



# McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

February 3, 2017  
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## Slip Sliding Into February

*by David Krane, McT Principal*

This has certainly not been a New England January. It is moderately cold outside, with some leftover dirty snow dotting the front circle and the playgrounds. It certainly has not been like some past January, cold, snowy, and utterly miserable, so we'll take it. No snow days by the beginning of February are always a good sign. But we say this warily, unwilling to make the jinx...

Two weeks ago, we had our Kindergarten Night here at McT. This is my eighth year to lead our Kindergarten Evening and each year it becomes more of a pleasure. This year, the Kindergarten Team revised and added to a remarkable movie/slideshow to present to prospective families that was absolutely phenomenal. There is a lot to be proud of at our school and it is fun to have so many faculty members, parents and, of course, Student Council members, all be a part of showing off who we are as a school. We can talk about how our community is indeed a large part of raising a responsible child, one who is invested in her learning. When the Student Council members can articulate so clearly what it is they do in their classrooms and how it helps them grow, socially and academically, then we know we have achieved some measure of success. In the end, it is the children who will tell us if we have succeeded in our efforts, and hearing those students speak to our visitors, I believe we are doing all the right things. The tours are a chance for people to visit and see all of this in action. The teaching in the classrooms, the hard work displayed on the walls and the interactions between kids and their teachers and all the other adults in our school all are terrific examples of who we are as a school. Thank you so much to Tracey Smith, our Parent Involvement Coordinator, Carol Chytil, our amazing Office Assistant, Christine Hanley, our incredible School Office Administrator, parent touring volunteers, and to the teachers who have all been part

of the process of showing off our school! The feedback from visitors has been hugely positive.

We continue the tour days. I enjoy my role in bringing up the points of pride about McT during these tour days. Prominent among these is the way that we look at process in learning. Children bring very individual learning styles to school and teaching children that their learning is an individualized process of guided discovery is part of what we do here at McT. Knowing that learning is a process can help to remove some of the anxiety that kids may bring to the classroom. Using the visual arts in the classroom is just one way to illustrate and demonstrate that process. Process is displayed in various forms on the walls of our school as we guide curious visitors through the school is one of the biggest points of pride here. Art Integration is an integral and critical part of teaching that process, and we have had school-wide conversations among the faculty about for the past year.

But this conversation has now extended to the School Council now, too. School Council, comprised of parents, teachers, an outside community member and school principal, was created as a part of the Educational Reform Act of 1993. The intent was to include families in an active role of engagement, having a voice in what constitutes the mission and vision of the school. Each year, the School Council is charged with developing a set of goals for the school to work on in the next academic year. This year, after much conversation, with the initial impetus from a faculty member, we have decided to include a goal about Art Integration. The goal for the School Improvement Plan is a learning goal for our entire McCarthy-Towne community: students, families, faculty and staff. The Goal to be included in the School Improvement

## Mark Your Calendar

### FEBRUARY

**7, Tuesday**

PTSO Meeting  
with AB Superintendent  
Dr. Glenn Brand, 7 PM

**10, Friday**

Box Tops Due

**15, Wednesday**

Pan Choral Concert at  
ABRHS, 7 PM

**16, Thursday**

Early Dismissal, 1 PM

**17, Friday**

Lip Sync Forms Due by Noon

**20-24**

NO SCHOOL, Winter Recess

### MARCH

**2, Thursday**

Early Dismissal, 1 PM

**9, Thursday**

Scrip Orders Due

**10, Friday**

Auction Raffle Ticket  
Purchases Due

**16, Thursday**

Early Dismissal, 1 PM

**18, Saturday**

McT Auction, 5:30 PM  
Devens Common Center

### APRIL

**6, Thursday**

Early Dismissal, 1 PM

**8, Saturday**

Lip Sync Extravaganza,  
McT Cafetorium, 4-6 PM

**14, Friday**

NO SCHOOL, Good Friday

**17-21**

NO SCHOOL, Spring Recess

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Plan, 2017–2018, is in the process of being written now, and I will share with the entire school community once this work has been completed.

There will be lots of opportunities for all to weigh in on this topic over the course of the next school year. I look forward to a rich dialogue among us all.

### **One important bit of housekeeping:**

Although February break is still three weeks away, I feel compelled to run this message again. This is a time of year when some families will take “unofficial” family

vacations. I cannot emphasize enough how important every minute of every day is at school. Teachers work hard to prepare instruction that is sequential. Missing substantial chunks of school time due to these “unofficial” family vacations sends the wrong message to students and, it’s important to add, to teachers, too. Children deserve to be part of every classroom endeavor and it puts kids at a disadvantage by being deliberately out of school for reasons of vacation. Please try and keep this in mind as you make family plans.

