



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

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November Days

by David Krane, McT Principal

It is the end of October as I write this, and the leaves are finally all down in the hill towns of western Massachusetts. I have actually started to think about the tremendous mounds of snow that surrounded our school for most of the first four months of 2015. But there is no snow yet and the days have been unseasonably warm. This year, so far at least, we are simply experiencing the time change, where we see more of a morning and considerably less of an afternoon!

We are all preparing for our Professional Learning Day, which will occur on Tuesday, November 3, Election Day. We are now in our second year of Regionalization, with all of its attendant issues and advantages. One clear advantage, from my elementary school Principal perspective, is the Pre-K to Grade 12 continuum view that we are beginning to think of as the district continues to move forward. In the past, Acton Public Schools was a single, discrete entity, as was the Junior High School and the High School. Now, however, we are beginning to have conversations that look closely at trends and ideas that have a single thread, from Pre-K through twelfth grade. For the last couple of years, we have tried to look at developing a district-wide budget that would begin to reflect that continuum. Part of the focus has been on issues of health and wellness, for staff and students. How can we as a district begin to address issues of stress and anxiety that seem to be surfacing in some children at an increasingly earlier age? During our Professional Learning Day on November 3, the staff will be attending a variety of workshops designed to reduce stress and anxiety, and to model how to approach it. This will, we hope, generate some conversations on understanding stress in our

students and how we could perhaps work to reduce it. Good, meaningful learning cannot happen in an environment of worry and anxiety. We must work to understand better how to begin to deal with this.

Last week, we presented a brief overview of the Responsive Classroom, it's philosophy, and it's methodology. The Responsive Classroom idea is one that has been increasingly important to us a learning community, one whose tenets include supporting both academic goals and community building goals. It provides a safe and comfortable structure for learning and interaction with both classmates and colleagues. It also teaches collaboration, risk-taking, and how to create positive energy for our school. These are the foundational pieces of building a successful classroom and school community. We have set expectations in an authentic way for both adults and children and it continues to make us a more positive community. No school, no community is without conflict but if there are mechanisms in place to help us deal with and resolve that conflict, then our school is better for it. Responsive Classroom helps us to get to that place. I encourage you to visit the McT website where a new tab has been added devoted to the Responsive Classroom. We will keep adding to it over the course of the year, too.

Schools teach about the critical elements of being part of a community as well as the important academic elements across the content areas. McCarthy-Towne has always been proud of the way that we make this clear to children and of our successes in both arenas. Thanks to all of you who are part of this wonderful school community and for your support!

Mark Your Calendar

NOVEMBER

- 6, Friday**
McT Fall Social, 6–8 PM
- 11, Wednesday**
NO SCHOOL, Veterans Day
- 17, Tuesday**
PTSO Meeting, 7 PM
- 18, Wednesday**
P.E. Climbing Night,
6:30–7:30 PM
- 19, Thursday**
Early Dismissal (12:20 PM)
- 25, Wednesday**
Early Dismissal (12:20 PM)
- 26–27, Thursday/Friday**
NO SCHOOL, Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

- 3, Thursday**
Early Dismissal (12:20 PM)
- 17, Thursday**
Early Dismissal (12:20 PM)
- 24–31**
NO SCHOOL, Winter Recess



from Julie Weir and Julie Hobbs, PTSO co-chairs

By the time you read this, your child's class will have visited the Scholastic Book Fair, but there is still time to browse or shop for you, your student or your child's classroom during **tonight's Fall Social!** The Fall Social is a not-to-be-missed event. Bridget Chamberas, Jen Nelson, and a large group of parent volunteers have created a fun evening for us all with lots of games, crafts, a cake walk, and a chili cook off! **Stop by school tonight, Friday November 6th, from 6-8 PM** for food and fun with the McT community! Hope to see you there!

This is also the time of year for classroom potlucks. Potlucks offer a great chance to meet parents in a more social setting outside of schools walls. Hosts have been given class lists and will be in touch shortly if they haven't already. These gatherings are just a couple of the many ways that we build a strong community and part of what makes McCarthy-Towne so special.

