



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

December 5, 2008
Volume 38, No 4

December

by Nancy Kolb, McT Interim Principal

This fall the faculty has spent considerable time discussing what qualities are most important in a McCarthy-Towne principal. There are certain qualities that the faculty believes are essential:

- Someone who truly believes in McCarthy-Towne shared decision-making, who trusts and supports teachers and is a good facilitator;
- Someone who values process in education and decision-making;
- Someone who is appreciative of McCarthy-Towne's Art Integration;
- Someone who empowers staff, parents and students;
- Someone who can effectively represent McCarthy-Towne in both the district and the community;
- Someone who is an educator with educational experience.

There are also many qualities we desire; such as, someone who is:

Approachable, flexible, thoughtful, organized, intelligent, open-minded, decisive, positive, respectful, visible, trustworthy, self-confident, a risk-taker, a good listener, a team player, a consensus builder, and someone with integrity and a good sense of humor.

You should be proud of the faculty and all the time and effort they have invested in defining values and what's important in a principal. This work has been instrumental in the principal search process.

Next year Community Education will offer Before and After School Extended Day at McCarthy-Towne.

The faculty support this opportunity for McCarthy-Towne parents to choose early morning and late afternoon childcare at

our school. Community Education will provide registration information in the Winter Catalogue.

And now I would like to offer parents some advice. If you haven't already done so, it's time to invest in an oversized portfolio to store your child's art projects. Both my daughters attended McCarthy-Towne. I kept almost all their projects. Some I framed immediately, some I waited and framed when I found the time. Each piece captures a part of my daughters; in some respects each piece is a self-portrait of who they were during their McCarthy-Towne years:

- The first grade butterfly is a joyful piece with strong brush strokes detailing the intricate wing patterns.
- The fourth grade Native American Landscape Study shows the understanding and reverence the Native Americans held for the land.
- The head-on, eye-level picture of the giant turtle is courageous; few would ever attempt that perspective at grade 3.
- The fifth grade fish collage blends tissue and colored pencil into a seamless camouflage of fish and environment.
- The second grade lion invites you to feel his soft fur, pat his protruding ears and love his endearing expression.

Your children have their unique style, understanding and expression. Keep their projects safe and cherish who they are as McCarthy-Towne students.

Mark Your Calendar

DECEMBER

10, Wednesday

Pajama Day

Community Assembly

PTSO Meeting, 7 PM

11, Thursday

Principal Search Forum

for Parents, 9:15-10:15 AM

Scrip Orders Deadline

Snack Sale

17-23

PDB Lost & Found Fair

18, Thursday

Snack Sale

24-Jan. 2

NO SCHOOL,

Winter Recess

JANUARY

5, Monday

School Reopens

14, Wednesday

PTSO Meeting, 7 PM

19, Monday

NO SCHOOL,

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

26, Monday

Kindergarten Change-over



by Lynne Densen and Kim Clark, PTSO co-chairs

What a great November we had! We met the Scrip Challenge and now the children will get to enjoy a PJ day during the December assembly.

We are still about \$1,000 away from our goal of raising \$3,500 to fund the Cultural & Performing Arts Committee (CPAC). CPAC brings school-wide events for the children during school hours and they also give \$100 to each grade to use for enrichment programs on a smaller scale. **There is still time to contribute.** Forms are available on the PTSO website, www.mctptso.org, under "forms".

Also, as the holidays approach, please remember there are many ways to help our school while you are doing your regular holiday shopping:

- **Buy store cards** for your holiday purchases, or give as gifts through our SCRIP program. The next order deadline is Thursday, December 11th.
- **Buy Amazon products** through our school portal (we get up to 10% of what you purchase). Simply go to our PTSO website, www.mctptso.org and click on the Amazon logo to the right.
- **Buy through Schoolpop.com**, at many of your regular stores; Land's End, L.L. Bean, just to name a few. You can reach the portal through the PTSO website, www.mctptso.org. Each order you place, a percentage goes back to McT.

