



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

September 8, 2017
Vol 47, No 1

September Start

by David Krane, McT Principal

Greetings and welcome to a new school year! Before school began, the staff worked with Nancy Clements of Social Thinking. Social Thinking is a way to help students become more connected with their emotional responses to a variety of situations. Nancy describes Social Thinking as using the “*framework and curriculum developed by Michelle Garcia Winner to teach the thinking that underlies social skills. We explore the Social Thinking and a student’s related social skills; we will also help to connect the dots on how the social mind impacts social academic tasks as well. We seek to teach students how to socially problem solve rather than to memorize because the social experience requires us to adapt our social behavior based on the situation and social situations constantly change...*” Nancy spent the day with all of our classroom teachers, including Art, PE, and Music. All classroom assistants, Special Educators, and Special Education assistants also attended this workshop. This is a school-wide effort to continue to develop language and strategies for students to address the social-emotional learning that is a critical part of any school community. We continue to embrace the philosophy and tenets of the Responsive Classroom as we integrate the ideas of Social Thinking where appropriate. More on this as the year progresses.

We welcome new faculty and staff to McCarthy-Towne this year: Courtney Clerge, our Intermediate Special Educator in the Learning Center, Liz Geller, our AM Kindergarten teacher, Anne Marie Savello, our Long Term Substitute in Darsi Tedesco’s All Day Kindergarten, Peter Knowles, our PE teacher, and Vanessa Bergmann, who will be in Second Grade as Jen Pratt moves to Fifth, replacing Amy-Jo Conant. Maryanne Talpey is joining our office staff, replacing Carol Chytil, who has moved to another position at the High School. All arrivals new to McCarthy-Towne School are extraordinarily qualified and we are delighted and very fortunate to have all of them as part of our school community. Please introduce yourself and say hello!

Our intrepid office staff, including Office Administrator Christine Hanley, Tracey Smith, Parent Involvement Coordinator, and Maryanne, our Office Assistant for things financial and general help and support, have kept our school moving forward during the summer months. Tracey did an amazing job with Kindergarten Orientation and welcoming new families. It is absolutely one of the best days to be part of our school (continued on next page)

Lend a Hand

- ✓ McT Milage Club starts Sept. 15
- ✓ School Picture Day Sept. 19
- ✓ Book Fair Oct. 18-20
- ✓ Fall Social Oct. 20



Support McT

- ✓ Scrip orders due Sept. 22
- ✓ Family Photo Weekends Oct. 14, 21, 28
- ✓ Book Fair Oct. 18-20
- ✓ Use Amazon from the link on www.mctptso.org

More details inside!

Mark Your Calendar September

12, Tuesday
Back-To-School Night, 6 PM

14, Thursday
Early Dismissal, 12:20 PM

16, Saturday
McT Playground Playdate
Kindergarten, New Students
9 – 11 AM

19, Tuesday
School Picture Day
PTSO Meeting

21, Thursday
No School, Rosh Hashana

22, Friday
Scrip Orders Due

28, Thursday
Early Dismissal, 12:20 PM

October
5, Thursday
Early Dismissal, 12:20 PM

9, Monday
No School, Indigenous Peoples' Day

12, Thursday
Early Dismissal, 12:20 PM

18-20, Wed-Friday
Book Fair

19, Thursday
Early Dismissal, 12:20 PM

20, Friday
McT Fall Social 6-8 PM

26, Thursday
Early Dismissal, 12:20 PM

September Start, continued

community, watching how excited these kids are to begin school and how equally excited their families are, too. Our office staff has fit right in to the flow of the school! Our school looks absolutely marvelous. McT hosted the summer classrooms this year, so there was a lot of work to be done here at McT in a short amount of time for Henry Morris, our new Head Custodian, and his crews. But they persevered and did a wonderful job. Tremendous thanks to Henry and Mike Fortin and all their helpers as well as the second shift custodians, Pete, Mark, and Julie. Thank you all for your dedication and hard work.

In addition to new staff, we start this year with a fourth section of Kindergarten.

We start this year with a palpable excitement about continuing the teaching, the learning, and the building of a strong academic and social community for adults and children! We have a remarkable teaching staff, an amazing support staff, and the enthusiastic support of the families of almost five hundred students.

Let's welcome our new faculty, our new students and a new school year. I am looking forward to a wonderful start to a wonderful year!
- David

PTSO Update

by Judy Bourdon, PTSO chair

As the start of school year begins, the PTSO is busy preparing for meetings, events and activities in the year ahead. Welcome to all the new families and welcome back to all the families at McCarthy-Towne School.

