



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

Volume 37, No. 2

October 5, 2007

Changes

by Marcia FitzGerald, MCT Principal

I have written and rewritten this note to you and I have not found a version that satisfies me. So, I have decided to be direct and simple.

I will be retiring from MCT at the end of this school year. While I look forward to the opportunity to enjoy a more relaxed schedule, I know that I will miss the work I do here and everyone in the MCT community. Some of you know that I have spent the last 30 years at MCT, first as a classroom teacher and most recently as principal. When anyone asks me what my job is, I reply, "I have the best job in the world! I work in a school."

I am sure you know that my commitment to MCT is complete and will continue to be. As always, I am available to answer your questions and to keep you informed about what is happening at school. Look in the Bulletin and on the MCT website for information about the hiring process for the new principal.

Mark Your Calendar

October 8 - No School - Columbus Day
October 23 - MCT Half-Day - 12:15 PM Dismissal
October 26 - MCT Octoberfest - 6:00-8:00 PM
October 31- MCT Half-Day - 12:15 PM Dismissal
November 2 - School Picture Retake Day
Nov. 6 - No School - Professional Development Day
November 12 - No School - Veterans' Day Observed
November 21 - Half-Day - 12:15 PM Dismissal
November 22 & 23 - No School - Thanksgiving Break

McTNews

Not sure when the gift wrap orders are due? Can't remember when photo day is? Then join the McTNews and receive school and PTSO reminders on-line. The McTNews is a moderated Yahoo group, so only school and PTSO-related information is sent to you. To join, simply go to the new PTSO website www.mctptso.org and click on the yahoo link to the right, or email a request to lynne.densen@verizon.net to be added. You will then receive an email confirmation to join. You can either "join the group" with your Yahoo ID or "join the mailing list instead" on the bottom of the page, for those without a Yahoo ID. Contact Lynne with any problems.

The PTSO Has a Website!

The web address is <http://www.mctptso.org> – please add it to your Bookmarks/Favorites. The website has information about volunteer opportunities, fundraisers, socials, and all the things the PTSO does. It also has an event calendar so you can keep track of coming "red letter days".

- Can't find that form that came home in your child's backpack? You can download it from the website and sometimes even fill it out online.
- Don't remember when the next PTSO meeting is? You can check the calendar and see.
- Do you have some time to volunteer and want to know how you can help? You can check the Get Involved section for Volunteer Opportunities.



Any questions please contact the webmaster, Maria Greene at maria@justmagicdesign.com or use the new Contact form through the website.



PTSO User Fees



A huge “thank you” to all of you who have already sent in your check to support the PTSO’s Cultural & Performing Arts Committee (CPAC) and the Arts Integration Program. Many people gave more than the suggested amount! As of this writing, we have received \$2500; however, we need \$3000 to pay for the program.

Past performances have included: “Scott Joplin,” “Opera to Go,” “Dennis Kobray,” “Galileo” (4th grade), “Thoreau” (6th grade), “Michelle’s Menagerie” (1st grade), and “Birds of Prey” (3rd grade).

If you have not already done so, please write a check to “McT PTSO” (suggested amount, \$7/ child) as soon as possible and send to the office in an envelope marked “PTSO User Fee.” Thank you!

--Suzi Yarin, PTSO Chair: (978) 263-6383 or ssyarin@verizon.net.

Everyone is welcome at PTSO Meetings!

Wednesdays, 7 pm, Faculty Lounge (top of stairs, top floor).

Mark your calendar now:

10/17, 11/14, 12/19, 1/16, 2/13, 3/19, 4/16, 5/21, 6/18

News from the PTSO Social Committee

Welcome back and, to our new families, welcome to McT. We hope the beginning of the school year has been going well and you are getting to know all the amazing people, kids and adults, here at McCarthy-Towne. Our goal is to help you get to know each other a little better, particularly now at the beginning of the year. So to start the year off, we’re in the midst of planning two events: the **Fall Social** and the **Parent Potlucks**.

The **Fall Social** will be on **Friday, October 26th** from 6:00-8:00 pm in the Parker-Damon Building. It will be a McT **Octoberfest** with music, dancing, food, and some magical fun. So mark your calendars and plan to come and see your old friends and meet some new ones. And, don’t forget to check out the great books available at the Book Fair while you’re there.

The **Parent Potlucks** are now in their third year and have been a great success. Our goal is to have each classroom organize an informal gathering— a potluck dinner at someone’s home for parents only, dinner at a local restaurant, or even a gathering on a weekend at a local park with the kids. This is a great opportunity for your class to come together, think of a fun event and get to know each other in a setting outside of school. So, think about if you are able help coordinate and/or host one for your class. It’s a great way to meet people and you will be amazed how much fun it will be! Thanks to everyone who has volunteered so far—many classes already have events planned or in the planning stages. So, keep it simple and have fun.

