



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

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December Changes

by David Krane, McT Principal

All the leaves are brown and the sky is gray... this is what it looks like outside my window today as we finish the first full, five-day week since the middle of October. It is the coming of real winter as we head into December and that is just a fact of life and geography. Making the transition into spring is just as inevitable as the transition into winter, but it only seems that winter comes along more frequently!

This is also the time of the year when we can start to take stock of how children are growing and where the challenges remain. We have gone through just about a third of the year and teachers have gotten to know their children very well at this point. Conferences have been pretty much all completed and so teachers have a wealth of information at hand to guide their instruction for individual children and their individual needs. This is the value of formative assessment, assessments that are administered to direct the course of instruction for students. Our job as a school is to reach every learner in a way that is most meaningful for that child. To do this, we need to really understand how that child learns.

Dawna Markova writes in her book, *How Your Child Is Smart*, that all children learn in different ways, an understanding that teachers here certainly know well. She identifies three different states of learn-

ing: operating with a conscious mind (with awareness of their thoughts), sometimes subconsciously (making connections in a semi-aware fashion), and even sometimes "unconsciously" (below the threshold of awareness). Each of these forms of thought produces different kinds of brain waves. Most importantly for teachers and for students, different people have different predispositions in each of these states of mind. Some of us are consciously oriented to visual primacy, or attention to what we see, others to auditory, or what we hear, and others to kinesthetic knowledge, which is the learning through movement and the body. This same "diversity" occurs on the conscious and the subconscious levels. Children respond differently and that's really the thesis in Markova's work: "...it's all about understanding and addressing the individual nature of each child. Once you know how to reach children as learners, you will know the ways in which they will be receptive."

Though this book is written for parents—the people with the greatest incentive for considering their child's learning styles, it also describes a process that happens in school. Teachers, too, have "great incentive" to learn about individual learning styles. It gives us the insight to reach children in a very individual way, in a way that allows to children to truly grow, to learn better and to flourish.

Mark Your Calendar

DECEMBER

12, Wednesday
Scrip orders due by 3:30 PM
PTSO Meeting, 7 PM

21, Friday **NEW**
Early Release, 1 PM
No Afternoon Kindergarten

24–January 1
NO SCHOOL, Winter Recess

JANUARY

2, Wednesday
School Reopens

9, Wednesday
PTSO Meeting, 7 PM
Faculty Lounge

10, Thursday
McT Community Assembly

21, Monday
NO SCHOOL,
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

22, Tuesday
Kindergarten Changeover
(AM/PM Switch)

Early Release Day: Friday, December 21st

Please note that Friday, December 21st is now an Early Release day. On Early Release days, McT follows the usual Thursday release schedule with a 1 PM dismissal. There is no afternoon Kindergarten on this day and morning Kindergarten students will be dismissed at 1 PM. Morning Kindergarten parents should let their teacher know where your child will be going at the end of the day—e.g., daycare, bus home, picked up in the office.



from Kate Murray and Tracey Smith, PTSO co-chairs

Welcome to December and the wonderful season of celebration! I would like to share a quote from one of my kids who said to me the day after Thanksgiving but I believe it is relevant as we approach this gift giving time of year. After reflecting upon his Thanksgiving Day, he commented, "it is so strange that after a day dedicated to people sitting around and saying how thankful they are, we are then encouraged to go out and buy more and more things on Black Friday". How true this is, and so I share this with our school community as a way of reminding us what is important during the holiday season. It should not be about the "stuff" that we get, but more about the goodness in gestures and experiences we have with those who we love the most.

We hope you can join us for our next PTSO Meeting on Wednesday, December 12 at 7 PM in the 2nd floor Staff Room. We will be joined by two members of the school committee to present information about the Regionalization process and what this will mean for our school community. We know this is a busy time of year, but we hope you will be able to attend. Thank you for all your support and enjoy all this holiday season brings.

Cleaning for the Holidays?

Save your toys, bikes, clothes, sporting equipment, books, furniture and household items for the annual McCarthy-Towne Yard Sale. We have had amazing success in past years and would like to continue in 2013 to raise funds for our students. We will be collecting donations on Friday, April 26 for the sale on Saturday, April 27. Note: this years sale will be earlier than in past years AND will be coordinated with Merriam's sale.