Here’s to the next wonderful half of the school year!



## **from Chris Hanlon and Judy Bourdon, PTSO co-chairs**

Evening meetings are difficult for parents of elementary students. Making sure everyone gets to and from their practices and clubs, getting dinner done before heading out, coming up with an arrangement for the kids which includes them getting through their normal evening routine... a great deal to coordinate! And this coordination starts even before kindergarten actually begins, as parents attend kindergarten information nights for up to six different schools. Then come meetings at the school level (like our own PTSO meetings), district level (e.g., this year’s parenting series), and town level (can anyone say multiple consecutive nights until 11 PM!)

Chris Hanlon learned about this coordination early in his McT career when he volunteered as our School Committee liaison, the person who goes to School Committee meetings and relays an idea of what is happening to the rest of the McT parent population. These meetings were lengthy and numerous, and wading through the acronyms, subcommittees, and second readings was challenging to the uninitiated. Especially when the topics specific to an elementary parent might occupy items 4 and 11 of a 13 point agenda.

All that leads to this invitation—**please join us on Tuesday, February 7th at 7 PM in the library for an opportunity to meet with Superintendent Dr. Glenn Brand.** This is a great chance to learn about district-wide issues that impact our students (such as potential changes in start time and district capital projects) and also to ask Dr. Brand questions (which is usually not easy at School Committee meetings). We would love to give him a great McT welcome as well as a show of interest for the time he has set aside for us that night.

If you have any thoughts or questions, please contact either Chris Hanlon ([hanlonchristopher@hotmail.com](mailto:hanlonchristopher@hotmail.com)) or Judy Bourdon ([judyandroland@gmail.com](mailto:judyandroland@gmail.com)).



## **Lip Sync Extravaganza Sign-Up Form**



The McT Lip Sync forms, including *Sign-Up Form* and *Rules and Requirements*, are included in this February Bulletin (purple paper)! The *Lip Sync Sign-Up Form* can also be found on the McT PTSO Website—[www.mctptso.org/lip-sync](http://www.mctptso.org/lip-sync). Completed forms will be accepted in the front office starting Monday, February 6th. Traditionally, Lip Sync Acts fill quickly, so submit one form per group, CD or digital audio file of the song, and lyrics soon! **All forms, music and lyrics must be received by Noon in the front office on Friday, February 17th. The Lip Sync performance this year will take place on Saturday, April 8th from 4–6 PM.**

### **Help is Needed to Make our Lip Sync Show a Success!**

A videographer is needed for the 2017 show! We are also searching for a 2018 Lip Sync Chair to continue this fabulous tradition next year. If you are interested in joining our 2017 Lip Sync Team to find out more about how the show is run or in videoing the show this year, please contact Deb Verner ([debverner@gmail.com](mailto:debverner@gmail.com)).

## Auction Raffle Update!

As we gear up for another amazing Auction, we have some fabulous raffle prizes to win this year!

**1st Prize:** Xbox Minecraft Bundle  
(includes Xbox One S 500GB Console and full game downloads of Minecraft for Xbox One)

**2nd Prize:** Amazon Echo

**3rd Prize:** Fitbit Alta

Look for raffle envelopes to come home in backpacks this Friday, February 3rd. **Please return ticket stubs and money and any unused tickets to the McCarthy-Towne office by Friday, March 10.**

### Our Auction raffle committee needs you!

We will also be selling raffle tickets outside of Donelan's and Roche Bros. (dates still to be determined). Volunteers will be needed to help sell raffle tickets outside of Donelan's and Roche Bros. This is a fun activity to do with your children (shoppers have a hard time saying no to cute kids!). If you can help out, even for an hour or two, that would be great. So look for updates on the dates and times for selling raffle tickets in the Howler!



If you have any questions or can assist with the raffle ticket selling at the grocery stores, please contact Judy (judyandroland@gmail.com). Thank you in advance for your continued support of our school!