As always, these events work best when everyone helps out. If you can, volunteer and get to know some fantastic people! If you have any questions or would like to help, please let us know:

Kate Murray at 978-263-3422, lfdtmurray@verizon.net or

Rosemary Benson at 978-263-3312, benson_rosemary@hotmail.com.

Auction Kick-Off Meeting

Planning is already starting for this year's groovy auction. This is our largest fundraiser and an extremely fun social event.

The McCarthy-Towne School Auction is being held at the Devens Common Center on **Saturday, March 1st, 2008**.

Volunteers are needed for jobs big and small. It is a great way to meet people, get involved and support our school. The more the merrier.

There will be an Auction Kick-Off meeting at Susan Lerner's home--25 Blackhorse Drive on Sunday, October 14th, starting at 7 pm. Come join the fun.

Please call or email the co-chairs with any questions: Carolyn Imperato, (978) 264-9982, carolynimperato@comcast.net

Susan Lerner, (978) 263-0045, sammyabe@aol.com

Professional Development Day

Professional Development Day is early this year; Tuesday, November 6th. During this day, the staff attends a variety of meetings. While they are away, as in past years, we would like show our gratitude for all their hard work throughout the year by having a nice luncheon awaiting their return.

We are looking for volunteers: bakers who would provide a luncheon item (hot or cold), appetizers, salads, or desserts. If you don't bake, we will need drinks, paper goods (napkins, plates, cups, and plasticware), table cloths, clean-up items (paper towels, wipes, sponges, plastic storage containers/baggies), and flowers. We are also looking for a few parents who can help with set-up and clean-up.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Lynne Densen at lynne.densen@verizon.net or 978.266.2952. We ask that, if you are planning on making something, please let us know what it is, so we end up with a variety of items for the luncheon.

On-line Emergency Cards

Response to the district-wide rollout of the on-line emergency card has been very positive! However we are still missing on-line cards from some families. If you haven't already done so, please log onto the district website to update the card for your student (<https://absis.ab.mec.edu/public>) using the access information in the notification letters sent home several weeks ago.

It is critical for the district to have this information. For example, in an emergency, the district needs accurate contact and medical information immediately. Besides emergency situations, nurses are required by law to have annual authorization from parent/guardian to give acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (motrin/advil). Without an up-to-date authorization, parents/guardians will have to be called each time there is a need for routine treatment of headaches, etc.

Note: If you had students at Douglas or RJ Grey last year, you were provided a username for one student and a family password. The usernames for your other students will be listed when you log in for one student. You must log in for each student separately using their unique username and family password.

Please contact Jean Onorato in the office if you have any questions. jonorato@mail.ab.mec.edu

MCAS Dates for Spring 2008

Please note the schedule for MCAS test administration next spring. If you have children in grade 3 - 6, please avoid scheduling appointments and travel during MCAS test periods.

English Language Arts, grades 3, 4, 5, 6:
March 24 through April 4

English Language Arts Composition, grade 4:
March 25

Math, grades 3, 4, 5, 6:
May 12-16

Science and History & Social Science, grade 5:
May 19-23

Important Information for all Parents Regarding Medications

Medication administration is an important issue in schools. Some students require medications at school in order to survive. Others need medications in order to learn. Occasionally, students require antibiotics during the day following a bacterial infection.

The goal of your School Nurse is to administer only those medications that are absolutely necessary during the school day. All other medications should be given at home either before or after school.

State law requires a written order by a licensed prescriber and written parental permission before any medication can be administered to students, including over-the-counter medications. You can obtain forms for this purpose from the School Nurse, or from most Health Care Providers. All medication MUST be in the original labeled container and be labeled with the student's name. The School Nurse will not administer the following: expired medications, medications delivered in unlabeled containers, and medications in inappropriate containers such as zip-loc bags.

For the safety of all students, no medications are to be carried to school by students. The only exception to this rule is for Junior High and High School students who are allowed to carry inhalers or Epi-pens after certain requirements are met.

With your help, the School Nurse can provide a safe, supervised environment for students who require medications at school.

Feel free to contact the McT School Nurse, Betty Johns, at 978-264-3374 with any questions.

News from the Sloyd Studio

Brick by brick, row by row, the graffiti wall is now complete! Check out the mural outside the Sloyd room and see how the 4th, 5th and 6th graders made their unique marks with their names.

