

Mission Hill School News

Letter from Child Street Spring Calendar at MHS

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

As I looked at the calendar a familiar sense of panic came over me. Spring is here. That means there isn't much time to do all the things we hope to do with students and other children in our lives. It's a season of events shared with the school community and the time just seems to fly.

Listed below are some of the Mission Hill events on the spring horizon:

May 26 No School: Memorial Day

May 28 MHS Teacher Appreciation Day (noon to 2:00): Send in a dish and/or come in to the school during the lunch/recess hour. This is one of the staff's favorite days of the year. Why? Volunteers come in to cover lunch and recess duty so everyone on staff can have lunch together.

May 28-May 30 School Quality Review: Team is present at Mission Hill. You may be asked to be part of a focus group or individual interview at some point during these 3 days. This review is all about feedback to the school. Where do we shine? And where do we need some polishing? Or dent removal?

May 29 School Picture Day: These are photos you'll want to share with loved ones and hold onto for years to come. Order forms must be turned in or no pictures, sorry.

June 2- June 20 Portfolio Reviews (schedule to come): Students in grades 7 and 8 will present their work to committees for feedback and assessment. These committees are predetermined and are open only by invitation. Artwork produced by grade 8 students as part of the portfolio reviews will be on display outside of the auditorium. All are welcome to view.

June 5-7 Promotion and ELD (to be scheduled): Families will be informed by invitation if such a meeting is needed.

June 6 Recollections (8:00am to 9:00am): Students in grade 6 will share reflections on their learning. They will read excerpts of a written reflection based on a viewing their work produced and collected over years spent at Mission Hill. Family representation for each grade 6 student is expected.

June 6 Exhibitions (9:30am to 10:30am): Students in K0 to grade 4 will present reflections on the year's work and learning. Family representation is expected.

June 11 Grade 8 Art Show (6:00pm to 7:00pm): Grade 8 students will complete one the graduation requirements, performance art. Family representation for middle school students only is expected at this event. Be prepared for dance, song, comedy and welcomed surprises. Bring applause and hearty congratulations to all the artists.

June 12 Governance Board (5:00pm to 7:00pm): This is the last meeting of the year. At this meeting new board members will be announced. If you've never been to a board meeting, this promises to be a great one. All are welcome. Childcare is available.

June 17 We have school! The BPS calendar says no school because it's Bunker Hill Day, but it is a make-up day for Mission Hill.

June 19 MHS Graduation (10:00 to 11:30): All students will attend our school graduation, but only the families of graduates are welcome to join. Photos and a listing of which high schools our graduates have selected will be in a future newsletter.

June 20 Field Day (10:00- 1:30) is a family event. Games and events begin in the morning. A picnic lunch happens after the games and activities. There are lots of ways to pitch in and have a great time.

June 24 and June 25: Half days at school. Dismissal begins at 1:25.

June 25: Last day of school

All of the things listed above will happen while our students are learning about how and why people arrived in the United States of America, electives are moving along, teachers are writing end of year reports and we all begin to prepare our school spaces for the summer. Yowza!

~Ayla Gavins

From the Classrooms

3 and 4 year-olds

Room 108

Where can three and four year-olds experiment with making huge bubbles, sit in a real bobcat and pretend to be a construction worker, climb an elaborate two-story structure, drop golf balls down a ramp from a 10 foot height, play drums, and pretend to drive friends to school in a life-sized school bus, and more— all under one roof? The Children's Museum, of course! Every child in The Helping Hands class enjoyed a fabulous adventure as we explored the museum in small groups. We had snack outside on the waterfront – checking out the birds and boats as we enjoyed the lovely spring day. Thanks to the many chaperones that joined us. Keep a look out for the book we are making about our experience – everyone will get a copy to have at home as a reminder of this wonderful day.

~Geraldyn Bywater McLaughlin
& Donna Winder



Kindergarten

Room 106

Disappointment comes in all forms. On Friday we had a close understanding of exactly what disappointment means. The Peregrine Falcon class was dressed and ready to go to the Farm School. After waiting awhile we learned that the bus would not be coming. I was very disappointed. The children helped me to think about things that would help me feel less disappointed.

They came up with many suggestions. We could play outside. We could look at birds. We could have a picnic on the rug. Those were great ideas and I asked if going to JP Licks would help everyone feel better as well. My idea was met with cheers.