We need your help! If you have any questions about the sale or are interested in volunteering to help with organizing, pricing, or selling, please contact either Julie Weir (julieannweir@yahoo.com) or Laura Welch (laura@penelopejewelry.com). "

Thank You

Thank you to all the members of our community who volunteer in so many ways, including (but not limited to):

- All the families who contributed to the Student Council Cradles to Crayons Winter Clothing Drive.
- Carol Chytil and Christine Kobelski for assisting Sharon Ryan and our Reading program.
- Ana Kerr, Kelley McCarthy, Janet Munson, Lisa Petrocchi, Kristi Pucillo and Tina Watlington for helping Nurse Betty with the hearing and vision screenings.
- Sarah McBride and Christine Kobelski for your help in getting all the donation letters out to local businesses for our all important Auction.

Sloyd News

A few new student art displays have popped up around school to admire and enjoy:

- A parade of wood animals in the library—grades 1 and 2.
- A school of fish swimming from the entry stairwell—grade 1.
- Leaf drawings and wire sculptures hanging outside of the sloyd room—grades 3 and 4.
- Mars Rover models exploring the downstairs glass case—grade 4.

2013 MCAS Schedule

Students in Grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be taking MCAS tests this spring. Please avoid scheduling trips and appointments during the MCAS testing periods. Testing begins at the beginning of the school day, so students should avoid late arrival to school. If they arrive after their class begins the test, they will not be able to take the test that day.

English Language Arts Reading Comprehension (Grades 3, 4, 5, 6)
Week of March 18

English Language Arts Composition (Grade 4)
Tuesday, March 19
(Make-Up Date: Thursday, March 28)

Mathematics (Grades 3, 4, 5, 6)
Week of May 6

Science, Technology & Engineering (Grade 5)
Week of May 13

McT ROCK 'N' ROLL AUCTION NEWS

The McT Auction is coming up on Saturday, March 9. There are many ways to get involved and we need your help! There is an immediate need for a raffle committee chair (description below). Want to help but afraid to go it alone? Grab a buddy and take it on! A full list of volunteer opportunities is available on the auction website—www.mctptso.org/auction.

Raffle Chair: The raffle is a significant fundraising component of the auction. We need someone to coordinate volunteers to sell tickets for an hour or two at places like Roche Bros and Donelan's over two weekends. Someone will also be needed to keep track of ticket sales. The approximate time commitment is 10 hours spread out from January through early March.

If chairing a committee still seems overwhelming, how about working as a Raffle Groupie? Sell raffle tickets in hour-long shifts at Roche Bros and Donelan's on two weekends preceding the auction—kids and friends are welcome and encouraged to help! A Groupie can also work the night of the Auction selling the 50/50 tickets and tickets for the gift bag table. Ideally, the time commitment is 10 hours spread out from January through early March but we will take ANY and ALL offers!

PLEASE HELP! This event really adds to the financial success of the auction! For questions or additional information, please contact either Jennifer Mabardy (jennifermabardy@comcast.net) or Lauren Richardt (laurenrichardt@yahoo.com).

Got Donations?

The Holiday season is in full swing and the McCarthy-Towne Auction is not far behind! This is the season of giving and getting. These are also the times when many of us feel we are asked to give a great deal more than we seem to be getting. What if there was a way to have your cake and eat it too? Well, you can! It's as simple as participating in the Auction! When you donate your goods and services to the Auction, you can feel great that the proceeds that result from those gifts will go to better services and opportunities for our children!

Think BIG! As you criss-cross the stores, maybe pick some of your favorite items and make a themed gift basket. Make it even more spectacular by inviting another McT family to contribute! Would you be willing to give up a game from your sports season ticket pack? How about using your connections to get some sports memorabilia?

Think BIGGER! Do you have access to a vacation rental! Or perhaps you work in a profession where you can donate your products or services (it's free advertising!).

The ideas are endless! You can check out last year's auction booklet for some inspiring ideas at www.mctptso.org/auction. Please save your gently used items, however, for our annual McT yard sale in the spring. Downloadable parent donation forms can be found on the website as well. Hard copies of the donation forms will be coming home in backpacks soon! The deadline for parent donations is February 8, 2013. This is earlier than in previous years and before February break!

If you have any questions about donations, please contact Christine Kobelski (cmk190@yahoo.com).

Turn Your Holiday Cooking into Art Supplies for McT!



With the upcoming holiday season, most of us will be spending a lot of time and money at the supermarket, buying ingredients for delicious meals. With the *Register Tapes for Education* Program at Donelan's, those groceries can now also help our school! For every dollar spent, McCarthy-Towne will earn points redeemable for free educational equipment, like art supplies and books.

So every time you shop at Donelan's, save your receipts! Simply send in your receipts in with your child or drop them in the collection box in the office. **Receipts dated September 1, 2012–March 31, 2013 are eligible.** Questions can be directed to Kate Hoitt (kjhoitt@verizon.net).

