their colleagues are taken care of. They are continually demonstrating their greatness. I will end with the song that Amina sent us last week. It is a beautiful rendition of ["We Shall Overcome" sung by the Aeolians Oakwood University Alumni Choir](#). Not only does it connect with the life work of Corretta Scott King, it is a poignant end note that summarizes the hope and joy I feel when I see the compassionate actions of our staff and community as we work through this time together.

Jenerra Williams

KINDERGARTEN

K0 Room 108

Quéla, Liana, Donna & Sarah

Getting a peek at our students' lives at home has been the recent joy of our lives for the K0 team. Teaching remotely has allowed us to see a side of our students that we wouldn't get to see otherwise. The Burgers are so much fun to be with even from this distance. Our week has been filled with Zoom coloring, music lessons, morning meetings and so much more. It has been fun to see a student's favorite toy or artwork, or the special bonds shared between siblings. Watching The Burgers cook and do science experiments with their parents is so wonderful, and don't get me started on the baby pictures! If you already thought The Burgers were cute now you have no idea!

As a team we grow closer with each weekly check-in and we enjoy sharing our updates and experiences with the kids and our personal lives during this time. This week Ms. Donna is baking bread and has been sharing all the different steps with us such as activating yeast, stretching and forming the dough periodically and letting it rest before it bakes into perfect golden goodness. I see our bond with The Burgers similarly. We put our love and care into our class when they arrived at our

classroom each day. Now we are apart, yet still growing closer by the day, and when we reunite our bond will be magical. Liana got a preview of this when she dropped off "Burger Bags" (bags with learning materials inside) to each family last week. The excitement the kids felt when they saw her was unmatched pure magic and we can't wait to all be together again.

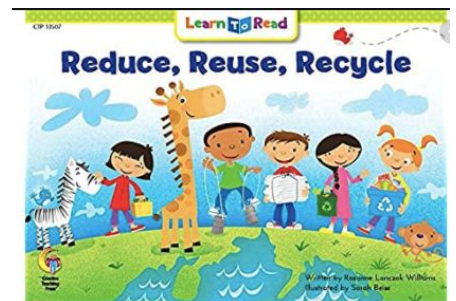
-Ms. Quela & The Burger Team

K1/K2 Room 106

Kathy & June

We have been learning about taking care of the Earth in Room 106. We have been listening to stories about recycling. We read *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle* by Rozanne Lanczak Williams. We also listened to [The 3 Rs](#) by Jack Johnson. Joel, we miss singing along with you. I shared with my class how I recycle at home. One thing I shared is that we love yogurt. My yogurt comes in little plastic containers, big plastic containers and glass. We reuse all these containers for different things. The little containers we use as seed starters. The big containers I reuse to hold my teaching supplies. The glass containers we use to hold our water for painting. We try to reuse most things at our house. Next step will be to make my own yogurt at home so that I don't even have to figure out

what to do with the containers I buy. Selma's family brought us homemade yogurt for a snack a couple weeks before school ended. I still drool when I think about it. What ways do you recycle at home?



K1/K2 Room 107

Jada & Manny

Here are some moments from this week:

Will shared a seed-in-a bag experiment. Results: The bag placed in the sun showed signs of green coloring and roots. The bag placed in the dark only showed roots.

Beck shared his new baby sister! He held her so carefully as his mom Ashley answered all our questions.

Josue shared a mini puppet show that included a cat, a duck and a spinning toy.

Jonathan shared that he has been practicing scooting off a ramp in the garage. He says sometimes his brain wants to do it, but his body seems to not be ready.

Gio shared seven as the answer to how many flowers were growing in Farmer Carmen's garden if she saw six growing one week and another one the next week.

Alysha shared her doll and was excited to show us how it could stand up on its own.

Maeve shared that she learned to ride a 2-wheeler!

Lucy shared her garden. She is growing greens and peas. Some plants are beginning to sprout. She is also learning how to play the guitar.

- Jada Brown and Emmanuel St. Vil



K1/K2 Room 109

Katie & Courtney M.

This week our class experimented with adding a "special Zoom" that was focused on a guided project. Last week I sent a mystery envelope to every child and wrote a note on the back, "Please save until our Wednesday Zoom Call :-)." When we gathered, the children guessed what might be inside by shaking, touching, and looking at the envelopes. When we opened them, 5 small beans dropped out. "What do you think we could do with these beans?" I asked. We

decided to sprout them! Children went to their kitchens and found paper towels and ziplock bags. They dampened the paper towels and rolled the beans inside. Putting the beans and damp paper towels into the bags, children taped the bags to the windows and drew pictures to show what they observed. I prompted the children to continue observing their beans for the coming week and to notice any changes. After our project, we read the poem 5 Little Seeds and acted it out. We can't wait for our special project time next week!

