



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

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May 2, 2008

Spring Traditions

By Marcia FitzGerald, MCT Principal

Budgets: During the spring of each year, the faculty and I plan the “contracted services” budget for the following school year. In the past, contracted services have supported a variety of positions. Last year it funded the art integration assistant, the parent involvement coordinator, part of the library/media assistant, 10 classroom assistants and 2 reading assistants. The funds for these positions have come from two sources: The appropriated budget and the PTSO.

While the process the faculty uses to create the budget has not changed, I think it is a good idea to review it every so often. It is important to know who does what! The faculty makes the decision about which programs it wants to support, and the PTSO makes the decision about how much monetary support it can give. The first step of this process is to evaluate the programs that we currently have in place. We look at what is working well and what we want to adjust. The entire faculty spends several meetings working on this and, some years, subcommittees may spend additional time. Every member of the faculty participates equally in this decision making process. This work is all done within the monetary guidelines we receive from the PTSO. After the faculty makes program choices, I present these choices to the PTSO. At this point, the parents decide whether or not they are able to fund the faculty’s request. If they can, this becomes our budget. If they cannot, I go back to the faculty for further decision making.

This year, the faculty and I have created a budget that we believe will maintain both the essential programs and the vision of the school. I will present it in its entirety at the May PTSO meeting. We have included in our budget the following positions: art integration assistant, 10 classroom assistants, 2 reading assistants, additional funding for the library/media assistant and parent involvement coordinator. We have made these choices after lengthy discussions and great deliberation. We are grateful to the PTSO and the parent community for the work you do that enables us to create this unique learning environment for children.

Balance: Springtime in New England is always a welcome relief from winter. It is especially welcome this year after the long and hard winter we experienced. It is a joy to see the cheerful colors of spring flowers and the fresh green buds on the trees. The warm weather encourages outdoor physical activity after a season spent cooped up inside. I know I feel a burst of energy that is invigorating and energizing. The change in the season brings a change in activities here at MCT, too.

One of the changes that occurs at school is the number of special projects, plays, assemblies and field trips. These activities are exciting and engaging for children. They recognize that the school year is coming to a close and that the activities are the culmination of their work. At the same time that all of these activities are occurring, many children are also engaged in after school activities such as soccer, baseball, music and dance. They are involved in end of year recitals and important games. There is a lot going on! While all of the school and after school activities are valuable for children, it is important for us, the adults, to remember to balance our children’s activities with quiet “down” time and a good night’s sleep. All of this activity can be exhausting for children! (Marcia, continued on page 3)

Good-byes

by Marni Kaplan-Earle

It is with a mixture of sadness and excitement that I share the news of my resignation as Art Integration Specialist. Saying good-bye to my work at McCarthy-Towne is not an easy thing. I believe deeply in the transformative power of making art and that the process grows individuals in profound ways, emotionally, intellectually and academically. The partners I have found at McT that are also committed to this philosophy have been an inspiration.

Taking advantage of opportunities that have presented themselves are important next steps in my professional and personal growth. I look forward to our involvement as a McT family and a continued conversation about all that art has to offer our children's hearts and minds.

Proposed 2008–2009 PTSO Steering Committee to be approved at the next PTSO meeting on Wednesday, May 21, at 7:00 pm.

Title	Name
Sr. Chair	Lynne Densen
Jr. Chair	Kim Clark
Treasurer	Jonathan Chinitz
Secretary	Debbie Simon
Faculty Reps	Tina Morgan Catherine Suess
Book Gifting	Joan Davis
Bulletin Editor	Kathie Watt
CPAC	Francesca Ricciardi Julie Greenspan
Directory	Suzanne Kissane
	Lisa Nivison
Grant Writing	Melinda Karp
Hospitality	Lynne Densen
International Liaison	Stacy Harris Susan Epling
Inter-School Council Rep	Wendy Schaad Susan Trudeau
Parker Damon Bldg Rep	Bridget Matz
Potlucks	Kate Murray
PTSO Website	Maria Greene Lynne Densen
Publicity	Amy Hedison
Safe Arrival	Anne-Marie Sweeney
Nominations	Laurie Taylor-Teran
School Committee Observer	Jonathan Chinitz
Socials	Maryellen DiPalo Kate Murray
P.D.B. Lost & Found	Amanda Dindal
P.D.B. Landscape Comm	pending
PTSO Liaison	Kathleen Surdan