We walked to JP Licks with the help of Eli's grandparents and devoured cones of ice cream. Thank you Eli's grandparents for buying us our yummy treats. We made it back to school and as suggested we had an indoor picnic on the rug in our class. We got cozy

and ate our Farm School lunches.

The children handled the disappointment of the day well and it turned out to be a great day after all.

~Kathy Clunis D'Andrea

Room 107

Last week, the Princess Dragon Bumblebees had their first "Where we come from" family presentation. While this school-wide theme comes around every four years, Jo-Ann and I have made space in our curriculum to do a smaller version of it every year.

The shortened version of this study usually includes creating life-sized replicas of our students, a family origin book and family presentations where family members are invited in to tell us about where (across the globe) their families are from. For each presentation, we attach pictures of our students to the region his/her family is from on our big map. This process serves as one way we introduce map-reading



skills. This year, Lila's family kicked off our presentations! They shared that some of their family came from Eastern Europe and that they celebrate Hanukkah, Christmas, and Seder (a big dinner that begins Passover).

According to her dad, Lila and her mom like to dance salsa-style and they all like to eat spaghetti and meatballs. After sharing that they listen to "music called Katy Perry," the classroom immediately broke out in song, "I got the eye of the tiger... you're gonna hear me roar... Oh oh oh oh oh..."

We finished our time together (as we always do) by looking at our big blue map outside of the K Quad doors. We found all the places Lila's family spoke about and in the process, learned that Italy is shaped like a boot. We cannot wait to hear the rest of our family stories. Jo-Ann and I always look forward to this time because the stories are always amazing and engaging.

~Jada Brown
& JoAnn Hawksworth

Room 109

Coming next week

~Jenny Goldstein

Grades One & Two

Room 204

A few weeks ago there was a PBS film crew at the school. Special correspondent John Tulenko from the PBS News Hour was there to look at our school and talk to teachers about their opinions on teacher leaders and teacher led schools. He interviewed Kathy, Nakia and me.

I had to miss read aloud with the Magic Learners for the interview so when I came back I explained why I was out. Then a wonderful discussion ensued. Part of what I shared with them was this question: "A lot of people around the country don't think that teachers should be able to decide what to do with the school. They think the principal or someone else should make those decisions. What do you think?" Here are some of their responses:

Dillon – I think that they should run the school because if the principal does something, decides on all the things, then the teachers might not get to teach what they want to.

Maya S. – Teachers because I don't know I just want teachers to do it.

Arianny – I think teachers and principals because they make good decisions together. They work together.

What do you think?

~Jenerra Williams

Room 205

Friday afternoon electives have offered a wonderful experience for everyone in our community to work with different teachers and students. Emma and I are leading a Lego Lovers Club, which involves students of multiple ages working with a range of Lego kits, as they think like engineers and scientists. They bring their Lego creations to life and challenge their minds as they work with pulleys, levers, gears, and wheels.

Kindergartners James and Eamon built a tunnel for balls to travel through. Patrick exclaimed,

"Yay, did you see that? It went across two chairs!" as their ball exited the tunnel and rolled across classroom chairs. Feelings of pride showed through, as someone else said, "Everybody's gotta see what I made." Older students Anais, Jovanni and Omauri worked on building a Lego monkey with moveable arms. "We're almost done and then we're gonna hook it up to the computer," Omauri announced.

When they finished, Zach and Zachary, from Robert's class showed the group how to use the computer as they modeled with their goalie that moved back and forth across a goal, while speaking. Zachary shared, "I made that sound it's saying." Once the other group connected their monkey, they realized a piece wasn't put together just right. They'll have to revisit the directions next time to correct their mistake. We're looking forward to seeing what new creations will evolve next week!

~Ashleigh L'Heureux

Room 217

If you walk into our classroom, you will notice our class' guiding questions on the wall: how do people move? And why do people move? During our read aloud time, we discuss what we've learned about these questions from our community interviews and books.

This past week, we explored the understanding that sometimes people do not choose to move and instead they are forced to move. We recently read *The Bracelet* by Yoshiko Uchida, a story set in

World War II. In Uchida's story, Emi, a seven-year old girl, is forced to move with her family from California to a Japanese Internment Camp in Montana. In the story, Emi's friend Laurie gives her a gold heart bracelet before Emi travels to Montana. Our class paused during the read aloud to interpret the line in the text where Emi says, "We looked like the enemy, but we were not the enemy."

