

McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

December 5, 2014
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December Changes

by David Krane, McT Principal

The words of the song tell us that all the leaves are brown and the sky is gray... this is what it looks like outside my window today as we look forward to only the second full, five-day week since the middle of October. Although that bit of snow is already gone from where I sit and write this, that cold and snowy beginning to our Thanksgiving break last week was probably a portent of things to come. Now that it is December, we can really prepare ourselves for the real winter.

We are also just about one third of our way through the school year and we are noticing and tracking how the children are changing, too. Conferences are, for the most part, recently completed. Families and teachers have been able to sit down and speak to the learning that is happening in the McCarthy-Towne classrooms. One of the extraordinary parts of this school is the level of respect that develops between student and teacher. For kids to really grow as learners and citizens, the teachers must have a solid understanding of the child as both a person and a learner. Knowing and understanding where a student is as a learner is the critical on-going process towards guiding that child in sustained growth. Mutual respect between teacher and student deepens that understanding and nurtures the growth.

We are also about a third of the way through a year that has seen many, many changes around us. We are now a Pre-K to Grade 12 district, and we have experienced some of the transition bumps that would come from that not insignificant change, including some transportation and scheduling issues. But we are overcoming those and we are moving forward. Our new Superintendent, Glenn Brand, is learning about our schools and he has spent quite of bit of time in our school getting to know our students and staff and getting an up close look at who we are as a school. That close interest in all of our schools and that effort to learn about what makes each of the schools unique in the new Region will help his leadership as we grow as a regional district.

I wrote last week that Thanksgiving has been traditionally a time to reflect. As I think back over the first third of our year, I am so impressed with the remarkable way that this amazing faculty has adjusted to so many staff changes as well as to some scheduling and process changes. We are fortunate to have the forward-thinking and flexible faculty that we have. I also think of the generous and giving parent community and how much they, too, support our vision. It is an authentic partnership and for all this we can indeed be thankful.

Mark Your Calendar

DECEMBER

- 9, Tuesday**
PTSO Meeting, 9:30 AM
- 12, Friday**
Scrip Orders Due
- 16, Tuesday**
4th-6th Grade Winter Choral and Recorder Concert, 6:30 PM
- 18, Thursday**
Early Dismissal (1 PM)
- 24-Jan. 4**
NO SCHOOL,
Winter Recess

JANUARY

- 5, Monday**
School Reopens
- 15, Thursday**
Early Dismissal (1 PM)
- 16, Friday**
NO SCHOOL,
Prof. Development Day
- 19, Monday**
NO SCHOOL,
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 26, Monday**
McT Winter Band Concert

FEBRUARY

- 5, Thursday**
Early Dismissal (1 PM)
- 16-20**
NO SCHOOL,
Winter Recess

Holiday Shopping – December SCRIP Orders!



Still need gift cards for holiday presents? We are sending in one final Scrip order before the break. **Return your order no later than Friday, December 12th** and we guarantee your gift cards to you in time for the holidays. Remember, there are more gift card options available to you on the Scrip website, and you can order them yourself or we can order them for you. Need a printout of the full gift card list? Email Christine Russell (QofHearts@gmail.com). Thank you for supporting our school!



from Shelley Cole and Julie Weir, PTSO co-chairs

We hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and enjoyed spending four days with your family. **It's not too late to donate to the McT Annual Appeal.** Make sure to send in your donation before the winter break so your donation can be tax deductible for this year. You can head to the McT PTSO website (www.mctptso.org) to donate online or send a check into the office with your child. Please include your name and address so a receipt will be sent home to you for your tax records. Thank you to those who have already given. We appreciate your quick response.

Another way to help our school out without spending any extra is to shop Amazon through the link on the PTSO web page. Scroll down and it is on the right side of the page. McCarthy-Towne gets a percentage of what you buy!

At our next PTSO meeting we are welcoming the Finance Committee. The meeting will be on Tuesday, December 9th at 9:30 AM in the multi-purpose room. Representatives from the Finance Committee will be joining us in a discussion that will update participants on the state of Acton's finances, including its recommendation regarding taxes for the next fiscal year and discussing how the municipal and school budgets are shaping up so far. There will also be plenty of time for questions with Finance Committee members.