Our Annual Appeal is well underway and thank you to those who have already given. We appreciate your quick response. Please visit www.mctptso.org for an idea of how much we have raised thus far and if you haven't had a chance to donate yet it is not too late to give! While there is no official deadline for the Annual Appeal remember that if you donate by December 31st you can claim your donation on your 2014 tax return. There is still time! Thank you, in advance, for your support!

And Finally, Thank you to those who joined us for the October PTSO meeting. Dr. Brand enlightened us all with his goals and visions for our district and we were able to ask him face to face any questions we may have had. **Join us this month on Tuesday, November 17th at 7 PM** in the McT Library where our special guest Food Services Director, Kirsten Nelson will show us what a typical lunch includes and how menus are decided. Hope to see you all there!

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 treats to share with friends and family. 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 in receipts with your child or drop them in the collection box in the office. Receipts dated **September 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016 are eligible.** Questions can be directed to Sarah Buriemek (sarahburianek@msn.com).


FALL SOCIAL
Tonight!
November 6th, 6-8 PM
\$5/Child, Adults FREE, \$20 Limit/Family
 Activities include a Cake Walk, Autumn Crafts, Henna and Face Painting, Rock Climbing Wall, Minute-To-Win-It, Free Throw Contest, Bubble Gum Blowing Contest, Whipped Cream Eating Contest, and other Carnival Style Games.
 Food offerings include Chili, Hot Dogs, Pizza, and other Autumn Fare. Prices are \$2 per slice of pizza and \$2 per hot dog.

Pick-up Info for Charleston Wrap Orders

Charleston Wrap orders can be picked up at 98 Windsor Ave in Acton during these times:

Thursday, November 12, 8–11 AM and 7:30–9 PM

Friday, November 13, 8–11 AM and 4–8 PM

Saturday, November 14, 1–3 PM

All orders are in the garage and the garage door will be open during these times listed above. Orders will be sorted by grade and teacher. Each order will be in either a box or clear plastic bag with your teacher's name and your child's name. It's important that you double check that you have collected the correct order before leaving.

If you have any questions or need to schedule another pick-up time, please contact Fiona Starr (781-530-7759 or fiona.starr@gmail.com). Thank you!

P.E. Climbing Night: PARENTS ONLY!

Parents of children in grades 3 thru 6 are invited to join our Physical Education teacher, David James, for a Climbing Night in the McT gymnasium on **Wednesday, November 18th from 6:30–7:30 PM**. You'll have an opportunity to try some of the adventure climbing activities offered to our students during Phys Ed. Dave will discuss safety, the "challenge by choice concept," and the variety of climbing options. Reminder, this is a parents-only event.

McT Mileage Club is Still Going Strong!

We will have 3 more Fridays to walk, run, skip or jump our way around the back playground. New families are always welcome. We meet at 7:50 AM on Friday mornings in the back playground. If weather is looking iffy, check you email, a decision will be made by 7 AM on Friday mornings. Our last session will be Friday, November 20th. We will break for the winter and then resume in the Spring with Chris Hanlon back at the helm. In the meantime, if you have any question about Mileage Club, contact Carol Chytil (carol.chytil@gmail.com).

Grade 5 Trip to Camp Merrowvista

from Matt McDowell, Assistant Principal

Our Fifth Graders, their teachers, and parent chaperones had a very successful and fun-filled three-day learning adventure in the woods of New Hampshire October 21–23. For many students, this was a first opportunity to sleep away from home. There was a mix of excitement and anxiety for most as we arrived at the camp on Wednesday. After a warm welcome from the staff- and a hearty lunch, the kids were ready to go!

The Fifth Graders were organized into both activity and cabin groups for their time at the camp. Each group rotated through a core of four activities: hiking/ forest ecology, climbing tower, Team challenge, and environmental block. There were also option block activities each day, from improve to archery to food creation. Throughout the variety of activities and experiences, the camp and McT school values of community, respect, and risk taking were reinforced. Students had the opportunity to come together and interact with each other in new and different ways, sometimes revealing new strengths and talents in the process.