Students critically examined their understanding of an "enemy" and talked about what people do when they are fearful of someone or something. As we continue to explore migration, these themes will continue to surface.

~Emma Fialka-Feldman

Grades Three & Four

Room 207

A couple of weeks ago the Role Model Hawks finished their Peopling of America interview project. Below are our goals for this project:

- 1) Identify any trends in why people moved to Boston.
- 2) Learn about the various types of transportation used to get to Boston.
- 3) Learn about the things they missed most from their original home.
- 4) Learn about the diverse cultures from the wonderful countries and states.
- 5) Learn how to identify the difference between a country and state.
- 6) Learn the names of various countries and states around the

world.

7) Learn how to read and use a map

Students were asked to interview two individuals who have moved to the city of Boston. To get a broader range of findings, the students were required to interview someone who moved here from outside the country and someone who moved from another state. After interviewing these persons, students were asked to bring in a photo of each person. The interviews and photos were then used to create a visual representation of how far the interviewees traveled to get to Boston. The students were then required to create drawings of the outlines of the country and state that each person had lived in before coming to Boston. Some of the reasons we learned were that people came to Boston to further their education, to support a health concern(s), to have freedom, and to simply try something new. Many of our families and friends have left special ones behind, while others were able to bring their loved ones. This was a fun and interesting project and we hope all who participated enjoyed it.

~Robert Baez

Room 216

I'm not sure exactly how a discussion of JP Licks came about this week. I think it came from our neighborhood walks around Jamaica Plain, when a student asked if we could go on a field trip to JP Licks ice cream.

After a few emails to a few

families, an idea was born. If they wanted to go to JP Licks, they would need to organize it. "What day would you like to go?" I asked. The responses were: the middle of June, the end of May, and the beginning of June. We took a vote. The students agreed to June 2nd. "Who will be responsible for keeping track of who brings in the money and how much money is brought in total?" Many volunteers eagerly wanted to help out. Three students were selected to organize this responsibility. "What will we do if we are short on money?" They replied, "We can do a lemonade stand!" Someone questioned, "What if we don't want to sell lemonade? Could we sell something else?" "Yes, that's fine," some answered.

"How do we make sure everyone gets the same experience at JP Licks?" I wondered. "We can all select the same size. We can choose different flavors, but we have to select the same size so it is fair." My last question was what size they would agree upon. This is where we are in our process. The next step is to figure out how much money the Clever Cats must collect in total. Then they will decide on size (kiddie size or one scoop) and how much more money they will need to raise to get the size they all agree upon. To be continued....

~Josh Kraus, Elsa Batista
Selina Ruiz & Melanie Centeno

Grades Five & Six

Room 210

Coming next week

Room 215

Coming next week

Grades Seven & Eight

Room 213

The 7th graders were teeming with questions when I introduced the topic of portfolios months ago: What happens if we don't pass portfolio? What is an advisor? What work do 7th graders present in portfolio? Do our parents see our portfolio? What happens if we miss portfolio? How long are portfolio presentations? Why do we do portfolios at Mission Hill? What is a portfolio?

An 8th grader had sound advice. "Your portfolio will be great – as long as you do all your work!" Another chimed in, "That means every day. Don't let yourself get behind." These words of wisdom, with the authenticity of peers who had shared the portfolio experience, were received soberly.

At Mission Hill, we know kids want to succeed so we put structures in place to guide them through the portfolio process. Frequent check-ins and interim deadlines, communication with families, a supportive yet no-nonsense advisor, and collaboration with peers to review work and practice presentations are all part of the

process. Admittedly, there are many ways for a student to get off-track. But just as surely, there are adults ready to nudge and push and encourage all the kids to do their best work. But all the support in the world won't help if a student doesn't choose to work. We are honest with kids: We offer support and teaching and encouragement, but no one will do the work for you. That's your responsibility.

This year, 8th graders will present the first week in June, and 7th graders the following two weeks. Families have received their portfolio date and time. We look forward to seeing you as your children share their work.

~Ann Ruggiero

Room 214

Coming next week

Hot Topics

Courtney's Corner

Check out Courtney's Corner for information on various programs and resources for you and your family.

Rincón de Courtney

Mira la información que esta fuera en el "Rincón de Courtney" para información sobre varios programas y recursos para ti y tu familia.

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