

# McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

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## January is Looking Forward

by David Krane, McT Principal

Happy New Year! These past ten days have shown a tremendous swing in the weather. Out in the hill towns of Western Massachusetts, we experienced sixty-five degree days for the first part of the break, including Christmas Day! And even though last year at this time we were experiencing much the same weather pattern, we all know what unfolded around mid-January... While I think that nobody is hoping for that, there still will be winter, including some snow. I just hope that it's a moderate winter, with moderate snow...

This is the January newsletter, a time to say help to prospective families as they begin the process of choosing a school in Acton or Boxborough. January is also a time to think about the upcoming year, especially as we begin to get ready to put our school on display. School communities use the past as a reference and as a preparation for what's next. Here at McCarthy-Towne, we are getting ready to present ourselves to the community at large as we prepare for the upcoming Kindergarten evening and the tours. The District-wide Kindergarten Information Night is Tuesday, January 12, at 7:30 PM at the High School and our McT Kindergarten presentation will be the evening of Thursday, March 1, at 7 PM, here at McT. School choice, a special component of public education here in Acton-Boxborough, compels all of us to stay mindful of our school mission and of our unique way of working with the children and families who choose our school. Preparing for the tours encourages us to reflect on what has worked so well in the past and also to consider the changes we might want to make in the future to support our mission.

AB families have high expectations for all the schools in town. Each of the six elementary schools works very hard and succeeds in meeting those expectations. Any one of these six schools would be an excellent choice for incoming Kindergarteners and their families. But what we offer here is very different. The integration of the visual arts into the curriculum across the grade levels begins in Kindergarten and becomes a huge part of the student learning process as kids grow through the school. Also, ours is an environment that is about risk-taking, cooperation, and problem solving. These three qualities are what we strive to have children understand about themselves as learners and as members of our larger community. Our school is also a place that seeks to have families assume active roles in the school. This is part of what makes us unique in Acton-Boxborough and, indeed, in public education.

The pride that the faculty and staff and children take in being part of McCarthy-Towne is apparent everywhere one looks. The walls display student work, completed and still in process. Conversations in the classrooms are as lively and engaging as they are in the staff room! Families are an active part of the school through the School Council and a variety of committees. Active, community and committed are words that describe our school. This is the school we proudly invite prospective families and children to be part of as they tour the McCarthy-Towne School.

Here's to a great year ahead!

## Mark Your Calendar

### JANUARY

- 12, Tuesday**  
PTSO Meeting, 7 PM
- 17-24**  
Online Camp Auction
- 18, Monday**  
NO SCHOOL,  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 20, Wednesday**  
Parent Forum on  
Art Integration, 6:30 PM
- 21, Thursday**  
Lost & Found Fair Ends  
Early Dismissal (12:20 PM)

### FEBRUARY

- 4, Thursday**  
Early Dismissal (12:20 PM)
- 5, Friday**  
Book Swap, 6-8 PM
- 8, Monday**  
Winter Band Concert  
(New Date), 9:30 AM
- 12, Friday**  
Box Tops Due
- 15-19**  
NO SCHOOL, Winter Recess
- 26, Friday**  
McT Family Movie Night

## New Date for McT Winter Band Concert

The winter band concert date has been changed. It WAS scheduled for Monday, February 1. We needed to change the date because McT will be hosting Kindergarten tours that day. The NEW (confirmed) date for the winter band concert is **Monday, February 8 from 9:30-10:30 AM.**

## 2016-2017 Calendar

The 2016-2017 Acton-Boxborough Regional School District calendar is now available at [www.abschools.org](http://www.abschools.org).



## from Julie Weir and Julie Hobbs, PTSO co-chairs

Happy New Year McT families! We hope everyone had a great holiday break and are ready to get back into the swing of things. Mark your calendars for these important events coming up soon!

**Our next PTSO meeting is Tuesday, January 12 at 7 PM.** Every parent is welcome to join us.

We are excited to host another parent forum on **Wednesday, January 20 at 6:30 PM** in the Faculty Lounge! The last forum was such a hit that we have scheduled one on Art Integration. Stop by to ask our teachers and administrators how and why Art integration make our school so special.

**Our first ever Book Swap will take place on Friday, February 5 from 6–8 PM!** Donate your “old” books and refresh your bookshelves with “new” books for the whole family. Donations NOT required.

**Save the date for the ever popular Lip Sync concert on Saturday, March 19.** Last year was a huge success and we look forward to another great show this year.

And don't forget to mark your calendars and hire your sitters for the biggest night of McT fundraisers! **Our “Roaring 20's” Auction is scheduled for Saturday, April 9!** Auction planning is in full swing with many business donations already in place and classroom projects in their planning stage. Volunteers have been working since October to make it great. Auction chairs are still looking for a Jr. chair volunteer. This is a great way to get involved and learn about how the auction is run.

In addition to the Auction Jr. position the PTSO is looking to fill a couple more spaces. Please contact Julie (julieannweir@yahoo.com) if you are interested in any of the following positions. Open positions include:

**Tag Sale Co-chairs** The event can be split between 2 or 3 people and includes advertising the event via newspapers and online media, organizing volunteers for set up, sale and break down, and being present as a figure head during the event. More hands make lighter work so if you and a couple of friends work together it is a really fun event that has no trouble getting volunteers.