- Katie

GRADES 1 & 2

Room 210

Amy, Alana & Stephanie

The teachers visited the Cocoa Kindness classroom last week. It was wonderful to see our classroom and be reminded of all that we did and will do again. Our Chinese lanterns are still hanging cheerfully. Our puppet show theater is ready for our performances. Hannah's note on the whiteboard advising mindfulness to the class remains a good lesson. Our shadows yet dance like ghosts on the wall. As the teachers looked around, we could almost hear and see the students laughing, working, getting a drink of water, building with blocks, taping and stapling up their never ending paper crafts. We gathered up more teaching materials for remote learning, enjoying all the student voices in our heads.

Seeing the classroom once more helped the teachers to grasp the enormity of what has happened to us. During our last few remote weeks of this school year, Cocoa Kindness, as with all of Mission Hill, will be there for each other as a community that learns and plays together. And we will demonstrate to the world that the path forward is to build our strength as a community that cares for each other. We have this!

Room 216

Danny & Felicia

We have been in phase 2 for two weeks now, and I have to say I'm feeling really good about the work we're doing. Our phonics and writing lessons have such a rhythm to them, and Airlie loves to bring Mew to the party. I've really enjoyed getting to read with individual students during our reading time, while the rest of the class maintains our classroom expectations. Just the other day I paused reading with Bilal to see how everyone else was doing, and they were all engrossed in their books! It would not have looked out of place during our Quiet Work Time in the school building. And don't get me started on math; I can't remember the last time that practically my whole class was working on subtraction with regrouping, including the first graders! We know how to have fun too, with our freeze dance parties and on-screen hide and seek. The hard work and fun times permeate our screens and keep us connected in this challenging time, and Ms. Felicia

and I look forward to continuing to build our capacity as online teachers.

-Danny Flannery and Felicia Haynes

GRADES 3 & 4

Room 207

Amina & Ms. Hernandez

Recently, on Zoom, I asked the Wolves: if they could pick one animal that would describe how they feel, what animal would they choose and why? Here are their responses:

Abel: An owl because owls stay with their families and it feels good to be with my family.

Ella: A horse because I am hungry and horses eat a lot.

Janee: A cat because I feel tired and lazy today.

Jordan: A brown bear because I am feeling lazy and bears are lazy.

Kyle: A dog because I like playing catch and dogs play catch.

Lola: A red panda because I am annoyed with my cat and I feel like I am in the red zone.

Malia: An owl because they sleep during the day and I am sleeping a lot.

Oscar: A snail because I am feeling lazy and slow.

Parker: A horse because horses spend time outside and I want to go outside today.

Randolph: A cat because cats roam around and I am roaming a lot in my house.

Raya: A dog because they go outside and I want to go outside.

Rex: A wolf because I want it to snow again and wolves love snow.

Saoirse: A birch scorpion because I am cooped up inside

and scorpions are often cooped up.

Shona: A tiger because they have a lot of energy and I am feeling energized.

Simeon: A sea otter because I am feeling lazy and sea otters are lazy.

Theo: A sloth because I am feeling lazy from being inside for 3 days.

Misael: A dog because they run and I like to run.

- Amina Michel-Lord

Room 212

Cleata & Ayan

As spring continues to progress, so does our morale. Knowing that the sun still shines, flowers still bloom and we can still take walks and enjoy the outdoors makes us hopeful. Students have been participating in book groups or exploring the world of work during our literacy time. The focus of our book groups is to build comprehension through vocabulary study, story elements and the author's purpose. This week our *Charlotte's Web* book group explored new vocabulary and the author's use of sensory and descriptive details. We created pictures to show the detail that E. B. White used to describe early summer days in chapter six, "Summer Days." Here is a part of the scene from chapter six, page 42 that we attempted to depict in our drawings: "The early summer days on a farm are the happiest and fairest days of the year. Lilacs bloom and make the air sweet, and then fade. Apple blossoms come with the lilacs, and the bees visit around among

the apple trees." I hope you enjoy the illustrations we created from E.B White's descriptive details! Future newsletters will share news from other book groups as well.

- Cleata, Ayan and Eric



Room 215

Leila & Kat

The Wonders have been working on true immigration stories. Jeremiah shared an amazing story from his family:

Once upon a time my sister's grandmother was with a group of people, and they went to a river to catch a boat to come to the United States because they

wanted to see their family. Then they were in the boat for three days. All of a sudden the boat flipped. Some people made it back to the boat in time, but the others were eaten by a crocodile. Those people who were alive were in the boat, but they did not have any food and they were nearly dying of hunger. They were scared because they thought that they were gonna die, and they weren't going to be able to come to the United States. So finally the boat landed, and they were happy because they arrived in the United States.

GRADES 5 & 6

Room 203

Ms. Coleman & Frances

Happy Friday from Room 203! "Mad Skills" students have had a trying time adjusting to a new schedule and many Zoom classes this week. Several of the students have figured it out and others are still learning to adjust to the changes. However; we are "Mad Skills". We can figure it out together. To all the parents that are working hard at home with their own careers, and becoming a teacher overnight, we (Mad Skills) say thank you!

Room 205

Nakia & David

Hey Everyone,

I posted this assignment on our class FlipGrid page. If you're not able to upload a video to FlipGrid

for the assignment, you can upload a photo of your comic.