Thanks to all the creative collectors in kindergarten and 1st grade. Collages inspired by their found treasures will soon be displayed in the downstairs hallway gallery.

Watch out for small magical beings with wings! Second graders are in the process of constructing fairy houses using bark, twigs, dried grasses, seeds and clay.

If you didn't get a chance to visit Canobie Lake this summer, the 3rd graders will take you on a ride this fall. Students are using a variety of twistable materials to create exciting models of roller coasters.

And remember to be on the lookout for inspiring sculptural shapes in your recycling bins. Drop off your cleaned plastic, cardboard tubes, wood scraps, packaging inserts and egg cartons anytime (no nut containers please).

Happy creating,
Heidi

Volunteer Opportunities

by Astrid Trostorff, Parent Involvement/Community Outreach Coordinator

Thank you to all the parents who have submitted forms indicating interest in volunteering at McCarthy-Towne and for the PTSO. The information had been entered in the volunteer database, and has been shared with the appropriate staff and PTSO committee chairs. You will be contacted as volunteers in your interest areas are needed.

If you have not yet completed the volunteer forms sent home the first week of school, it's not too late. Just send them in to school with your child. Or, you can go to the new McCarthy-Towne PTSO website (www.mctptso.org) and click on "Get Involved." You can either print out the volunteer forms and send them in to school, or you can fill out forms on-line and follow the links to email them to me. (Thank you, Maria Greene, our PTSO web-master, for adding this feature.)



Book Fair 2007

This year's McCarthy-Towne Book Fair will be held Friday, October 26 through Tuesday, October 30, in conjunction with the Fall Social. The Book Fair is great fun for the kids, a nice way to spend a couple of volunteer hours, and a wonderful fundraiser for the school.

Students will come to the Book Fair at assigned half hour slots, as determined by their teachers, on that Friday, Monday and Tuesday. The Book Fair will also be held Friday night during the Fall Social. Families are encouraged to buy books for their children, as gifts for others, and as gifts to specific classrooms by purchasing books from the Teachers' Wish List. This is a terrific way to help the teachers build their classroom libraries.

Volunteers are warmly welcomed! Parents can choose to volunteer at times when their child/children attend the book fair. The more the merrier! We also will need volunteers to set up the book fair on Thursday, October 25, work the social on the evening of Friday, October 26, move the book fair into the hallway on Monday, October 29th after school and break down the book fair on Tuesday afternoon. We have a list of volunteers that Astrid has collected but it is not too late to add your name to the list. Volunteers will be contacted as soon as teachers sign up so you can be sure to be there when your child's class comes in.

More specific information regarding your child/children's classroom visit will be coming via backpack mail. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer please contact Susan Lerner (sammyabe@aol.com, 978-263-0045) or Julie Jannke (julie.sweitzer@comcast.net, 978-263-1924).

Hopscotch

McCarthy-Towne parent Marietta Lees has opened a wonderful toy store called Hopscotch in West Acton. She is offering to do a fall fundraiser for the school on November 8 from 10am - 7pm with 20% of the proceeds going back to MCT. Stop in and take a look at all the great things she has including many favorite books and games. Hopscotch is located on Spruce St. where the car wash used to be next to Tables to Teapots.

Tidbits from Tina

by Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

Here is more from Dr. Jane Nelsen's Positive Discipline A-Z:

Tool #2: Decide What You Will Do, and then Do It!

"The heart of Positive Discipline is learning to change yourself instead of trying to control others and make them change. If you've been busy trying to control your children, you probably haven't considered the possibility that you can deal with problems by controlling your own behavior." Dr. Nelsen gives a few examples to make this point. This particular example rang true for me—

"A parent noticed that his kids were putting off their homework until just before bedtime, and then asking for help. He told them he would be available to help with homework every night between seven and nine. The first time one of his kids came to him at 9:30 to start studying for a test, he smiled and said, 'I know you need my help, and I am happy to help you between seven and nine any night of the week. This time you're on your own.' It is so easy for a parent to feel sorry for a child at that point, or think it is best to give more chances (after the 'I told you so' lecture). But you can make the problem much better if you have the courage to follow through on your commitment, because you are allowing your child to learn from her behavior. Keep in mind that this only works if you skip the nagging, reminding, and lectures."

Tool #3: Act, Don't Talk

Adults are big talkers, especially when it comes to our children. Instead of using a few words, we use paragraphs and our children tune us out. Try acting instead of talking. As Dr. Nelsen explains, "Instead of asking your children to be quiet over and over, you can try waiting quietly for them to give you their attention. If children are fighting over a toy, quietly remove it and put it where they can't reach it. You don't need to say a word for them to get the idea that they can have the toy back when they stop fighting over it. If your child is banging his fork on the table. . . ask the child to stop once. If the child persists, remove the object instead of repeating yourself incessantly." We lose the impact of our words when we use them too much.