## Keep Saving Donelan's Receipts!



McCarthy-Towne is participating in the *Register Tapes for Education* program. Those groceries you buy at Donelan's 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 in receipts with your child or drop them in the collection box in the office. Receipts dated **September 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017 are eligible.**

## Spring 2017 MCAS Dates

\*Please Note 4th Gr. Change Below\*

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. The schedule is as follows:

### English Language Arts Comprehension

**Grades 3 & 5:** April 3, 4, and 5

**Grade 6:** April 3 and 4

**Grade 4:** April 7, 10, and 12 (Computer-based testing)

\*Dates changed slightly due to Passover observance

### Math

**Grades 3, 5, 6:** May 16 and 17

**Grade 4:** May 9 and 10 (Computer-based testing)

### Science, Technology & Engineering

**Grade 5 Only:** May 22nd and 23rd

## Scrips Update



Thank you to all the families that ordered Scrip cards in the month of January. The Scrip Program continues to be a great way to help the school raise money without having to "buy" anything in addition to your usual purchases, so we will continue to offer the Scrip Program on a monthly basis until the end of the school year.

Are you planning on going away in February and/or April? Please keep Scrip in mind as you plan your vacations. Scrip offers a great selection of hotels, airlines, car rentals and restaurants.

And don't forget Valentine's Day! Surprise your Valentine with a Scrip gift card. From the classic dinner and a movie date night, to a trip to the spa or a sporting goods shopping spree, celebrate your loved ones on Valentine's Day with Scrip!

Order forms were sent home earlier this week due to the early deadline this month. **Please note that orders are due on Thursday, February 9th at 3:30 PM.** Cards will be ready to go home Monday, February 13th. For questions about the Scrip program, please contact Pam Hippensteele (phippensteele@gmail.com).

## 10 Steps to Keep Ahead of Head Lice

1. Watch for signs of head lice, such as frequent head scratching, flaky or irritated scalp, scabs, or the presence of nits. Anyone can get lice, mainly from direct head-to-head contact or possibly by sharing hats, brushes, beds, pillows, towels, etc.
2. Check all household members and close contacts for lice and nits (lice eggs) at least once a week.
3. Be sure not to confuse nits with hair debris (i.e., dandruff, hair spray droplets, or hair casts). Nits are yellowish-white, oval-shaped, and are attached at an angle to the side of the hair shaft.
4. Consult a pharmacist, physician, or school nurse before applying pesticides or other lice treatments. If anyone to be treated is pregnant or nursing, has allergies, asthma, or has nits in the eyebrows or lashes, contact your physician. Never use a pesticide or lice treatment on or near the eyes.
5. Consider all of your treatment options. Remember, lice-killing products are pesticides and must be used with caution. If you choose alternative methods, they may not have been studied thoroughly enough to determine long-term outcomes. The most effective and safe alternative is manual removal by combing.
6. Remove all nits. Separate hair sections and remove nits with a lice comb, baby safe scissors, or your fingernails.
7. For lice treatment, follow package directions carefully. Use the products over the sink, not in the bath tub!
8. Wash bedding and all recently worn clothing in hot water and dry in high heat for at least 30 minutes. Combs and brushes should be soaked in hot water (not boiling) for 10 minutes.
9. Avoid lice sprays! Vacuuming is the safest and best way to remove lice or fallen hairs with attached nits from furniture, rugs, stuffed animals, and car seats.
10. Notify your child's school, camp, child-care provider, play partners, and neighborhood parents. Check for lice on a regular basis.

## Box Tops for Education



Great Job, McT! This fall we earned over \$600 from Box Tops for Education®. We are well on our way to reaching our goal! Remember, the classroom that brings in the most Box Tops from September through May will win a class party!

**Our next Box Tops collection is due on Friday, February 10th** (before vacation). Just clip Box Tops off the product package and send them in a Ziploc bag or envelope. Please label your child's collection with their name and teacher's name. Send them to school with your child or drop them off in the large collection box just inside the main office. Around town, you can drop Box Tops in the yellow box labeled "McCarthy-Towne Box Tops" at Roche Bros.

Remember that Box Tops expire so send them in as you get them so we can submit them before deadline. Visit [www.btfе.com](http://www.btfе.com) for a list of participating products. If you have any questions about the Box Tops program, please contact Julie Weir ([julieannweir@yahoo.com](mailto:julieannweir@yahoo.com)).

## Family Movie Night Recap

Many thanks to all the parents, teachers and students who helped with the 6th grade movie night last week! We had a huge turnout with nearly 500 people attending and everyone had a great time! This event raised almost \$1,300 that will be put towards costs for the 6th grade field trip to Thompson Island.

## Tag Sale is Coming!

Early Spring cleaning? Please save your gently used clothing, toys, household items, and more to donate to our upcoming school-wide Tag Sale! **Stay tuned for our late April/early May date.**

Up for helping with this fun and important school fundraiser? Contact Becky Barnett ([becky@highrock.org](mailto:becky@highrock.org) or 617-710-8729) for more information or to volunteer for the sale.

