

McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

October 4, 2013
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Rolling into October

by David Krane, McT Principal

It's foggy this morning as I write this and the sun is having hard time convincing us that day has finally broken. That's part of the fall weather as we continue to move along. It's hard to believe that we already have a month of school behind us. Time seems to pass very quickly at the beginning of the year and, seemingly in the blink of an eye, we have gently moved into later sunrises and cooler morning temperatures.

Among the changes that greeted everyone at the beginning of the school year was the Big Room Change. More than three quarters of our classrooms have changed location to cluster in grade level teams and the realignment, according to teachers and students, has been very successful! Although this is hardly a scientific survey, children have been reporting to me that they really enjoy being close to all of their grade level classmates. Teachers, too, have been positive about the move. Schools are communities within communities, and this close proximity tends to help to make all of our school communities stronger.

Back-to-School night was also a huge success again this year. Many families came out to see new classrooms, all up and running for learning! I really enjoyed meeting all the new families and greeting returning ones. There was a great feeling in the school as parents moved around to various place. Thanks to all who visited our Special Educators, Sloyd, and Music teachers and their classrooms, too.

With all of us so busy at this time of year, becoming used to new routines can be difficult. There is a lot that children are doing after school, much of it different from day to day. Preparing your student for a schedule glitch can be helpful. Do your children know what to do if they come from school to an empty house or apartment? Would they know how to get in? How to contact you? Which neighbors to go to for help? Sometimes—despite parents' best planning—you will not get home in time to meet your children as they come home from school. The doctor's appointment could run longer than expected, the check-out line at the store could be slow, and there could be a traffic jam you can't get around. Please talk to your children about what to do if they are unexpectedly "home alone." If they are prepared, it can be a relatively easy situation to remedy.

I'd like to take a moment to encourage parents to come and speak to me about any concerns or questions, however small, that you might have about our school or really anything at all. I see my role as one of supporting students, teachers, and families as they navigate through the school year and even into the Junior High School! Please consider me a resource, as you would any educator in our school.

Thanks in advance for your continued enthusiastic support as we all look forward to a very successful year for all of the children at McCarthy-Towne!

Parent Reception—You're Invited!

David Krane would like to invite all parents to an informal meet and greet on Friday, October 11 from 10:30-11:30 AM in the Multipurpose Room. Come join him for coffee and pastries and catch up on what's happening around school. No need to RSVP, just sign in at the office and head down to the Multipurpose Room.



Mark Your Calendar

OCTOBER

- 5&6, Saturday/Sunday**
Family Photo Weekend
- 11, Friday**
Parent Reception with David Krane, 10:30 AM
Lost & Found Fair Begins
- 14, Monday**
NO SCHOOL, Columbus Day
- 17, Thursday**
PTSO Meeting, 9 AM
BoxTops Due
- 18, Friday**
Scrip Orders Due
- 24, Thursday**
Lost & Found Fair Ends
- 28, Monday**
Picture Retake Day
- 29, Tuesday**
Early Dismissal (12:15 PM)
- 30, Wednesday**
Book Fair Begins

NOVEMBER

- 1, Friday**
McT Fall Social, 6–8 PM
Book Fair Ends
- 5, Tuesday**
NO SCHOOL, Professional Development Day
- 11, Monday**
NO SCHOOL. Columbus Day
- 13, Wednesday**
Early Dismissal (12:15 PM)
- 27, Wednesday**
Early Dismissal (12:15 PM)
- 28–29, Thurs./Fri.**
NO SCHOOL,
Thanksgiving Recess



from Tracey Smith and Shelley Cole, PTSO co-chairs

Just as school is in full swing, with a solid four weeks of no holidays, the PTSO is gearing up for a busy month of events. **This weekend, October 4th and 5th, Shelley Cole will be busy photographing families for our Family Photo Weekend.** Email Shelley (sd@shelleydrouin.com) to check for availability this weekend, with pictures arriving just in time for holiday cards and gifts. If you haven't seen her work, visit www.shelleydrouin.com for a glimpse of her beautiful photos.

At the end of this month we have two of our most popular events—the **Book Fair and the Fall Social**. The Book Fair rolls into school on October 30th and runs through November 1st. November 1st also happens to be the date of our Fall Social, which runs from 6-8 PM. Bring the whole family for pizza, baked goods, carnival games, and other entertainment (plus you can shop the Book Fair while you catch up with friends).