Seeking Tape and CD Players

The McT Reading Program is seeking small, gently-used tape players or CD players (personal size with headphones, no am/fm stereo) that can be borrowed by students in the reading program to go with the huge collection of books with tapes/cd's that are available for students to enjoy.

If you happen to have any that you no longer need, please consider donating them to a worthy cause where they will be put to wonderful use!

You can drop your donation off in the office, labeled Sharon Ryan, Room 307, or contact me directly at sryan@mail.ab.mec.edu for more information. Thank you in advance for your support!

Landscaping Committee - We Still Need You!

Would you like to see some beautiful results to your volunteer work? Join the Landscaping Committee! We plan, and take care of the gardens of the Parker-Damon Grounds. It is a combined effort with both McCarthy-Towne and Merriam Schools cooperating. All of the landscaping for this building depends on our volunteers, so please join us! We are especially in need of a McCarthy-Towne co-chair for this committee!

Our major All-School Fall Clean-up Day will be on **Sunday, October 14, from 9:30-1:00!** Please join us - the whole family is welcome - and bring your gardening gloves, weeding claws, dandelion pullers and the desire to pull a lot of weeds. Help us make the campus shine!

You do not need gardening experience to join! We are looking for anyone willing to spend a little of their time to help out. Even if you can only attend a clean-up or planting day, we'd love to have you join us. Please contact Amanda Lye (978 635-9879) amandalye1@yahoo.com with questions.



Fall Family Photo Day: Sittings Available

Our annual Family Photo Day is scheduled for **Sunday, Oct 14**. This year we are very pleased to have Lola Farra of With Clarity Photography (and a McT parent) take our photos. You can check out Lola's website at www.withclarityphotography.com. The photo day will once again be at the Acton Arboretum. Sittings are scheduled every 10 minutes and the cost per family grouping is \$40.00. The sitting fee includes a free photo and even better, \$35.00 of each sitting fee goes directly to the McT PTSO! Get a jump on those holiday cards and gifts while supporting our school! **There are a few sittings available in the afternoon between 1:00 and 3:00.** Contact Sandy Billings at sandybillings@verizon.net to reserve a spot for your family.

Turn Your Groceries Into Free Educational Equipment for MCT!

For every dollar spent at Donelan's Supermarkets, McCarthy-Towne will earn points redeemable for free educational equipment, including art supplies and books.

- All you have to do is save your receipts and give them to the school. You can either send them in with your child or drop them in the collection box in the McCarthy-Towne office.
- Receipts dated September 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007 are eligible.
- Even if you aren't a regular shopper at Donelan's consider either shopping there during the promotional period or asking your friends and neighbors to give you their Donelan's receipts.
- Remember... The more you spend, the more we earn!

Thank you! If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Schaad at ws.schaad@gmail.com.

Food Service Notes

by Kirsten Nelson, Food Service Director

This Month's Healthy Recipe: Fruit Salsa

2 golden Delicious Apples (peeled & cored)

2 Kiwi (peeled)

1/2 Orange (peeled)

1/2 pint Strawberries (stems removed)

1/2 pint Raspberries

1/2 TBSP. Apple Jelly

1/4 cup Brown Sugar

1/8 cup Sugar

Wash, Chop the fruit, set aside in a bowl. Mix last three ingredients together and add to the chopped fruit. Mix, set aside in the refrigerator overnight and serve chilled with cinnamon pita chips. This is a great fruit dip! Enjoy!

Did you notice the **farm fresh produce** we mentioned on our September menu? We are working with local farms to bring farm fresh produce to the schools. In the month of September we tasted: Peaches, Cucumber Sticks and Corn on the Cob. We hope you enjoyed these new items. Obviously as the weather gets colder we are limited in what we can offer.

We are happy to announce our new **Whole Grain Products!**

On the 17th: Whole Grain Pasta with Choice of Sauce

On the 19th: Whole Grain Max Pizza Sticks

On the week of the 22nd: Sandwich of the week:

Whole Grain Chicken Patty on a Roll

We have taste tested these products and your kids will never taste the difference!



Recycling Fundraiser News

Keep sending in your used printer cartridges, cell phones, and used electronics – DVD movies and video games, portable DVD players, laptop computers, MP3 players, video game consoles, digital cameras, digital picture frames and portable GPS devices. Note that the collection box has now moved to a gray bin outside the McT office, next door to the front door and seating area. You can also find collection boxes at the main branch of the Acton Memorial Library and at the Acton Water District office on Rte. 111.