Thank You, 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. This was our biggest one yet and we filled more than forty giant bags with warm and wonderful coats, hats, mittens, boots and other clothing.

Thanks to Martha Brandt, Shannon Callison, Bridget Chamberas, Aditi Chandra, Petra Charisse, Pam Hippensteele, Kate Hoitt, Christine Kobelski, Jen Nelson, Cura Pfefferkorn, Fiona Starr, Mariah Straayer, and Julie Weir for helping in the office with bus passes, dismissals and other projects

Esther Anderson, Pam Hippensteele, and Julie Weir for laminating special projects,

Jana Bull, Shannon Callison, Julia Hanna, Kate Hoitt, Kimberly Hurwitz, Bridget Matz, Alex Mojica, Janet Munson, Jen Nelson, Cura Pfefferkorn, Lena Saetre-Grant, Mariah Straayer, Julie Weir and Susie White for helping with Safe Arrival,

Carol Chytil and Tracey Estabrook for helping get all the donation letters out to businesses for our spring Auction,

Kate Hoitt, Sarah Hoitt and Tara's class for collating this month's Bulletin, and

Julie Brown-Cook for managing our UNICEF donation. Our students collected almost \$500 this year to donate to UNICEF!

Scholastic Book Fair Success!

The McT Book Fair was a BIG success again this year thanks to the many volunteers who made it happen and the countless McT families, teachers and students who purchased books. **Our total profit was \$2,805 for McCarthy-Towne!**

Once again, our McT families made the teacher Wish List program a great success. All teachers received books for their classroom libraries and the McT library received over \$140 in books as a result of your generosity.

Many thanks to David Krane, Tracey Smith, Carol Chytil and Astrid Trostorff for all of their help and to all the teachers for bringing their classes to the Book Fair. Thank you to the following fantastic volunteers who helped so much: Janet Munson, Pam Hippensteele, Shelley Cole, Alexandra Mojica, Dawn Murphy, Martha Brandt, Shannon Callison, Bridget Matz, Michele Abroff, Kerry Lewis, Brenda Simpson, Katie Garnett, Susie Maxwell, Jana Grater, Emily Welch, Mariah Straayer, Julia Epperson, Dana Graham, Rebekah Burr, Marianne Sullivan, Nicholas Moustakas and Joe & Lora Loyall.

Safe Arrival Reminder

If you are traveling for an extended period over the coming months, please remember to contact the Safe Arrival hotline at 978-264-4098 so that we don't worry about your child(ren). Even if you have emailed your child's teacher, you still need to contact Safe Arrival. This hotline is on 24 hours a day so you can leave a message at any time. You can even call far in advance of your vacation if you know the dates that your children will be absent. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

2015 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 Composition (Grade 4)

Tuesday, March 24

English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 5 & 6)

March 24 and 25

English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 3 & 4)

March 30 & 31

Math (Grades 3, 4, 5, & 6)

May 5 and 6

Science, Technology & Engineering (Grade 5)

May 12 and 13

Cleaning for the Holidays?

Save your toys, bikes, clothes, sporting equipment, books, furniture and household items for the annual McCarthy-Towne Tag sale. **Last year, because of your amazing donations and efforts, we were able to raise almost \$3,000!**

We will be collecting donations on Friday, May 1st for the sale on Saturday May 2nd. This year, in addition to allowing families to drop off unused items for McT to sell, we will be offering space in the gym for individuals to sell their own items. We do all the advertising and bring in all the people and you price, sell and profit from your own items! Details will follow.

We need your help to make the Tag Sale a success! If you have any questions, would like to reserve your own sale space, or are interested in volunteering, please contact Julie Weir (julieannweir@yahoo.com).

Enter to Win an iPod® Shuffle PLUS \$500 in Free Groceries!



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. Every time you shop at Donelan's, save your receipts! Simply send them in with your child or drop them in the collection box in the office. **Receipts dated September 1, 2014-March 31, 2015 are eligible.**

Enter to win a \$500 grocery gift certificate PLUS an iPod Shuffle by filling out the entry form below and sending it into school with your receipts by **January 15, 2015**. You can enter as many times as you like as long as your entry is submitted with a Donelan's receipt and the entry form is not photocopied. If you want to make copies, copy the entry form first and then hand write your information on each form. They will NOT accept entry forms that have been filled out and then photocopied. Please leave the "school code" section of the entry form blank.