Title	Name
Gift Wrap/Bulbs	Tammy Sarnelli Suzi Yarin
Book Fair	Julie Jannke Susan Lerner
Auction Chairs	Carolyn Imperato Susan Lerner
Donelan's Receipts	Wendy Schaad
General Mills Box Tops	Joanie Davis Maureen Ryan-Friend
SCRIP	Lynne Densen Maureen Jones
Funding Factory	Lloyd Simon Jeannie Meijer
Special Events Snack Sale	OPEN
McT Afternoons	Francesca Ricciardi
Family Photo Day	Maryellen DiPalo Sandy Billings
Yard Sale	OPEN

Spring Clean-Up Is Here And Now!
Sunday, May 4th from 10:00am - 1:00pm

We need to get these Parker-Damon Grounds into shape for Spring! With your help we can make them look beautiful! Bring your rakes, weeding tools, trash bags and wheel barrows. . .

The whole family is welcome – and we need all the help we can get!

Show your school pride!

All clean-up and landscaping of the school grounds is done only by volunteers and we need you!

For more information, or to help with landscaping tasks on other days, please contact: Amanda Lye, Merriam PDB Landscaping Committee co-chair, via email at amandalye1@yahoo.com or by phone at (978) 635-9879.

(Marcia, continued from page 1)

Modesty: Another thing the warm weather affects is the kind of clothing that children wear to school. As it becomes warmer, children wear clothing that is lighter and more comfortable. This is a natural response and completely appropriate. In the past, we have noticed that sometimes children choose outfits that are more appropriate to the beach than to school. This is another time when adult guidance is invaluable. A reasonable guideline is for children to wear clothing that allows them to perform all school activities comfortably without drawing undue attention to themselves and that the torso be covered.

Some of the apparel that we feel should not be worn to school include:

- shirts or tops with spaghetti straps,
- shirts or tops that leave the midriff exposed,
- shirts or tops that have very large armholes,
- halter tops,
- very short shorts,
- any clothing that would cause discomfort to the child or others.

Thank you for your help with both of these areas. I appreciate your support and interest in what happens at school and know that this creates a positive and supportive environment for all children.

Save the Date: Ice Cream Social

Friday, June 13th

Mark your calendars for our annual end of the year Ice Cream Social which will be held on Friday, June 13th from 5:30–7:30 pm on the Parker–Damon Building back playground (or will be held inside if it rains). This is a fun celebration for all. The events will include carnival games, a giant inflatable slide, and a big and messy Kimball's ice cream sundae. Watch for flyers to go home mid–May with more details and a ticket order form.

Lip Sync Thank You

by Lynne Densen and Karen Anderson

Thank you to everyone who made the 1st Annual Lip Sync Extravaganza a wonderful success. Thank you to everyone who signed up and performed. All the performers were wonderful and seemed to be having a good time. The teachers not only performed their songs, but were also the MCs for the show and added in little skits throughout. Thank you to all the wonderful bakers (we sold out of everything), and to all the volunteers who worked the event and helped the afternoon run smoothly. Thank you to Stefan Durrant for taking all of the music and putting it in order on the CD and to Tony Dolan for taping the show and editing and burning all the copies that we sold.

Thank you also to everyone who purchased tickets and came out to watch our Lip Sync Extravaganza. We had over 225 people in the audience and made over \$1,400 (that is amazing, especially for the first time).

Thank You

by Astrid Trostorff,
Parent Involvement/Community Outreach
Coordinator

Thank you to all the members of our school community who volunteer and contribute in so many ways to help make McCarthy–Towne such a wonderful school, including (though not limited to):

- Rebecca MacNeill, Julie L'Heureux and Nancy Tighe for taking photographs of student artwork for portfolios
- Kim McGlothlin, Tina Watlington, Lynne Densen, Marie Clougher, Carol Blanco and Amy Miles for sorting McT SpiritWear for distribution
- Jane Ceraso for organizing (with Merriam parents) the very successful 2nd Annual Parker Damon International Evening
- Amanda Dindal for running another PDB Lost & Found Fair
- McT grandparent and noted children's author Johanna Hurwitz for giving wonderful presentations to our 2nd and 3rd grade classes.