Please note that desktop computers and copier toner tanks are not accepted for recycling. For more specifics, see Ecophones.com or FundingFactory.com.

Donations are tax-deductible; however, you should consult your tax advisor for a determination of the items' value.

We are looking for volunteers to help in packing up materials collected at the school office for shipping and picking up materials from the library and water district office. If you are stopping by the library or the water district office and see that there are materials in the collection box, feel free to pick them up and drop them off in the school recycling bin. Any questions, call Astrid in the office or Debbie Simon at deb.simon@comcast.net or 978-263-5322.

Box Tops For Education

Time to hand in the first round of Box Tops! Please send in your Box Tops with your child to be given to the classroom teacher. If you can trim the edges it would be fantastic! The class with the most box tops by Oct. 15th will receive an Ice Cream Treat! Remember, every box top is 10 cents for MCT. Please contact Susan Sheehan (andrew_sheehan_1999@yahoo.com) or Maura Champigny (champsfam@yahoo.com) with any questions. Thanks for your support!

Knitters Group

Any parents interested in meeting every Wednesday morning from 9-11 at a local coffee shop to knit should contact Amy Miles at cjmiles@tfs.net or 266-1340.

Bullying 101 for Parents

October 24th – R.J. Grey Library at 7:30 p.m.

Is bullying an issue in your child's life ... would you like to learn more about how to handle this issue? Come join us for this informative presentation by Carolyn Imperato, Ph.D as she educates us on this difficult issue.

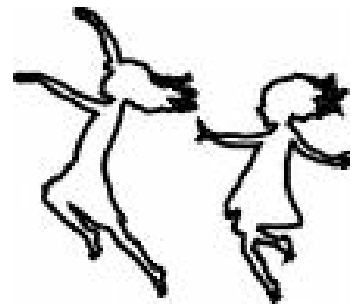
Some adults believe that bullying and teasing are a natural part of childhood, but children do not need to accept this as a part of their lives. There are ways to effectively address this behavior and to help all the children who are affected by it. This one-evening program will help parents of elementary and junior high students to acknowledge when bullying is happening and know what to do about it. Parents will learn to identify the signs that their children are being bullied or are bullying others, even when children are not talking about it. Through interactive discussions, parents will develop strategies for intervening and supporting their children, whether they are the ones being bullied or are doing the bullying. This program will also include suggestions for working collaboratively with the schools and other professionals to help your children. Handouts and take home tips will be provided.

Carolyn Imperato, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist and certified school psychologist. She has worked in the Acton schools, community mental health agencies, and the courts with all age levels. She is currently in private practice in Littleton where her interests are working with children, teens, adults, and their families around issues including communication, self-esteem, healthy relationships, parenting challenges, and mental health problems. She is also the Wellness Coordinator, Steps to Respect and Second Step consultant for the Acton Public and Acton-Boxborough Regional School Districts.

In addition to hosting this meeting, ABPCC – Acton Boxborough Support Group for Parents of Children with Challenges - will also have our opening morning meeting at **9:30 a.m. on October 17th** at ABRHS room 131E.

We will discuss this topic of bullying and also any topics that our members feel would be important to cover this coming year. Please join us to kick off this year and bring any specific questions regarding bullying that we can pass on to Carolyn before her presentation the next week.

Mark your calendars for future events –Learning Disabilities - November 27th 7:30 p.m. RJ Grey Library and Dealing with your Child's Anxiety – January 31st – 7:30 p.m. RJ Grey Library. For further information on our group, contact Francesca Ricciardi at fmr08@verizon.net or Lynn Armstrong at lynn.armstrong2@verizon.net.



Scrip Gift Card Program

We would like to thank all the families that ordered Scrips in the month of September. We are already off to a terrific start this year, raising just over \$350 for our school.

The October orders are due on **Wednesday, October 17th**. This scrip program is a great way for your family to help the school raise money, without doing anything additional or different. Just shop as you normally would on a regular basis, but instead of paying with cash or credit card at checkout, pay with your gift cards.

Attached is a list of participating merchants in our area. Please note specials for the month are in bold on the order form. Order forms are also available on our website - <http://mctptso.org/fundraising/scrip>.

Please contact Lynne Densen at lynne.densen@verizon.net or 978.266.2952 or Maureen Jones at maureen.jones1@verizon.net or 978.266.2874 with any questions. The November Script deadline will be November 14th and the December Script deadline will be December 11th.