**Howler Editor** This person is responsible for sending out our weekly email newsletters. This is a perfect job for someone who is looking to help from home during odd hours. It's all computer-based and you can do it any hour of the day that you have time. It's mostly cutting and pasting articles that people send you into the form—you don't have to do any of the writing. Our current editor will be “aging” out of McT this year so we'd love to find someone now to train and shadow her for the next few months.

**Scrip Coordinator** We would also love to find someone who could take over handling our Scrip orders. Our current volunteer is managing a bunch of other things and would love to hand this off. This is also a position that can mostly be done from home and via computer in large part.

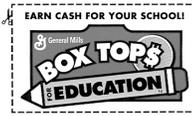
### Lost and Found Fair January 8–21

All lost and found items are on display in the lower level of the Parker Damon Building (in front of the multipurpose room). **The items will be there until Thursday, January 21.** Please come in and check for any items that may have gone missing during the last weeks. There are many mittens, hats, jackets, coats and lunch boxes. All items that remain after the fair will be donated to charity. If you have any questions, please contact Petra Charisse (pecharisse@gmail.com).

### Parent Forum: Come Learn What Art Integration is All About

**Join us for our next Parent Forum on Wednesday, January 20 from 6:30–7:30 PM.** This will be a fun evening led by several of our teachers, beginning with a presentation to showcase what Art Integration looks like in the classroom, followed by some hands-on learning. You won't want to miss this special event! The event will be held in the Faculty Lounge at the top of the stairs.

## Call for all Box Tops!



Great Job, McT! This fall we earned almost \$500 from *Box Tops for Education*®. Congratulations to Jillian's 5th grade class for collecting the most Box Tops! Remember, the classroom that brings in the most Box Tops will win a prize (playground toys, or games, books and supplies for their classroom).

**Our next Box Top collection is due on Friday, February 12** (before vacation). Just clip Box Tops off the product package and send them in a Ziploc bag or envelope. Please label you child's collection with their name, grade, 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 blue box labeled "McCarthy-Towne Box Tops" at Roche Bros. Visit [www.btfе.com](http://www.btfе.com) for a list of participating products. If you have any questions about the Box Top program, please contact Melissa Kaplan Morse ([mkmorse1@msn.com](mailto:mkmorse1@msn.com)).

## Spring 2016 MCAS Dates

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 5 & 6)

Tuesday, March 29 and Wednesday, March 30

### English Language Arts Comprehension (Grades 3 & 4)

Monday, April 4 and Tuesday, April 5

### Math (Grades 3 and 4)

Tuesday, May 10 and Wednesday, May 11

### Math (Grades 5 and 6)

Monday, May 16 and Tuesday, May 17

### Science, Technology & Engineering (Grade 5 only)

Tuesday, May 10 and Wednesday, May 11

## Lip Sync Extravaganza—March 19th!

The Annual Lip Sync Extravaganza is scheduled for **Saturday, March 19 from 4–6 PM**. Due to the overwhelming popularity in recent years, a few changes are in store for the 2016 show:

- The mandatory rehearsal is scheduled for Thursday, March 17 at 12:15 PM.
- Songs will be limited to 2 minutes.
- Each student is limited to ONE act.
- Show has a limit of 45 acts.
- Songs may be performed once, accepted on a first-come first-served basis.

The Lip Sync is open to all McT students. Participants choose a song, determine to perform individually or with a group, create choreography, and perform their act on stage at McT. Now is the time to start thinking about songs and whether to perform individually or in a group. Be creative with song choices and choreography! Introduce your kids to different musical genres—they might enjoy music 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, we realize 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](http://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!

## McT Family Movie Night

This year's McT Movie Night, hosted by the 6th Grade, is Friday, February 26. Admission is free and open to all McT students and family members (not a drop off event). Pizza, beverages and baked goods will be sold at the event which is a fundraiser for the 6th Grade's Thompson Island end of the year field trip. The movie will be voted on by all McT students prior to Movie Night and announced during February's assembly. All movie choices are rated G.



## 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.

### Here are some tips to help our school stay healthy:

- 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.

## McCarthy-Towne Auction 2016!

Exciting things are starting to happen gearing up for the McT 2016 Annual Auction which will take place on April 9th at 5:30 PM! Mark your calendars if you haven't done so already. In the meantime, the business donation committee is getting to work with numerous donations coming in!



### Online Camp Auction

One of the most successful auction items we typically receive are donations from local camps. Since many of you are planners and want to start thinking about your upcoming summer plans, we will be holding our **Online Camp Auction during the week of January 17–24**. To date, we've already received camp donations from: Camp Takodah, Create! Sewing Studio, Guard Up, Lawrence Academy and the Umbrella Community Arts Center, with many more to come! Keep your eye on on the McT Facebook Page for up to date details about this exciting Online Camp Auction, including instructions on how to place your bid!

### Auction Trivia

Congratulations to Matt Onken who guessed correctly that to be "spifflicated" in the 1920's was to be drunk. The same as canned, corked, tanked, primed, scrooched, jazzed, zozzled, plastered, owled, embalmed, lit, potted, ossified or fried to the hat. However, today, spifflicated is defined as "treat roughly or severely; destroy."

**This month's question:** The 1920's was a decade full of aviation firsts. From the first transcontinental mail delivery flight from NY to San Francisco in 1920 to the first passenger plane designed and built by Henry Ford in 1927. But it was another event in 1927 that brought public attention to aviation and secured the future of flight as a mode of transportation. On May 20, 1927, who made the first non-stop flight from New York to Paris? Be the first person with the correct answer to email Julie Weir (julieannweir@yahoo.com) and you will win an auction drink ticket! Good Luck!

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