School District Budgets

In the school office we have a few APS budget books and a few ABRHS budget books. If you would like to see either of these, please stop by the office.

Parent Appreciation Breakfast

by Astrid Trostorff

Parent Involvement/Community Outreach Coordinator

All parents and guardians are invited to attend the annual McCarthy–Towne Parent Appreciation Breakfast next Friday, June 6.

Who is invited to the Parent Appreciation Breakfast? All McCarthy–Towne parents and guardians. (You do not have to have volunteered for any school or PTSO activity, or donated to the PTSO, to come.)

What is the Parent Appreciation Breakfast? It is an opportunity for the McCarthy–Towne staff to thank the parent community for all their support during the year. Staff members bring in delicious breakfast treats. Parents and staff drop by all morning to informally chat and enjoy the goodies. (Don't forget to pick up the special "Thank you" made for you by your child.)

Where is the Parent Appreciation Breakfast?

Come to the Parker Damon Building multipurpose room. (That's the big room on the ground floor at the bottom of the main staircase.)

When is the Parent Appreciation

Breakfast? Friday, June 6th beginning at 7:30 AM until 10:30 AM. (Sorry—we cannot accommodate McT students before school, but younger siblings are welcome anytime.)

How do I come to the Parent Appreciation Breakfast? Just stop by anytime between 7:30 AM and 10:30 AM on Friday June 6.

Don't Forget to Reserve a Space to Build a Fairy House!

Join Heidi, McT sloyd teacher, in creating magical fairy houses to take home, on Wednesday, May 7, from 5:30–7:00 in the sloyd room. Celebrate spring with your child by constructing secret spaces with natural materials such as bark, twigs, grasses, shells, and seeds.

Please e-mail Heidi at hkupferman@mail.ab.mec.edu to reserve a place.



Sharing Our World at International Night

Sights, sounds, and tastes from cultures around the world were to be savored April 11 at International Night, an event jointly hosted by McCarthy Towne and Merriam Schools. More than 250 people—students, teachers, and families—gathered in the cafeteria, which was transformed for the evening by saris festooning the walls and Chinese lanterns hanging at the door. Families could mark their point of origin on a world map at the entrance. Once inside, kids could play an international trivia game, have their names painted in Chinese calligraphy, and have their hand painted with a henna design. Families could choose from a sumptuous assortment of foods from around the world prepared by McCarthy Towne and Merriam families.

After dinner came the show! McCarthy Towne and Merriam students from kindergarten through sixth grade entertained the crowd with a variety of performances including Hebrew songs and dances, Chinese ribbon and folk dances, Irish step dances, and Hindustani classical singing and Bollywood dance. Merriam alumnus Jason Pao was back by popular demand to demonstrate his skill with the Chinese yoyo. Other performers at International Night were Jessica Shen, Lauren Zou, Chelsea Zhang, Jasmine Falk, Christine Lai, KaiLou Yue, Velerie Han, Kathleen Qiao, Vivian Soong, Cindy Qi, Celine Qi, Alaina Mishleg, April Mishleg, Carrie Yu, Angela Xie, Sufi Kaur, Elsie Liu, Alicia Dai, MeiLi Stanten, Annie Qian, Kai-Jia Yue, Serena Han, Emmie Ohnuki, Iris Zhao, Jenny Yuan, Amanda Wu, Leah Brandstein, Yasmine BenShir, Jana Davis, Eliana Gilfix, Miryam Gilfix, Michelle Zabaruk, Rui Tanimura, Helena Ma, Wendy Huan, Sarah Leandro, Emily Leandro, Emma Bowe–Shulman, Olivia Bowe–Shulman, Abby Kong, Joy Jiang, Jennifer Lu, Shawnae Ma, Sophia Meynard, Yuting Tarn, Judie Wang, Rupyayan Neogy, Colleen Griffin, Bridget Griffin, Alecia Reed, and Alok Macharia.