For complete contest rules, please visit www.registertapesforeducation.com/shoppercontest. If you have any questions about the program, contact Sarah Burianek (sarahburianek@msn.com).



Register Tapes Entry Form

Please enter me for a chance to win a \$500 grocery gift certificate plus an iPod Shuffle®.

Name

School Code

Address

City

State

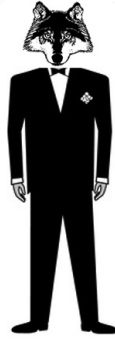
Zip

Phone Number (____) _____ - _____

Please return to your school by January 15, 2015.

McT 007 Auction 2015

The McCarthy-Towne Auction is March 28th and we still need your help! It is only a few months away and we welcome anyone and everyone who wants to get involved. There are plenty of ways to still help out. Pre-Auction Raffle! Business Donations! Parent Donations! Student Donations! Art Projects!



After the holiday break there will be lots of exciting 007 Auction news coming out in the McCarthy-Towne Bulletin and Howler. If you haven't already signed up for the Howler, it's not too late! Simply visit www.mctptso.org and click on the "Sign up for the Howler" link.

Congratulations to last month's winner of the 007 trivia question: Kerry Lewis! Here's this month's question: Which weapon in the James Bond universe is constructed from a lighter, a fountain pen, a cuff link, and a cigarette case?

The first person to email Christine Russell (qofhearts@gmail.com) with the correct answer wins an auction drink ticket. Good Luck!

If you are interested in helping out with the McT 007 Auction in any way, please contact either of the Auction Co-Chairs—Christine Russell (qofhearts@gmail.com) or Samantha Valente-Phillips (luvbgnamom@gmail.com).

Donation Excitement has Begun!

Thanks to our fantastic Auction team (and very generous businesses), donations are already rolling in. Some of these items are time-sensitive to be redeemed. In order to give our community time to get the full use from these items, we are trying something new. As warranted, we will be periodically posting time-sensitive items and offering them at partial face value, on a first-come, first-served basis. **When we have items to post, we will announce them in the Tuesday Howler and on Facebook.** Keep an eye on these sources as these deals will go quickly. Of course, the majority of the donations will still be sold at the Auction on March 28th so don't forget to book your babysitter now! If you have any questions, contact Carol (carol.chytil@gmail.com).

McCarthy-Towne Cookbook!

The new McT Cookbook makes a great last-minute gift. An order form is attached to this Bulletin and cookbooks can be sent home within two days of placing your order.

Lip Sync Extravaganza: March 7, 2015

The Annual Lip Sync Extravaganza is scheduled for Saturday, March 7th from 4–6 PM. Due to the overwhelming popularity in recent years, a few changes are in store for the 2015 show:

- The mandatory rehearsal is scheduled for Thursday, March 3rd at 1 PM.
- Songs will be limited to 2 minutes.
- Each student is limited to ONE act.
- The same song may not be performed by multiple acts. Song choices will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

This popular event is open to all McT students. Participants choose a song, determine to perform individually or with a group, create choreography, and perform on stage at McT. Now is the time to start thinking about a song to perform and if your child wants to perform individually or in a group. Be creative with song choices and choreography! Introduce your kids to musical genres from the 60s, 70s, and 80s, or genres such as Country, Broadway musicals or international hits. PLEASE check the lyrics before students start practicing to make sure they are family-friendly and elementary school appropriate. Sometimes we think songs are okay, but when we read the lyrics, they are not suitable for young children. Over the past few years, we have said no to a few songs and asked the participants to choose a new song. Lyrics can be found for free at www.metrolyrics.com.

The Lip Sync Sign-up Form and Rules and Requirements will be sent in backpacks in late January. The form, written lyrics and music will be due in mid-February. Hope to see you at the show!

Join us on Facebook

If you haven't already, please consider joining the McT Facebook page. Facebook, more than any other source, enables us to inform our community of late-breaking news and issue timely reminders. It's also a great place to share news and pictures of school events. Anyone is free to post news, pictures and questions. We just ask that you refrain from posting identifiable pictures of children. Our Facebook page is open to all adult members of our community. It is a "closed" group which means that people from outside our community are unable to see or post to our page. To join: search "McCarthy-Towne School" or visit www.facebook.com/groups/1404961776417219/