December Lost & Found Fair

The second Parker Damon Building Lost & Found Fair of the school year will be Wednesday December 17 through Tuesday December 23. All items in the Lost & Found with legible names on them (preferable first and last names) will be brought to the school office and a note sent to the student. Items without identifying names will be displayed in the hallway outside the multi-purpose room at the bottom of the main staircase. Any items not claimed by the end of the fair will be laundered and donated to charity.

Please remind your children to check the Lost & Found Fair for items they may have lost. Families are also welcome to check the fair anytime the building is open. (When school is in session, please remember to sign in the school office before going to the fair.)

Save the Date

McCarthy-Towne Yard Sale, Saturday, May 9

Start setting aside items to donate to this year's yard sale! Every little bit adds up to a lot for our school. Last year's sale grossed \$3,600—all from donated used toys, sporting equipment, housewares, books, clothes, and furniture from McT families, staff, and friends.

For questions about donations or to join the yard sale planning committee, please contact Brenda Simpson (brendahsimpson@hotmail.com or 978-266-1336), or Tina Narbonne (narbonnefamily@yahoo.com or 978-263-3446).

Scrip Gift Card Program

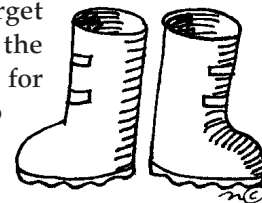
We would like to thank all the families who ordered Scrips in the month of November. WE DID IT! We met the challenge and **the kids have earned a PJ party on Wednesday, December 10th.**

Our last Scrip order for 2008 is due next week—Thursday, December 11th. Cards should be out to families that following Wed. or Thurs. (12/17 or 18). Attached is a list of participating merchants in our area. Order forms are also available on our website—<http://mctptso.org/fundraising/scrip>. Please contact Lynne Densen at 978-266-2952 or lynne.densen@verizon.net or Maureen Jones at maureen.jones1@verizon.net or 978-266-2874 with any questions.

Dressing For Winter

The cold weather is here! Students will continue to go outside for recess unless it is extremely cold or raining. Recess is a very important part of their day, and gives them a chance to exercise, socialize, and get fresh air.

Please make sure that your children are dressed appropriately for outdoor activity. 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 the children not only warm and comfortable, but healthy as well.



McT Principal Search Process Final Parent Forum

The Principal Search Committee wants to make sure all parents have an opportunity to participate in the search process. Since we held the first forum in the evening, our final forum will be in the morning.

Join us on Thursday, December 11 from 9:15–10:15 AM in the McT Conference Room. We will describe the principal search process, hear your priorities, answer your questions and address concerns that you may have. Our goal is to hear your input about the most important qualities for our next Principal. If you have some ideas or questions about the principal search process, we would love to hear them. Refreshments will be served. Please contact Ann Budner (a_budner@yahoo.com) or Carolyn Imperato (carolynimperato@comcast.net) for more information.

'Tis the Season to Recycle

*"Twas the night before SLOYD, and all through the house.
The children collected, even the mouse.*

*Pretty paper and ribbon, cardboard and wood.
"Let's make a sculpture". The kids knew that they should.*

*"Thanks for the toy, it really is great.
But so is this box, and even the crate!"*

*Cut, bend and glue. "Look, it's a creature!
And what we don't use we'll bring to our teacher."*

*So please look all around, put together, take apart
Collect all the things to make into art.*

Thank you to all the creative collectors who have been helping the SLOYD room become a multi-sensory, mixed-media studio.

Here are a few collecting ideas to add to your list:

- scrap wood pieces (even shingles)
- plastic and paper supermarket bags
- yarn, fabric, ribbon, bows
- papers: maps, greeting cards, wrapping
- cardboard: cut into manageable sizes
clean plastic containers, trays and juice caps
old or broken small electronics (DVD, VHS, typewriters, etc...)
- small, unwanted plastic toys
- old hand tools (files, rasps, drills)
- hardware (bits and pieces in the junk drawer)

*Happy Holidays,
Heidi*

Help McT with Holiday Shopping

Don't forget to take advantage of the following sites for holiday shopping. Every purchase you make will benefit the McT PTSO without costing you anything extra!