Parker Damon International Night was made possible by support from the Acton Boxborough Cultural Council, the McCarthy Towne Student Council, and the Merriam PTO. Helping contribute to the success of the evening were a fabulous team of volunteers as well as cafeteria staff and custodians.

This unforgettable evening allowed our two schools that share the Parker Damon Building to celebrate together the fascinating cultural diversity that invigorates our community.

PIP Offers Summerskills Workbooks

by John Petersen

PIP (Parent Involvement Project) is coordinating the sales of Summerskills Sharpeners, a series of math workbooks spanning PreK–8, Pre–Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, and High School Math. The workbooks are aligned with the National Math Standards and are designed to reinforce the mathematical concepts learned in the just-completed school year; parents are generally advised to select the book grade level that corresponds with the grade their student has just finished. Summerskills Language Arts (PreK–7), Spanish (I, II), and French (I) workbooks are also available through PIP. Cost is \$16 per book—a savings of \$2 off the publisher's list price. For each book ordered, at least \$1 goes to support PIP family math and science activities. Samples of the workbooks are on display at the Acton Memorial Library in the teen area of the Children's Department, or can be previewed at www.summerskills.com. Order forms are available online at www.actonpip.org, and are also available with the samples at Acton Memorial Library. Orders placed by Friday, May 16, are guaranteed to be available before the end of the school year (approximately 3 weeks later); an additional order will be placed on May 30. Contact Susan Krikorian at 978-635-0174 or actonpip@yahoo.com for more information.

This year, in celebration of Earth Day, you can have your Summerskills books delivered in an "eco-friendly" PIP reusable grocery bag for an additional \$5 donation to PIP. Stop by the PIP table at the Acton Earth Day event Saturday, May 3, 10am–3pm, at St. Matthew's Church, Acton, for more information.

PIP is a network of parents, educators, community, and business partners supporting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education K–12. For more information about PIP visit www.actonpip.org.

Your Donelan's Receipts Paid Off

Thank you to everyone who collected receipts for the Donelan's Receipts for Education Program. Together, you supplied over \$121,000 in receipts which translated into over 121,000 points for McCarthy Towne. Marni Kaplan–Earle (Art Integration Specialist) and Heidi Kupferman (Sloyd Teacher) were able to redeem those points for a variety of art supplies including a laminator, modeling clay, glitter, and much more. The best thing is that these supplies, which were valued at approximately \$1,200, didn't cost McT or the PTSO a cent! Thank you for your support!

Spring Yard Sale

Saturday, May 17th 8am–1pm

It's almost here! Please support the McCarthy–Towne Annual Yard Sale on Saturday, May 17 from 8am–1pm. We're still looking for:

1.) Volunteers – Please sign-up for short shifts to help set-up Friday night (4pm–9pm), between sporting events on Saturday morning during the event and/or make 1 trip to Goodwill/Transfer Station during clean-up from 1–3pm on Saturday afternoon; Volunteers please contact Brenda Simpson at (978)266-1136 brendahsimpson@hotmail.com.

2.) Donations – Vacation is a great time to clean out for this event! Ladies, please dig out that outfit with tags from the back of your closet for our "Boutique". Tax Deduction Forms available. Donations may be dropped off Friday, May 16th 4–8pm in Cafetorium or 1–4pm in the Multi-Purpose Room.

3.) Shoppers – Come and buy big!

Other questions? Please contact Co-Chairs – Maureen Ryan–Friend at (978)635-1520, friendz@verizon.net or Wendy Schaad at (978)266-1670, ws.schaad@gmail.com.