Also, don't forget that our Fall Fundraisers are coming to an end. Genevieve's orders for gift wrap and other items are due today, but we'll be accepting late orders through October 9th. Our Direct Appeal also continues to accept those tax-deductible donations.

Finally, join us October 17th for our next PTSO meeting. This one will be at 9 AM in the Multipurpose Room which is on the 1st floor of the school. Siblings not yet in school are welcome to join their parent(s). And don't forget to email Tracey (tracey@gristmillmedia.com) with any topics you'd like to see discussed at length in one of our upcoming Parent Forums.

A Message from Food Service

For those who are new to the school system we would like you to know about our Sunday evening automated calls. If your child's balance on Sunday is below zero you will receive a call letting you know the balance. If your child has a positive balance between \$.01–\$5 you will receive a call letting you know you have a positive balance that is getting low. If you do not wish to receive a call on Sunday evenings from the Food Service Department we suggest you keep more than \$5.01 on your child's lunch account.

We do not send home invoices. The automated call is our way of letting you know your child's balance. There are occasions when an account is above \$5.01 on a Sunday (you will not receive a call), the account can still go in the negative over the course of the week. If you have an account in *ParentOnline* you can set up a low balance alert. You will receive an e-mail notification if your balance is below the threshold you set for the alert (example: notify me when the balance gets below \$10). You also have the ability to set up an automatic payment once your balance gets below a certain amount. If you would like to set up a low balance alert or an automatic payment for your child's lunch account visit www.parentonline.net.

You can also send in cash or check for payment with your child to school. Below are links for payment forms to send in with check or cash.

Elementary Schools: www.ab.mec.edu/departments/food/pdf/lunchform-elementary.pdf

Junior High and High School: www.ab.mec.edu/departments/food/pdf/lunchform-regional.pdf

Don't Be Left Out!

Have you signed up for The McCarthy-Towne Howler, our school email newsletter? Many announcements are last minute and just don't fit into our monthly Bulletin schedule. Never again miss out on important or timely information; sign up for *The Howler* today. Visit www.mctptso.org and fill out the form on the main page.

McT Mileage Club

We've had 53 McT students come to at least one of the first three meetings of the McT Mileage Club. The mornings have been crisp and the miles are racking up—163 miles in our first three sessions! The Club is a drop-in format so you can join at any time. Here are the details:

- Friday mornings, 7:45 – 8:15 AM in the back playground of the Parker Damon Building
- Students walk, jog, run (or combination) on our one-fifth mile loop. Then they chart their progress and earn foot tokens at miles 1, 4, 7, and 10.
- Wear comfortable clothes. A bottle of water is a good idea, as is a small snack.

Thanks to the parent volunteers who have joined us. For more information or to get involved, contact Chris Hanlon (hanlonchristopher@hotmail.com).

School Picture Retakes

School picture retakes are scheduled for Monday, October 28. If your child was absent on September 13, they will have their picture taken on October 28. If you are not satisfied with the original picture, send the entire package back to school on October 28.

McCarthy-Towne Auction

Mark your calendars—the McT Auction is Saturday, March 22nd! Doors open at 5:30 PM at The Devens Common Center at Springhill Suites. We are very excited for this year's theme—Treasure Island!



Thank you to all the people who are donating their time to chair the different aspects of this amazing fundraising event:

Co Chairs: Michele Caterina/Jennifer Mabardy

Business Donations: Tracey Estabrook

Faculty Donations: Sam Valente-Phillips

Parent Donations: Christine Kobelski

Classroom Projects: Michelle Abroff /Rebecca MacNeill

Booklet/Bid Sheet Editors: Carol Chityl

Publicity/Communications: Sarah McBride

Event Design: Lara Maira

Pre-Auction Raffle: Patty Lee

Data Manager: Bridget Matz

Finance: Chris Hanlon

Room Set-Up: Michelle Doughty/Christine Kobelski

Back Room: Andy Brockway/Michelle Dawson/Rob Dawson/Ellen Spero

The Chair position for Auction Night Raffle is still open! If you are interested in this position or helping out with any other aspect of the auction, please contact either Jen Mabardy (jennifermabardy@comcast.net) or Michele Caterina (michelecaterina1@gmail.com).