A few basics about the PTSO:

- All McT parents, teachers, and students are automatically part of the PTSO.
- The PTSO meets monthly. Meetings are a great chance to hear updates from our principal, David Krane, ask questions you have about the school, learn about upcoming PTSO events and programs, learn how to get involved at McT, and meet others involved in the McT community.
- The PTSO has a number of events throughout the year that add to the community spirit of our school. Look for announcements for these events during the school year.
- The PTSO fundraises to make a concrete difference in the day-to-day experience of our McT students.
- The PTSO Steering Committee is made up of volunteers and we are always looking for new ones. There are also many other PTSO volunteers that work behind the scenes. Thank you to all the volunteers and supporters of the PTSO.
- Most of the steering committee is in place for this year's PTSO. There are two key openings still remaining: **Junior Chair and Secretary**. Thank you to all who have already volunteered to be part of the 2017-2018 PTSO steering committee!

We look forward to a great and successful year with many familiar events and maybe some new events. We will have PTSO meetings with informative and interesting topics that you won't want to miss.

The first PTSO meeting is **Tuesday, September 19 at 7 PM**.

Visit www.mctptso.org to get an overview of plans for the year as well as specific events on our calendar. If you have any thoughts or questions about PTSO happenings, please contact the PTSO chair, Judy Bourdon at judyandroland@gmail.com.

Back-To-School Open House

McCarthy-Towne School Back-to-School Open House will be held on **Tuesday, September 12th from 6–8 PM**. This is an adult-only event for parents and guardians of McT students to visit their child(ren)'s classroom(s). **Book your babysitter now!** Teachers will speak to families at specific times according to grade level. The schedule will be sent home with students, and also posted in the "News and Notes" section of the McT website, mct.abschools.org.

Bus Passes

Parents or guardians must sign a release of liability waiver at the beginning of the school year to participate in bus passing. The waiver and bus pass forms are available in the "Nuts and Bolts > School Forms" section of the McT website, mct.abschools.org.

School Picture Day

School Picture Day is **Tuesday, September 19**. We are working with a new company this year, Geskus. Weather permitting, pictures will be taken outdoors. Pictures start at \$11! Check your child's backpack for the Geskus order form and send it back as soon as possible.

Sibling Discount! Geskus offers a discount for families with three or more students. This applies to all siblings that attend schools that use Geskus. See the order form for details.

Volunteers needed! Help is needed from either **8:20–10 AM** or **9:50 AM–11:30 AM**. This is your chance to make sure your child's hair is in perfect condition for picture day. Please contact Virginia Tawa at virginia.tawa@gmail.com with your time preference.

McT Book Fair

This year we are excited to be working with **Porter Square Books** as our book fair vendor. We have the opportunity to pick the books we sell and cater to our school's audience while supporting a local company! The Book Fair will run **Wednesday, Oct 18th** through the Fall Social on **Friday, Oct 20th**.

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 will visit the Book Fair with their classes at assigned half-hour slots. The Book Fair will also be open Friday night during the Fall Social. Families are encouraged to buy books for their children, as gifts, and as gifts for specific classroom by purchasing books from the Teachers' Wish List posted during the Book Fair. This is a terrific way to help teachers build their classroom libraries!



Volunteers needed! Help set-up the Book Fair on Monday, October 16th, or work the Fall Social on Friday evening, October 20th. We are also looking for volunteers to work 1.5–2 hour shifts during school hours Wednesday through Friday.

More information about the Book Fair and your child's class visit schedule will come home in Friday folders in a couple of weeks. Be on the lookout for those flyers! If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please email the Book Fair co-chairs Amy Stimac or Julie Weir at BookFair@mctptso.org.

McT Fall Social



Volunteers needed! The Fall Social requires A LOT of help from volunteers. If you want to volunteer for this awesome event, please contact Bibiana Knell at bibianaknell@gmail.com.

Student Absences

If your child will be late to or absent from school, remember to call the McCarthy-Towne **Safe Arrival** line at (978)264-4098 any time, day or night. Leave a message with your child's name, their teacher's name, the date of the absence or late arrival, and the reason. Classroom attendance and Safe Arrival notifications are checked every morning, and families will be contacted about any unaccounted absences.

Breakfast at Parker Damon

Students can purchase breakfast from **7:50-8:20 AM**, for \$1.75*.

Blueberry muffin, whole wheat bagel with cream cheese, or Multigrain Cheerios. Includes fruit or milk.