Amazon.com Up to 10% of your purchase price is donated to McT. Amazon has books, DVDs, CDs, electronic gifts and much more! Simply enter the website through the icon on the PTSO website, www.mctptso.org and place your order. It's that simple!



Schoolpop Register online at www.schoolpop.com and select McCarthy-Towne as your beneficiary school. Each time you shop through the Schoolpop site, which offers popular online stores including L.L. Bean, Land's End, The Gap, Nordstrom, Barnes and Noble, Borders, Dick's Sporting Goods, and dozens more, our school earns a percentage of your purchase.

Target Do you have a Target credit card? If so, register your card at www.target.com so our PTSO can receive a percentage of your Target purchases!

Save your Receipts!



With the upcoming holiday season, most of us will be spending a lot of time and money at the supermarket, buying the ingredients for delicious treats to share with our friends and family. With the Register Tapes for Education Program at Donelan's Supermarkets, those groceries can now also help our school! For every dollar spent, McCarthy-Towne will earn points redeemable for free educational equipment, including art supplies and books.

So every time you shop at **Donelan's Supermarkets**, save your receipts! Simply send in your receipts in with your child or drop them in the collection box in the office. **Receipts dated September 1, 2008–March 31, 2009 are eligible.**

Even if you aren't a regular shopper at Donelan's consider either shopping there during the promotional period or asking your friends and neighbors to give you their Donelan's receipts.

Thank you for your support! Questions can be directed to Wendy Schaad at ws.schaad@gmail.com.

Remember... The more you spend, the more we earn!

Auction Update: Cruising for more good people!



Mark your calendars for the 18th Annual McCarthy-Towne Auction and Come Aboard the SS McCarthy-Towne! Our ship will be departing on Saturday evening March 21st at the luxurious Devens Common Center at the Marriot Springhill Suites in Devens, MA. The auction committee is busy planning for this event. This is a fun evening and our school's largest fundraiser. Once again, the MCAT's will be entertaining the masses with their special cruise ship favorites.

Our cruise directors need a few more volunteers. As always a special thank you to all the people that have sent back volunteer forms. There is already a great group of folks willing to work on this year's auction but there are still a few committees that need more volunteers. This is a great opportunity to meet new people and help raise money for our school. Volunteering for the auction is fun and easy as we have many different positions with varying time commitments even just one hour!

The following committees need a few more people: Business Donations, Parent Donations, Back Room and Raffle Ticket Sellers. Business Donations requires visiting local businesses who have donated an item in the past and collecting the donation this year. There is no cold calling. All businesses will receive a letter requesting a donation soon. The visits are made in January. Parent Donation volunteers call parents to answer questions and to remind families to donate. The Back Room folks work the night of the auction. Raffle Ticket Sellers work an hour time slot at a local grocery store or the post office on a weekend. If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information, please contact our auction Co-Captains Carolyn Imperato (978-264-9982 or carolynimperato.net) or Susan Lerner (978-263-0049 or sammyabe@aol.com).

We have a Co-Chair for the PDBLC!

from Amanda Lye, (Merriam PDBLC Co-chair)

Please welcome Karen Dean, our new Parker Damon Landscaping Committee (PDBLC) Co-chair, representing McCarthy-Towne!

For two years, despite constant pleas, the Landscaping Committee has been struggling along with only one Chair, and just a few volunteers. As a result, we were unable to accomplish many of the goals that the PDBLC had overseen in the past. This included having to cancel Earth Week events for students both years due to lack of parent volunteer participation. We now have the beginnings of a revived Committee and will bring back some wonderful projects this coming spring—especially Earth Week!