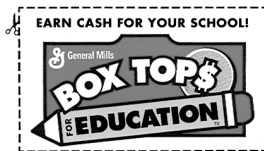
BoxTops = Easy CA\$H for McT

Last year McT earned nearly \$1,500 with the BoxTops program! It's so easy—just clip BoxTops off the product package and collect them in an envelope or bag. Send them to school with your child or drop-off in the collection box in the office. **The next BoxTop collection deadline is Thursday, October 17.** Please label the collection with your child's name, grade and teacher so we can track rewards for the classroom contest!

You can also drop BoxTops in the blue boxes labeled "McCarthy-Towne BoxTops" at Roche Bros. or Donelan's. Visit www.btf.com for a list of participating products.

Shopping online at your favorite stores through the BoxTops Marketplace® can earn McT more rewards. Up to 20% of your purchase will be donated to McT, with no additional cost to you. Visit www.boxtops4education.com/marketplace.

If you have any questions about BoxTops, please contact Melissa Kaplan Morse (mkmorse1@msn.com).



Fall Social

McCarthy-Towne's Annual Fall Social will be held on Friday, November 1 from 6–8 PM at the school. The night holds a lot of fun with a gym full of carnival-style games with prizes to be won, crafts, tattoos and face painting. It is a great opportunity for children to play with old friends and make new ones and for parents to get to know each other. The annual book sale will also be taking place in the lobby.

Sue Donahue, a McT parent, will be leading some fun games and dancing in the cafeteria. This part of the night will be broken up into two groups: grades K–3 will play with Sue at 6:45 PM and kids in grades 4–6 will do the same at 7:15 PM. Sue is trained in Zumba for kids.

Admission is free for adults and only \$5 per child. Plus, there will be Sorrento's pizza on sale while complimentary baked goods, fruits, veggies and refreshments will be offered. This is not a drop-off event so please make arrangements to attend with your children or have them chaperoned.

If you are able to provide a baked good, veggie or fruit tray, or beverages, please contact Sarah McBride (sarahmcbride@yahoo.com).

If you have any general questions, please contact either Chris Hanlon (hanlonchristopher@hotmail.com) or Kat Hudson (katmudson@comcast.net).

McT PTSO Fall Fundraising Campaign

As of this week, the Direct Appeal Campaign has received the support of 21 of the 365 families at McT, totaling \$3,040. We deeply appreciate the support from these families for their tax-deductible donations, and want to remind parents that many employers will match such donations. These donations to the PTSO will provide support for the school in many ways, including additional teaching assistant hours, McT's art integration specialist and materials, school-wide cultural and performing arts presentations, and special class projects.

We are currently behind our Direct Appeal fundraising pace from this week last fall (53 families contributing almost \$7,800... we eventually raised \$9,000). While we would like to wrap up this campaign in the next two weeks, the PTSO always welcomes your financial support... there is no true deadline to help out. Families that have made donations will be receiving a letter of acknowledgement for tax purposes in the next few weeks. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Hanlon (hanlonchristopher@hotmail.com).

Scholastic Book Fair 2013

This year's McCarthy-Towne Scholastic Book Fair will be held Wednesday, October 30 through Friday, November 1, in conjunction with the Fall Social. The Book Fair is great fun for the kids, a nice way to spend a couple of volunteer hours, and a wonderful fundraiser for the school.

Students visit the Book Fair with their classes at assigned half-hour slots, on Wednesday (10/30), Thursday (10/31), and Friday (11/1). The Book Fair will also be held Friday night during the Fall Social. Families are encouraged to buy books for their children, as gifts for others, and as gifts to specific classrooms by purchasing books from the Teachers' Wish List. This is a terrific way to help the teachers build their classroom libraries.

Volunteers are needed to set-up the Book Fair on Tuesday afternoon, October 29, work the Fall Social on Friday evening, November 1, and break down on Monday afternoon, November 4. Parents can also volunteer at times when their child's class attends the Book Fair (you will be contacted when teachers sign up).