The assignment is:

A comic strip is a sequence of drawings in boxes that tell an amusing story, typically printed in a newspaper or comic book. For this week, I'd like you to create your own 3 panel comic strip.

On our Goggle Classroom you'll find resources to help you. When you're finished, please create a video telling us about your comic strip on FlipGrid or upload a photo of your comic on our Google Classroom.

If you weren't with our class this week, I'll explain how to get to our class FlipGrid.

1. Go to www.flipgrid.com
2. Type in our class flipgrid code: walker1915
3. Log in with Google, using your BPS email address
4. Click on the Comic grid
5. Click on the green circle with the white plus sign to create your video

Please email me if you have any issues getting to FlipGrid or with uploading your video.

Have fun!

-Meg Walker, Art Teacher



GRADES 7 & 8

Room 213

Jenna & Courtney D.

My favorite part of teaching 8th grade has always been watching portfolio presentations at the end of the year. These presentations mark the end of our students' Mission Hill experience and are their last way to reflect on their learning and their time at Mission Hill. People who view these presentations get to see the finished product, after all of the work is complete. The part I appreciate about this work is the invisible part, the part that comes before that final presentation. This is that part I find myself in now. These presentations typically take a lot of work from the teacher- giving feedback, encouragement, helping students' address specific weaknesses- and this work has been compounded during this pandemic. I find myself on constant Zoom calls- helping students make schedules, editing their work, and convincing them they can do it. It is exhausting but I am confident that the final product will be worth it and that our 8th graders, despite ending their career at Mission Hill in a pandemic, will be able to look back and be proud of the work they accomplished and how they finished their time with us.

Room 214

Kathy B. & Ayanna

It's comforting to have so many students logging in to morning meetings during these unsettled weeks. Recently, Black Fire students shared what they like and don't like about remote learning.

Justin: To be honest, it's hard to pick. I would be at home because I can do my work on my own times but also I would want to be at school because I don't get the help I need.

Luis: I like that we keep our distance.....I prefer class learning to distant learning. I can't focus.

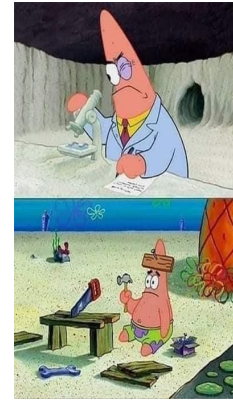
Zuhri, Keysha and Elias: See my friends and take time I need to do my work.

Keysha: I don't like that my computer always freezes.

Chani: ...don't like waking up early.

Liam: I like that I don't have to walk/scooter to school every day but the work on the websites can be hard to get into. I don't like not being in class, seeing my friends and knowing the work.

Next question? "What's the difference between using technology for school work opposed to entertainment?"



Students using technology to make tiktoks

Students using technology for distance learning

SCHOOL-WIDE NEWS

Food Assistance for All BPS Families - Message from Superintendent Cassellius

Beginning this month, every Boston Public Schools (BPS) family will be receiving financial assistance for food due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are available under a new program called Pandemic EBT (Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer) or P-EBT.

As BPS provides free meals to all students, every BPS child is qualified to receive P-EBT funds. You will receive \$5.70 per eligible child per day for every day school is closed due to the pandemic, or \$28.50 a week.

If you do not currently have an EBT card, you will receive a P-EBT card in the mail in May at the home address on file with your child's school. Each enrolled BPS child in the household will receive a unique P-EBT card. If you currently have an EBT card, funds will be added to your account. The card is valid for one full year, and funds can be used to buy food items at stores where SNAP benefits (food stamps) are accepted (look for signs that say, "We accept EBT here"). Families are not required to use P-EBT funds. For more information, please visit www.MAp-EBT.org or contact food@boston.gov.

IMPORTANT: Using your P-EBT card does not impact you or your child's immigration status. The public charge rule does not apply to this program.

If you do not receive funds by mid-May or have questions, please call Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline at 800-645-8333. The FoodSource Hotline is open to all Massachusetts residents, with support available in 160 languages. Call 800-645-8333 to find out how you can get additional food support for your family during this time.

The City of Boston provides free meals for families every weekday, available at 65 locations throughout the city. BPS has 17 sites with free breakfast and lunch available for pick-up Monday - Friday, 8:30-11:30 am. You can use the P-EBT card and continue to pick up meals at the sites.

Please continue to practice safe social distancing and wear a face covering while outdoors. Visit bostonpublicschools.org/coronavirus for additional resources and updates. We know these are difficult times, and we are here to support you. This incredible challenge will make our community stronger as long as we continue working together.

Stay safe and healthy.
Dr. Brenda Cassellius
Superintendent

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.

Help Hotline is Open!

There is a BPS hotline where you can get many answers to your questions related to the coronavirus school closure. The hotline is 617-635-8837. You can also 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
Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Superintendent



Mission Hill K-8 School

A Boston Public Pilot School

WWW.MISSIONHILLSCHOOL.ORG

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



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