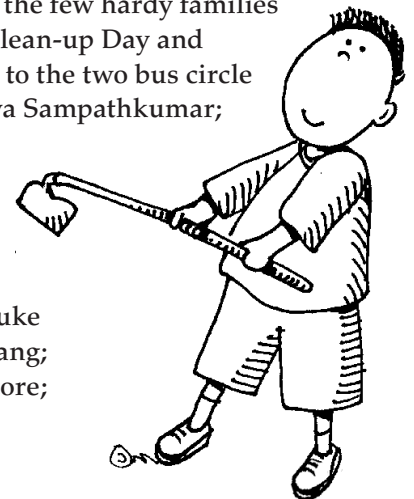
Please consider volunteering to help the PDBLC. Regular attendance and gardening experience not required! Here are two easy ways to be involved:

Thursday Weeding Group (10 AM–Noon) Come join us for weeding and sharing of gardening knowledge to take home and apply to your own yards! Not sure of the right way to pull a weed? Don't worry we'll show you how! This weeding group will transform to a spring planning group when it's too cold outside.

Be part of Earth Week! During Earth Week classes from both schools take an active part in the care of their surroundings. This project is wonderful for the kids and was sorely missed! There will be a scheduled evening meeting to brainstorm about spring projects and Earth Week.

Contact Amanda Lye (amandalye1@yahoo.com) or Karen Dean (dkdean83@gmail.com) with questions, comments or to be added to the regular PDBLC email list to receive regular updates on upcoming projects.

I want to extend a sincere thank you to those who have been joining me on Thursdays to make a dent in the weeding, as well as the few hardy families who came on the Fall Clean-up Day and made such a difference to the two bus circle areas. Thanks to: Vidya Sampathkumar; Wendy Marlowe; William, Benjamin, Brian, and Melissa Dempsey; Neena Arora, Brett, Kathryn and Marika Murphy; Luke Zhang and Chelsea Chang; Kristy and Nicole Paratore; and Michelle Silbert.



5th Grade Overnight at Merrowvista

For the past 12 years the 5th grade students have gone on an overnight experience to an outdoor environmental education center. At first it was *Horizons For Youth* in Sharon, MA, then we switched to *Nature's Classroom* in Groton, MA. This year we ventured even further afield and went to *Merrowvista* in Center Tuftonborough, NH. The trip, as always, was amazing! The students took part in science and environmental education in ways that couldn't be duplicated in the classroom. We went on hikes to mountain ledges, saw a beaver dam, climbed a 40 foot climbing tower, took part in team building exercises and studied the night sky. In 3 days and 2 nights we became a closer and more supportive community of learners. We will take the lessons learned with us as we journey through the rest of this school year.

The trip this year was funded, in part, by a grant from the American Youth Foundation, a group dedicated to strengthening leadership skills in children and young adults. The remaining balance was taken care of by families.

McCarthy-Towne students will continue to make this trip as long as we are able to fund it! We are currently looking at ways to fund the trip, so if you have any questions, comments or suggestions please let us know. Contact any of the fifth grade teachers (Kate Fitzmaurice, Caitlin Walsh or Karen Shiebler) through email at any time. We would like to thank everyone who made this trip possible by sharing some of our observations and feelings about the trip below.

Some Thoughts On Merrowvista, *written by 5th graders at the McCarthy-Towne School*

At Merrowvista my favorite thing was the climbing tower. I learned how to put on a harness. The first time I went to the climbing wall it was my goal to make it half way and I did. But the second time I went up I kept climbing and climbing. Finally I made it to the top of the climbing tower. It taught me to keep going.

My favorite activity was the night walk. It was so cool how when you rub quartz together it makes a light! Also, when you bite wintergreen it makes a light!

I think cruisers was very fun because you got to run around getting food, setting up tables and sweeping was the most fun I had at Merrowvista.

I really liked the hike to the ledge. The hike itself was challenging, but the view made it all worth it! It was spectacular looking out over the lake. If I looked really hard, I could see the tower. The hike down was harder than the hike up because of the leaves and rocks.

At Merrowvista they really took saving the earth seriously, with the ORT and compost. I do wish that we could stay a little longer because we really didn't do all the things I could have. But we got to see a sawmill ruin. That was cool because Matt told us that it was 500 hundred years old and they powered it with water.

I loved Merrowvista because it was inviting and very clean. Also, the cabins had heaters. The people were very nice to me and my teammates. We all had breakfast, lunch and dinner together in the dining hall. The counselors were very nice and helpful.