More information will be coming home via backpack mail. If you have questions or would like to volunteer, please contact Susan (sammyabe@aol.com or 978-263-0045) or Mimi (mimikirkman@yahoo.com or 978-263-9770)

Lost & Found Fair: October 11–24

Already the Lost & Found is well stocked. **The first Fair will be Friday, October 11 through Thursday, October 24.** Please stop by the Fair at the bottom of the stairs on the first level of the Parker Damon Building (outside the multi-purpose room). This is a great opportunity to look for any items that might have gone missing. Items not claimed will be donated to charity.

All year, the lost and found team goes through items on a weekly basis and returns labeled items to their owners. The easiest way to get back lost items is by marking your child's belongings with at least their LAST NAMES! In a building with over 1000 students you can imagine that first names or initials don't help to track down the owner of a lunch box. Please take a minute, and label all items that could get detached from your kids. If you have questions contact, Mary Beilman (mmorgank@aol.com) or Petra Charisse (pecharisse@gmail.com).

Parent Potluck Planning

Thanks to everyone who signed up to help out with the Parent Potluck for their classroom(s). If you missed the sign-up at Back-to-School Night, please email Sorrel (sorrelsammons@hotmail.com) with your name and child's teacher name. Volunteers are needed in several classrooms. Details will be sent to all volunteers so you can get a date set. Contact Sorrel with any questions.

FREE Money for McCarthy-Towne!

Target Credit Card

McCarthy-Towne school recently received a check for \$563 from the Target *Take Charge of Education* program. Do you have a Target credit card? If so, you should know that McT receives 1% back on every purchase you make if you register your card on the Target website. Currently we have 18 families enrolled in the program.

Please visit www-secure.target.com/redcard/tcoe/enroll to register your Target credit card. There is no charge to you and will take just a minute of your time. You don't have to do anything else and McCarthy-Towne earns money whenever you use your Target card!

Ink Cartridges!

Bring in your used ink cartridges for recycling. Last year we earned more than \$100 with this recycling program!

OneCause

Have you ever noticed that icon at the bottom of the McT PTSO website? The one that says "OneCause/Click Shop Contribute"? You can earn money for McT just by shopping online! Go to www.onecause.com/shop and click the link to install the OneCause toolbar which will ensure that every eligible purchase you make gets credited to McCarthy-Towne. You spend no extra money, but McT will earn a percentage of your purchases. Our participation in this program has waned lately, but in the past we have earned over \$1,000 a year through OneCause.

Amazon.com

There's another button you may have noticed on the PTSO website—the Amazon.com School Rewards button. You can bookmark this link and then every time you use it before shopping at amazon, our school receives a percentage of what you spent. Our school earned over \$500 last year from amazon.

Thank You!

Thank you to all the parents who volunteer in and around the office including, but not limited to:

Karen Benn, Shannon Callison, Petra Charisse, Christine Kobelski, Jen Nelson, Lisa Petrocchi, Fiona Starr, and Mariah Straayer for helping with dismissals, bus passes and other paperwork,

Jody Long and Jen Mabardy for keeping up with all the laminating requests,

Karen Benn, Jana Bull, Shannon Callison, Lena Grant, Julia Hanna, Kate Hoitt, Bridget Matz, Jen Nelson, Kristi Pucillo, and Maria Yevsyukova for helping with Safe Arrival,

And Rena Barbieri, Kim Beers, Jill Defoe, Kenwin Huang, Jen Mabardy, Kerstin Mendelsohn, Latha Murthy, and Fiona Starr for organizing all those smiling faces and making picture day run so efficiently.

LOOKOUT FOR LICE!

A Guide for Prevention and Treatment of Head Lice

from Betty Johns, McT School Nurse

WHAT ARE HEAD LICE?

Head lice (pediculosis) are tiny, wingless, elongated insects that are tan to grayish-white, but may take on a reddish-brown color after feeding on their host. They are about the size of a small sesame seed, and their six legs have claws for grasping hair. They cannot fly nor can they jump. Head lice, which have a life span of about 30 days on a host, are parasites that feed on human blood. The lice bites cause itching, which is often the first sign of infestation.

A female louse lays 100 or more eggs (“nits”), which hatch in 7-10 days. Nits are oval or teardrop shaped, and may be colored yellowish-brown, white, or silver. They are quite tiny, about the size of the period at the end of this sentence. Lice attach nits at an angle to the side of a hair shaft with a water-proof, cement-like substance; therefore, nits cannot be washed or brushed out of hair like dandruff or other debris.