Dates To Remember

Sunday, May 4..... Spring Clean-Up, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm
Wednesday, May 7..... Art Night – Reservation needed) 5:30 – 7:00 pm
Tues/Wed, May 13/14..... Gr. 3, 4, 5, and 6 Math MCAS
Friday, May 16..... Yard Sale Drop Off
Saturday, May 17..... McT Yard Sale, 8:00 am – 1:00 pm
Tues/Wed, May 20/21..... Gr. 5 Science & Tech./Engineering MCAS
Wednesday, May 21..... PT SO Meeting
Thurs/Fri, May 22/23..... Gr. 5 Social Studies MCAS
Monday, May 26..... NO SCHOOL—Memorial Day
Friday, June 6..... Parent Appreciation Breakfast
Friday, June 13..... Spring Ice Cream Social
Thursday June 19..... LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

Wednesday, September 3..... FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL 2008–2009

Tidbits from Tina

by Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

More excerpts from Positive Discipline A–Z by Jane Nelsen:

Tool #11: Know Who Your Children Are

Take the time to get to know your children. Listen to them, without criticizing or trying to manipulate them. It is true that it is the parent's job to impart values and teach them right from wrong; but sometimes it is best to put aside the lectures and the teaching. Find out what they feel and think, and show them you respect their opinions and feelings. Sometimes we are so busy molding our children, we don't take the time to find out about them as individuals and value them for who they are.

Tool #12: Welcome Mistakes

We need to help our children believe that mistakes are opportunities to learn. Instead they interpret mistakes as bad; they think that "you are stupid, bad, inadequate, or a failure if you make mistakes. If you make a mistake don't let people find out. If they do, make up an excuse even if it isn't true." These are the messages our children think are true, and we have to convince them otherwise. We have to model for our children, as we admit to our own mistakes, and find ways to learn from them.

(Editorial note: I find it easy to tell a student that mistakes are great ways to learn; I find it harder to admit to my own mistakes. . .hmmm. . . Something I need to work on perhaps?)

TICK FACTS

Summarized by the APS/ABRHS Nurses, April 2008

What are ticks?

Ticks are bugs that feed on the blood of mammals, birds, and reptiles. Deer ticks and dog ticks are found throughout Massachusetts and may spread different disease-causing germs when they bite. Ticks are generally found in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas. Ticks do not fly or jump. They attach to animals or people that come into direct contact with them.

- Deer ticks: Both nymph (young) and adult deer ticks will bite humans. The highest risk of being bitten by a deer tick occurs throughout the spring, summer and fall seasons. However, adult deer ticks can also be out searching for a host any time winter temperatures are above freezing. Deer tick nymphs are the size of a poppy seed and deer tick adults are the size of a sesame seed.
- Dog ticks: In general, only the adult dog tick will bite humans. The highest risk of being bitten by a dog tick occurs during the spring and summer seasons. Adult dog ticks are about the size of a watermelon seed.

How can I protect my family from tick bites?

- The single most important thing you can do is check yourself for ticks once a day. Favorite places ticks like to go on the body include areas between the toes, back of the knees, groin, armpits, neck, along the hairline, and behind the ears. Remember to check your children and pets, too. Remove any attached tick as soon as possible.
- Use repellents that contain DEET on exposed skin and those that contain permethrin on clothing. Be sure to read product labels to ensure safe and proper usage.
- Stick to main pathways and the center of trails when hiking.
- Wear long-sleeved, light colored shirts and long pants tucked into socks. This will keep ticks away from your skin and make it easier to spot a tick on your clothing.
- Talk to your veterinarian about the best ways to protect your pets from ticks.
- There is currently no human vaccine available to protect against Lyme disease or any other tickborne disease found in Massachusetts.

What should I do if I find a tick on myself or my child?

The tick should be carefully removed as soon as possible. The longer an infected tick remains attached to a person or animal, the higher the likelihood of disease transmission. Use fine point tweezers to grip the mouthparts of the tick as close to the skin as possible. The tick should not be squeezed or twisted, but pulled straight outward with steady, gentle pressure. You should not apply kerosene, petroleum jelly, nail polish, or a hot match tip to remove the tick; these measures are not effective and may result in injury. Notify your health care provider if you have been bitten by a deer tick, or if you develop a rash or other flu-like symptoms following a tick bite.

Further information can be found on the following web sites:

www.mass.gov/dph and www.cdc.gov