Merrowvista was awesome! I can still smell the bacon and French toast in the air. I can still see the tiny heads of people from the top of the 45 foot wall. I can still feel the gross leftovers from the dishes on my hands. I can still taste the crisp, night air. I can still hear the crunchy leaves under my feet.

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MCAS Dates for Spring 2009

Note the MCAS test dates for the 2008–2009 school year. If you have children who are students in grades 3, 4, 5 and/or 6, please avoid scheduling appointments or travel during MCAS test periods.

English Language Arts Reading for grades 3, 5, 6:
March 31, April 1, April 2

English Language Arts Composition for grade 4:
March 31

English Language Arts Reading for grade 4:
April 1, April 2, April 3

Mathematics for grades 3, 4, 5, 6:
May 12, May 13

Science & Technology/Engineering for grade 5:
May 18, May 19

Social Studies for grade 5:
May 21, May 22

Facts About the Flu

What is the Flu? The flu is caused by the influenza virus, which infects the lungs, nose and throat. The virus is easily passed from one person to another by coughing and sneezing. For most people, the flu makes them feel very sick, but they generally get better in about a week. In New England, flu season usually begins in December and lasts until April.

Symptoms of the Flu include sudden onset high fever (102-104° F; 39-40° C) lasting 3-5 days, headache, muscle and body aches, exhaustion which can last 2 weeks or more, and dry cough. Some people may be unsure if they have a cold or the flu. Colds are usually milder and do not come on suddenly. Cold symptoms include stuffy nose, sneezing, sore throat and cough.

Treatment of Flu symptoms. Rest in bed. Drink lot of fluids. Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Stay home for at least 3-5 days after you get sick so you don't pass the flu to others. Call your doctor for any of the following reasons: fever that does not get better after 3-5 days; difficulty breathing; chest pain; cough lasting > 7-10 days and/or accompanied by mucus that is green, rust-colored or bloody; you are not able to drink enough fluids.

Reducing risk. Get a flu shot every year. Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Cover your mouth with a tissue or your arm when you cough or sneeze. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Avoid close contact with others who are sick.

Please visit www.mass.gov/dph/flu for more information about the flu.

Home Alone

from the office

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, there could traffic you can't get around.

Please talk to your child(ren) about what to do if they are unexpectedly "home alone." If they are prepared, neither of you will panic.

Special Help Needed in Sloyd

by Astrid Trostorff, Parent Involvement Coordinator

Our Sloyd teacher, Heidi Kupferman, is looking for help on an intermittent basis with two different tasks. Please contact Heidi (hkupferman@mail.ab.mec.edu or 978-264-4700 ext 3703) if you can help with either of these Sloyd projects.

- One or two parents who would put out and take down displays of students' Sloyd projects. The school has hallway display cases and bulletin boards for showcasing the work students have done in Sloyd, and the community enjoys seeing the wonderful projects.
- One or two parents to take digital photos of students' Sloyd projects on an as needed basis.

Thank You

by Astrid Trostorff, Parent Involvement Coordinator

Thank you to all the members of our community who volunteer and help make our school community a wonderful place for all, including (but not limited to):

- Lena Saetre-Grant for handling the school T-shirt orders, and Eleanne Roosenburg and Erik Grant for helping her sort and distribute the orders.
- Marie Clougher, Stacy Harris, Susan Miller, Jean Smith, Ebit Speers, Joan McCaffrey, Susan Miller, Maureen DeLeo, Kristen Durand, Suzy Eppling, Betty Graham, and Maria Ledebor-Cid for assisting Nurse Betty Johns with student health screenings.
- Marie Clougher, Wendy Oltsik, Nancy Tighe, Kim Meusel and Kim Clark for supervising 6th grade snack sales.
- Amanda Dindal for sorting and counting money collected in Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF boxes.

Tidbits from Tina

McT School Counselor

Have you hugged your kid today? I mean REALLY hugged him/her, even when he/she didn't set the table or make the bed or eat those veggies...