Meal times were another opportunity for learning as the staff stressed respect for the earth through responsible food choices, composting, and monitoring our O.R.T. (our remaining tidbits). Song challenges and conversation filled the dining hall at each meal. We also had the awarding of the "MTQ" or McCarthy-Towne Quality award. The "MTQ" is awarded for qualities such as cooperation, persistence, enthusiasm/ spirit, and respect for fellow classmates during an activity. Students selected another member of their activity group after each rotation and presented the "MTQ" to them with a short speech as to why each was receiving the award.

The trip is a tremendous opportunity for learning and for team building among the grade. The teachers get to know the students in a way not possible during the regular school day. The values stressed during the trip are referenced and supported throughout the year. Additionally, the more academic concepts also get investigated, especially those in Earth/ Social Science like animal adaptation or Human's impact on the Earth.

An enormous "thank you" to our grade 5 team- Amy-Jo, Jillian, and Justin, and to the parent chaperones for giving of the time and energy to make this trip such a worthwhile and memorable experience for all of the students.

..... McCarthy-Towne Auction 2016!

Mark your calendars for the biggest night of the year! **The McCarthy-Towne Auction will be held at The Devens Common Center at Springhill Suites on Saturday, April 9th.** And, in case you missed it, the theme for this year's auction is "Roaring 20's". Congratulations to Carolyn Imperato for being the first person to guess the theme. Every couple of weeks we will test your Roaring 20's knowledge and feature a trivia question via Facebook, Howler and the Bulletin. Your next trivia question is: **In the 1920's it was illegal to manufacture and sell alcohol. Which Constitutional Amendment enacted prohibition and which Amendment repealed it?** The first person to respond via Facebook comment or email to Julie Weir (julieannweir@yahoo.com) with the correct answer wins an auction drink ticket!



We Need You! If you are interested in helping out with the auction in any way or if you would like to shadow the Auction Chair people, please contact either of our Auction Co-Chairs— Christine Russell (qofhearts@gmail.com) or Samantha Valente-Phillips (luvbgnamom@gmail.com).

While there are many positions of all shapes and sizes within the auction our current request are for a Jr. Auction chair and help with business donations. The Jr. chair would shadow the current chairs to learn the position and take over in 2017. The chair position becomes much easier to do if you've already watched someone do it. Auction Business Donations is a small committee that secures donations from various businesses via phone (business have already been solicited so NO "cold calling" needed) and in-person for picking up donations. Get the first look at what is being donated! Busiest times include November and January but remember that many hands make light work and no experience is necessary! If you can help, please contact Business Committee Co-Chairs Carol Chytil (carol.chytil@gmail.com) or Sarah McBride (sarahamcbride@yahoo.com) Thank you!

Donate Books to the McCarthy-Towne Library!

Have you heard about the McCarthy-Towne Gift Book Program? It's so easy to donate a library book that will provide years of enjoyment for our children. Donating a library book is a meaningful way to pay tribute to an individual or a group. You can honor your child on his or her birthday, congratulate a graduating sixth grader, thank a reading buddy, or remember a favorite teacher. Book donations also make excellent holiday gifts! We will be happy to place a bookplate in your donated book(s) in recognition of your donation and will contact you for details about the donation inscription.

Our library's "wish list" of books is available on the Amazon website. Go to www.amazon.com and click on "Wish Lists", then enter "McCarthy-Towne" in the search field. A link to the list is also available on the PTSO Book Gifting website— . Once you find a book(s) on Amazon be sure to select "This will be a Gift" during checkout and enter your name in the "Gift Note" box. Books will be shipped directly to the school library.

You can also purchase books from your local bookseller. If you purchase from a retailer other than Amazon, please go to the Amazon wish list and click on "Buying this book elsewhere" and enter the required information so the book title will be moved to our purchased list. Books bought locally can be delivered to the library by you or your child.

If you cannot decide on a book title, you are welcome to send in a check (payable to McCarthy-Towne PTSO) and let Donna decide on your book donation. You will be notified through email of the book selection.

Please contact Jen Lewy (jen@zenmarketing.net) with any questions. Thank you for supporting our school library!