Notebooks and Zumba and Games, Oh My!

from Kat Hudson & Chris Hanlon

This year's Fall Social was a great success! The kids enjoyed games, face painting, henna tattoos, Zumba lessons with Sue Donahue, and winning the featured prize—an eco-friendly mini notebook and pen with the McT logo on the cover. Even the adults wanted one.

The Fall Social is always a lot of work and we would like to thank all the volunteers who made the night such a success: Jennifer Beale, Ray Joyce, Jennifer Mabardy, Ryan Broglia, Sarah McBride, Carloyn Dee, Eve Aronoff, Janice Trombetta, Josh Spero, Debbie Walz, Erika Hanley-Onken, Sandy Billings, Ori Kilner Munson, Iris Munson, Liz Noonan, Kate Murray, Liam Murray, Mariah Straayer, Rob Bukowski, Margaret Busse, Greg Lewy, Dan Niemann, Heidi Dalaklis, John Aiello, Debbie Aiello, Huili Xia, Natasha Venti, Carol Chytil, Jen Nelson, Ann Landiorio, Preeti Bhuvan, Lara Maira, Eric Hudson, Eric Brown, Ravi Maira, Rob Landry, Kelly Simon and Priya Ramanan. We also are very grateful to all the high school students that helped as well as the parents that provided baked goods and items for the food table. Lastly, a special thank you to Patty Lee who does too many things to name but always instrumental with all things going on at McCarthy-Towne.

We really enjoy coordinating the Fall Social and creating a fun night for so many in our community.

Scholastic Book Fair Thank You

*from Mimi Kirkman and Susan Lerner,
Scholastic Book Fair Co-Chairs*

This year's Scholastic Book Fair was a tremendous success! Thanks to the generosity of the school community, we generated a nice profit for the McT PTSO, donated many books to the school and classroom libraries, and were able to provide books to children within our school who were otherwise unable to buy books. Thanks to all who shopped and supported the cause!

In addition, we would like to thank the many volunteers who donated their time to make this event so successful; we truly appreciate your flexibility throughout all of the Superstorm Sandy workarounds! Thanks to Karen Benn, Jen Nelson, Barbara Hirsch, Ashlee Kim, Maria Cid-Ledoboer, Christine Brault, Rena Barbieri, Dana Lissy, Jill Defoe, Wendy Schaad, Amy Stimac, Sylvie Aguilar, Laura Kelmar, Shannon Callison, Sara Stall-Ryan, Alex Mojica, Lena Saetre-Grant, Pam Hippensteele, Kimberly Hurwitz, Julie Jannke, Ana Kerr, Nicole Lippa, Sharon Metzger, Tina Wattlington, Noreen O'Brien, Lauren Richardt, Santana Wat, Laura Williams, Pauline Thorpe, Maureen Jones, Marianne Sullivan, Bridget Matz, Brenda Simpson, Grace Watman, Lizzie Kirkman, and Meredith Kirkman. Also, a very special thanks to Astrid Trostorff and Patty Lee... we couldn't have done it without you!

Reminders from the Health Office for a Healthy Winter

The CDC recommends reminding children to:

- 1. COVER THEIR NOSE AND MOUTH** with a tissue when they cough or sneeze, and have them throw the tissue away after they use it.
- 2. WASH THEIR HANDS OFTEN WITH SOAP AND WATER**, especially after they cough or sneeze, use the bathroom, and before handling food. If water is not near, use an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- 3. NOT TOUCH THEIR EYES, NOSE, OR MOUTH.** Germs often spread this way.

Your child should stay home from school if he or she has a fever, vomits or has diarrhea within the past 12 hours, appears lethargic, or has a persistent cough. If your child is sick and goes to school, you place others at risk for getting sick as well.

Before returning to school after an illness, your child should be fever-free for 24 hours and have enough stamina to manage a full day of school activities including P.E. and recess. If your child is taking an antibiotic, he or she should remain at home for the first 24 hours. Please notify the health office if your child tests positive for strep infection.

All medications should be brought to the health office by a parent. Do not send in medication in your child's backpack.

Check your child for lice once a week, and contact the health office if you find lice or nits. The most effective control is careful, repeated inspection of the child's hair and scalp by parents.

Students need to get plenty of sleep and physical activity, drink water, and eat good food to help them stay healthy in the winter and all year.

Please make sure that your children are dressed appropriately for outdoor activity; our students will continue to go outside for recess unless it is extremely cold or raining. Coats, hats, mittens, and boots are a must when the weather is cold, and don't forget snow pants when there is snow on the ground. Dressing appropriately for the winter temperatures will keep children not only warm and comfortable, but healthy as well.