HOW ARE HEAD LICE SPREAD?

Head lice are most often spread through close contact with an infested person or by sharing personal items such as hats, clothing, combs and hair accessories. Not surprisingly, head lice can be spread in schools among play-mates. Because head lice can survive for 24-48 hours off of a human host, they also can travel through coats and hats that are hung or piled together. Also, head lice can remain undetected on upholstered furniture, stuffed toys, pillows, and bed linens.

HOW DO I CHECK FOR HEAD LICE?

Because head lice move so quickly, they are difficult to see, so the diagnosis of infestation is usually made on the basis of finding nits. Nits are barely visible to the naked eye. It can be especially difficult to see nits in light-colored hair. It may be helpful to use a magnifying glass to search for them. It is also essential to use a bright source of light, with natural sunlight being optimal. Comb carefully through the hair, looking for nits. Pay close attention to the back of the head, nape of the neck, and behind the ears. Nits are most commonly clustered in these areas, but examine the entire scalp. In rare, severe cases, nits may be found in eyebrows and eye-lashes. Nits are usually found close to the scalp, about 1/4” to 1/2” away, but they can be found at any distance along the hair shaft, attached securely.

CAN HEAD LICE CAUSE INFECTIONS?

In general, head lice do not pose a human health risk. In some severe cases, excessive scratching can cause infections in children. These infections can cause swelling of lymph glands around the head, especially behind the ears and on the neck.

TREATMENT

- Treatment must be directed toward the infested person AND his/her personal articles.
- ALL family members must be checked and, if found to be infested, also treated. Males, as well as females, can be infested. Hair length does not matter (other than for ease of nit removal).
- The environment must be decontaminated.
- Rechecks are essential to control infestation and reduce the possibility of reoccurrence.

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WHAT DO I DO WHEN I FIND LICE OR NITS?

- STAY CALM!
- Contact your child's health care provider for their treatment recommendations.
- Following the recommended treatment method, remove remaining nits with a fine-tooth comb designed for nit removal. Continue to check for and remove nits DAILY for the next two weeks.
- Wash all clothing, bed linens, and other washable articles that have been in contact with the infested person using water that is at least 130° F. Use the hot dryer cycle.
- Non-washable items can be left in a sealed plastic bag for two to three weeks.
- Soak combs and brushes in hot water for 10 minutes.
- Report all cases of head lice to the school nurse. You should also notify the parents of your child's close playmates. Don't be embarrassed; head lice are NOT a sign of uncleanliness.

PREVENTION

- Warn your child not to leave clothing items in piles at school or at after-school activities.
- Instruct your child not to share clothing, hairbrushes, etc. with friends.
- Tie back or braid long hair.
- Check your child's hair and scalp WEEKLY throughout the school year. This may take up to 30-45 minutes, but it will become routine. It is much easier to treat a mild infestation than when lice have been living on your child's head for weeks!
- Check your child's hair when you receive a lice notification from his/her classroom, then return the notice to school.

WHAT CAN I DO TO AVOID REINFESTATION?

- Recheck for reinfestation 7-10 days after the initial treatment, and treat again if necessary.
- Recheck all family members whether they were infested or not during the next 2-3 weeks.
- Remember to treat the home environment. Vacuum rugs and upholstered furniture, mattresses and car seats as needed to remove loose hairs and nits. Clean clothing, bed linens as outlined under treatment. Be sure to clean combs and brushes.

HEAD LICE PROCEDURE OF THE ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS

Like many school systems, the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Schools have a "No-Nit" procedure recommending that students have no nits in their hair in order to attend school. This increases the likelihood that the child is truly rid of the infestation.

IMPORTANT!

It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to report all cases of head lice infestation and reinfestation to their child's school nurse immediately.

Only then can steps be taken to prevent increased transmission within the school environment. These steps include:

- Notification of parents/guardians of the presence of lice in the classroom.
- Individual head checks.
- Classroom decontamination following environmentally sound procedures.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Your school nurse or personal health care provider can give you more resources about head lice. There are helpful web sites, videos, articles and books that they can recommend and/or lend to you.