*If you are eligible for free or reduced lunch, you are also eligible for a free or reduced breakfast. Apply online for free or reduced meal prices in minutes anytime at <http://www.abschools.org/departments/food-services/free-reduced-lunch>. If you need help, come to school, and we can assist you!

Family Photo Weekends

This year we are bringing back McCarthy-Towne's Family Photo Fundraiser with a twist! There will be 2 different photographers. Shelley Drouin is returning, and new this year is Alex Mojica! All photo sessions are 30 minutes. The sitting fee is \$50, and due the day of the session. The best part is \$40 goes to McT! Prints and digital images are extra. These funds will go far to help out our kids.



Sessions with Shelley

Saturday October 21, 8:30 AM – 3 PM

Shelley photographs in her yard and on her neighbor's property. There are plenty of beautiful backgrounds including multiple barns and a tree swing. These images are great on your living room wall or on a Holiday card. If there is rain, she sets up a canopy to still get the wonderful backgrounds.

To schedule a sitting, contact Shelley at sd@shelleydrouin.com or (617)529-3629. View her work at www.shelleydrouin.com, or visit her Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ShelleyDrouinPhotography>.

Sessions with Alex

Saturday October 14, 8:30 AM – 10:30 AM and 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Saturday October 28, 8:30 AM – 10:30 AM and 4 PM – 4:30 PM

Alex photographs in the Acton Arboretum. She will reschedule on a different weekend for rain.

To schedule a sitting, contact Alex at alexmojica2003@yahoo.com or (617)774-7844. View her work at www.alexandrajamesphotography.com, or visit her Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Alexandra-Mojica-Photography-1772450762996420/>.

McT Mileage Club...Get Moving in the Morning!

The McT Mileage Club is a morning exercise program for McT students, parents, and siblings. The program is heading into its sixth year, and is great way for students to start their day with hearts pumping, blood flowing, and brains waking! Using a measured course in the back playground, McT Milers will log laps by running, jogging, walking, skipping, or strolling (or some combination thereof). They will also use a chart to track their mileage and receive a foot token at certain accumulated distances. McT Mileage Club is a free program that operates on a drop-in basis. Come as often as you can; there is not an "every week" commitment.

When: Friday mornings, **7:40 – 8:05 AM** beginning **September 15th** and continuing as long as the weather is bearable (We are aiming to make it to Thanksgiving this year.)

Where: Back playground, Parker Damon Building

What to bring: Shoes comfortable for activity and a great attitude. A bottle of water is a good idea, too.

How do I get involved: Complete a form for each child participating in McT Mileage Club. Forms are available in the office and at the Mileage Club sessions. The form will also be sent to families on the McT Mileage Club e-mail group.

Volunteers needed! We rely on help from parent volunteers. You can volunteer as often as you like (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, only when the weather is nice, etc.).

The program will be led again by Chris Hanlon, parent of Josie (6th grade) and former teacher and track/cross country coach. Contact Chris with questions, to volunteer, or to be added to the email group, at hanlonchristopher@hotmail.com.

Scrip Orders

As one of McCarthy-Towne's most profitable fundraisers, we will once again be running the Scrip Gift Card Program on a monthly basis. (Last year, we raised over \$1,000!) Fortunately, this is a fundraiser that doesn't require you to sell anything; you simply support the school by making your regular household purchases! Scrip fundraising is a program that allows families to raise money for McCarthy-Towne by using gift cards, or Scrip, to pay for everyday purchases. They're the same gift cards that you buy at the store, and many popular merchants participate in our Scrip program including iTunes, Amazon, CVS, Starbucks and many, many others.

Order forms will be going home soon, and you'll also be able to order and re-load cards online. Keep an eye out! **The September order deadline is Friday, September 22nd by 2:50pm.** Typically, your store cards will be in your hands one week after the deadline.

Looking forward to an amazing year! If you have any questions about the Scrip Program, please contact Pam Hippensteele at phippensteele@gmail.com.

Food Service Update

by Kirsten Nelson, Director of Food Services

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year. The Acton and Boxborough Elementary school lunch price is \$2.75 and Acton-Boxborough Jr. High and Senior high lunches start at \$2.75 with tiered pricing to \$3.75. All lunches include an entrée, choice of milk, fruit, and vegetable. If a student wants to purchase an a la carte milk, it is available for \$.50.

The Food Service Department now offers an online application for free or reduced lunches at <http://www.abschools.org/departments/food-services/free-reduced-lunch>. If you need a paper application, you may print it from the website or you can contact your school's secretary or counselor for a paper copy.

The Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools use a pre-payment system for all school meal and cafeteria purchases. Each student has his/her own lunch account which is accessed by using the school assigned Lunch ID number. **ALL** students enter this number into the PIN pad located at each register to purchase food. Younger students will receive help with this from food service staff members. Please note that if a student forgets his/her ID number we can access it through a search at the register. However, this

will slow the process so we encourage students to know their Lunch ID number. Students' Lunch IDs will remain the same for the entire time in the Acton-Boxborough Regional School system.

If you do not have your child's lunch ID, please log into the PowerSchool Parent Portal <https://absis.ab.mec.edu/public/>. For High School and Elementary schools, login and choose **My Class Schedule Page** link. Lunch ID for the Junior High can be found on the **Team Assignment** link in PowerSchool.

To pre-pay money to your child's lunch account, you can either send in cash/check to your school's cafeteria manager OR log into **SchoolCafe** at www.schoolcafe.com to prepay using a credit card. To ensure proper credit when paying by cash or check, please include student's first name, last name and Lunch ID on the memo line of the check and please attach the appropriate form. Checks are payable to "AB Food Services Dept." All forms can be found on the Food Services Website at <http://www.abschools.org/departments/food-services/lunch-prepayment>.



Checks can be given to a teacher or a cashier at any of the elementary schools, or left in a lockbox just outside the cafeteria at the Junior High and High School. To prepay to your student's account by credit card, please create an account at www.schoolcafe.com. (Please note that there is a \$1.75 fee for each credit card transaction processed through SchoolCafe.) In SchoolCafe, you can set-up low balance reminders, automatically add money to your students' accounts and manage a la carte purchases.

If you have any further questions, please call the Food Service department at (978)264-4700 x3221 or email us at lunchonline@abschools.org. We look forward to serving your child a healthy lunch at school.

Important Information for All Parents Regarding Medications

Medication administration is an important issue in schools. Some students require medications at school in order to survive. Others need medications in order to learn. Occasionally, students require antibiotics during the day following a bacterial infection.

The goal of your School Nurse is to administer only those medications that are absolutely necessary during the school day. All other medications should be given at home either before or after school.

State law requires a written order by a licensed prescriber and written parental permission before any medication can be administered to students, including over-the-counter medications. You can obtain forms for this purpose from the School Nurse, on the school website mct.abschools.org (see "Health & Nursing Services"), or from most Health Care Providers. All medication MUST be in the original labeled container and be labeled with the student's name. The School Nurse will not administer the following: expired medications, medications delivered in unlabeled containers, and medications in inappropriate containers such as zip-loc bags.

For the safety of all students, no medications are to be carried to school by students. The only exception to this rule is for Junior High and High School students who are allowed to carry inhalers or Epi-pens after certain requirements are met.

With your help, the School Nurse can provide a safe, supervised environment for students who require medications at school. Feel free to contact the School Nurse, Betty Foster, at (978)264-3374 with any questions.



Head Lice Information

It's important to take steps at home to help prevent your child from becoming infested with head lice. Any time children come together, particularly at the start of the school year or following any social grouping like Girl/Cub Scouts, Brownies, Little League, dance groups, or sleepovers, detected head lice cases commonly increase. Recent studies show that head lice are seldom spread in the school setting.

Direct, physical, head-to-head contact is the usual method of transmission. Lice do not jump or fly. They survive only for a short time away from the human head and have difficulty crawling or clinging to smooth surfaces. **Check your child's head weekly for lice and/or nits (eggs).** Mature lice, which are no bigger than a sesame seed, avoid light and are hard to see. Lice eggs or "nits" are usually found close to the scalp – usually within one quarter inch, and may be easier to spot behind the ears and at the nape of the neck. They appear as tiny whitish ovals that are "glued" to the hair shaft. They cannot easily be flicked away as dandruff can. Head lice do not transmit disease and are not a serious medical condition. They cannot survive on your pets.

If you find head lice on your child, please notify the school and treat him/her with lice shampoo following package instructions. A second treatment may be required in seven to ten days. Continue to examine the child and all family members for three weeks and treat only if live lice or if nits are found one quarter inch or less from the scalp.

Check Regularly – Treat Quickly

Help Keep Head Lice Off Your Child

- Check your child's head weekly for signs of head lice.
- Teach your child not to share or trade personal items such as hats, combs, brushes, headbands, and barrettes.
- Contain long hair in braids or ponytails, especially in younger children.
- Teach children to avoid head-to-head contact.

For more information regarding head lice or its treatment, please feel free to contact the School Nurse (Betty Foster, (978)264-3374) or your local health department. And be sure to read the attached "Head Lice Myths and Facts" page in this bulletin. Thank you for your help and support.