Parents Weigh In on Principal Search

As part of the Principal Search Committee's community input process, many parents shared their hopes for the new principal. The committee would like to thank everyone who contributed to the process so far and share some of the major themes we discovered.

1. What do you value most at McCarthy-Towne?

Parent replies were remarkably consistent on this question. Many parents highlighted McCarthy-Towne's emphasis on the arts integration and project-based learning process, where students are encouraged to do their best work and take risks rather than worrying about grades and test scores. The highly competent and enthusiastic faculty drew particular praise. Many parents also highlighted our inclusive, mutually respectful community in which parents, students, faculty, and staff are all important and valued, where bullying is not tolerated and differences are celebrated. These quotes tell the story:

- I appreciate how McCarthy-Towne values each child, encourages them to take risks, and gives them the confidence they need to take on projects.
- The fact that teachers are committed to excellence, and pay such close attention to detail. They have high expectations for every child. They don't settle for anything but a child's best work.
- Openness of staff to parents—no sense of secrecy. There is a sense of trust that everyone is on the same page.
- The sense of community. The school embraces you and makes you feel a part of its family. Every part of this family has a voice and encourages us to ask questions and offer opinions.

2. What are your top priorities for the next 2 years?

Responses on this question differed considerably. Some parents said that they'd like to see their children continue to enjoy learning, take risks, and think creatively. Other parents felt that McCarthy-Towne is already strong in these areas; they hoped that our school will put more emphasis on math and science education. Some requested wellness policies regarding junk food and electronic devices. Still others hoped that budget woes wouldn't compromise educational quality, classroom assistants, and the unique assets of McCarthy-Towne.

- My main priority is that learning be fun and the natural wonder kids have be encouraged rather than squelched by monotonous drill work.

- My hope is that McT will address basic math skills in a more successful way than it has in the past... Our students totally understand math concepts, they just don't have the basic math skills and confidence that they could have, if even 10% more time were given to the basics.
- Smooth transition for the school so that the new leadership brings positive qualities/experiences to the school. I hope that he/she will allow the "good" to continue and will bring new and exciting ideas to the school community.
- Making it through potential budget cuts as money gets tight in town so that all of the uniqueness of McT isn't lost because of money.

3. What qualities do you see as most important in the next principal for McCarthy-Towne?

Parents gave varied responses to this question as well, creating a virtual thesaurus of positive qualities, but some themes did emerge. One was that the new principal should be warm and accessible, welcoming to children and parents, and a strong believer in the McCarthy-Towne philosophy. Some parents hoped that the principal would continue our effective and positive discipline policy. Another theme was someone who has a strong respect for teachers, an ability to inspire their respect, and a talent for hiring excellent faculty and staff. A third theme was an ability to advocate for and represent the school effectively in the larger community.

- I hope this person also stands at the door and greets each child with a smile like Marcia did.
- Firm enough to keep control and maintain good student behavior but not knocking kids down in the process- instead she builds them up.
- Strength in leadership—the ability to listen to all voices and then apply wisdom to create and act out a vision.
- Able to support teachers in all areas while keeping mission and values of McT foremost in mind.
- The ability to clearly and passionately articulate what makes McT special, culturally and philosophically, to the larger community.

Thanks again to everyone who shared their thoughts. We will keep your feedback in mind as we continue with the search process, and will continue to send updates through the McT Bulletin and McT News. If you have any questions, please contact Ann Budner (a_budner@yahoo.com) or Carolyn Imperato (carolynimperato@comcast.net).

McCarthy-Towne School – DECEMBER 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
7	8	9	10 Pajama Day! Community Assembly PTSO Meeting, PDB Faculty Room 7 PM	11 Principal Search Forum for Parents, 9:15–10:15 AM Scrip Orders Due Snack Sale	12	13
14	15	16	17 Parker Damon Building Lost & Found Fair (through Dec. 23)	18 Snack Sale	19	20
21	22	23	24 NO SCHOOL Winter Recess	25	26	27
28	29 NO SCHOOL Winter Recess	30	31	JANUARY 1	JANUARY 2	JANUARY 3
						School reopens January 5