



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

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School Improvement Plan

By Marcia FitzGerald, MCT Principal

Each year the MCT School Council submits a report to the School Committee relating the work that has been done on the current School Improvement Plan. The first half of the report includes an assessment of the work the school has done with regard to the School Improvement Goals that were determined last year at this time. The goals are related to MCT's commitment to literacy, the arts and the health and the support of our ESL students and their families. The entire report will be available for anyone who is interested following the June APS School Committee meeting. What follows is an overview of that report.

Literacy

This year the McCarthy-Towne faculty continued its focus on the advancement of literacy among all students.

Members of the faculty:

- Participated in a summer R & D focusing on and preparing for the assessment work to be done during the 2007-08 school year;
- Created an extensive bibliography of writing resources for teachers and students;
- Developed a set of teaching lessons and activities for each of the 6 + 1 Traits;
- Viewed, discussed and evaluated model lessons focusing on individual traits;
- Worked in grade-level teams to assess student writing and to plan remediation;
- Modified their grade-level writing rubric based upon instructional experience;
- Used the biweekly grade-level planning time to assess student writing using the student samples collect during the 2006-07 school year.

In an effort to inform the parent community, the members of the School Council wrote and distributed "Writing Literacy at McCarthy-Towne: Six Traits of Writing."

The Arts

The importance of the Art Integration Specialist (AIS) and the Sloyd program at McCarthy-Towne cannot be overstated. Both have been part of our school since its founding in 1971. Each year we include goals in support of these program in our school improvement plan in order to ensure their continued success as part of McCarthy-Towne School curriculum.

We have met this goal in the following ways:

- Continued support of the AIS through weekly meetings;
- Expanded the Sloyd volunteer program;
- Developed architectural/contemporary art projects such as the Keith Haring inspired graffiti wall and the Claes Oldenberg paper mache tools;
- Continued the integration of classroom curriculum in Sloyd projects; (Balance & Motion/Calder stables; Ghana/masks; Paris/clay gargoyles; Lowell mills/ceramic coil weaving; Greece/claypots with classic design motifs; Simple Machines/Calder balancing toys; Egypt/Basket cats and amulets)
- Photographed artwork and created CDs for archival reference and student portfolios;
- Held a Sloyd Family Art Night.

Support of ESL Students and their Families

Our focus has been on integrating new international families into our community. To help accomplish this we have done the following:

- Distributed the International Family Handbook (IFH) to families and made it available on our school website;
 - Translated the IFH into Mandarin Chinese, Portuguese and Spanish;
- (Marcia, continued on page 2)

(Marcia, continued from page 1)

- The PTSO has set up buddy families for new international families. They have done this to welcome the new families, answer questions and provide some support.
- Held the second International Evening with Merriam, which was very well attended by all members of our community. People brought food to share. Some students as well as their parents did some short performances related to their culture.

PTSO News

What a terrific year this has been! At this point in time, the McCarthy-Towne PTSO has raised almost \$103,000 during this school year. We have had so many amazing people step up and help the PTSO to not only raise this money, but to bring the school community together. Thank you to all the parents who either organized, volunteered or attended an event, and to the teachers who have gone beyond the call of duty (performing at the LipSync, helping at the upcoming Ice Cream Social and running the Spirit Wear Sale), and to everyone for supporting our school.

We are very fortunate to have most of our PTSO chairs returning next year. However, we still have three open positions: Landscape Committee, Yard Sale and Basketball Snack Sales. These positions can be filled by one person, or by two co-chairs (former chairs are still at school and will be available to help train you). Attendance at PTSO meetings IS NOT mandatory, but is a great way to get involved. Information on the open positions was published in the May bulletin (which is available at www.mctptso.org/bulletin). We will be voting on the nominations at the June 11th PTSO meeting.

We will also be voting at the June 11th PTSO meeting on the 2008-2009 budget, so we urge everyone to attend.

In case you need three reasons to attend: Nancy Kolb, interim principal, will attend the next PTSO meeting on Wednesday, 6/11 at 7 pm.

Proposed budget:

CPAC	\$ 3,500
Hospitality/PICOC	\$ 300
Safe Arrival	\$ 400
Student Aid	\$ 400
Contracted Services	\$96,500
General Expenses	\$ 500
Credit Card Expenses	\$ 400
6th grade graduation	\$ 500
Total	\$102,500

The contracted services budget covers the Art Integration Assistant, the Parent Involvement Coordinator, Media Assistant, Reading Assistants, and Classroom Assistants. This covers both Reading Assistants and 2nd - 6th grade Assistants for 15 hours a week, and 1st grade Assistants for 19 hours a week, which has been the contracted amount per week for the past few years. If you have any questions or feedback regarding the proposed budget, please contact either Lynne Densen at lynne.densen@verizon.net or 978.266.2952 or Suzi Yarin at ssyarin@verizon.net or 978.263.6383.

Many thanks to the following outgoing chairs for all their hard work!

Basketball Snack Sales...Jeannie Meijer
 Bulletin.....Kathie Watt
 International Liaison.....Jane Ceraso

Nominations.....Betsy Gitelman
 Social.....Rosemary Benson
 PTSO Liaison.....Pat Loria
 General Mills BoxTops...Sue Sheehan and Maura Champigny

Yard Sale.....Maureen Ryan-
Friend and Wendy Schaad

Family Photo Day.....JoAnne Wiggins
Sr. Chair.....Suzi Yarin

Ice Cream Social: Friday, June 13th

Come to our end-of-the-year celebration which will be held 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 the entire family. The events will include carnival games, a giant inflatable slide, and a big and messy Kimball's ice cream sundae. A flyer is attached with more details and a ticket order form--if you know you're coming, please try to pre-order tickets (by June 10th) to help us better anticipate ice cream/pizza needs. Thanks and hope to see you there!

Celebration of Marcia FitzGerald's Years at McT!

Join us during the Ice Cream Social in the multi-purpose room between 6:00-7:00 pm for a special slide show and a chance to say "Hi" to Marcia. Current and past students and families are all welcome.

On-Line Emergency Cards and Placement Notification

From the McCarthy-Towne office

Beginning with 2008-09, your child's class placement notification will be through the on-line Emergency Card system. The school will no longer be sending placement letters.

Parent/guardians should have received or will be receiving a letter with your child's user name and family password at their end-of-year conference (or mailed home, if they have already had their conference.) This is the same information you received last fall. Since you are required to review and update this information every year until you child graduates high school, please save this information in a safe place.

Class placement will be available on-line beginning on August 22 at 3 PM. Parent/guardians need to review and update any changes to contact and medical information, and indicate whether you give permission to the school nurse to treat your child. When you are finished reviewing and updating, hit the "submit" and the next screen will indicate your child's teacher.

Class lists will be available on-line in a "read only" format beginning August 29.

Grades K - 5: Not at McT Next Year? from the office

Are you moving out of Acton? Is your child going to private school or a charter school next year? You should fill out a "Release of Records" form as soon as possible. During the summer, the

school office is open only limited hours, and the health office is closed.

On-Line Emergency Cards and Next Year's Directory

From the McT office and PTSO

The McT PTSO publishes the School Directory each fall. In the past, the school has had parent/guardians fill out "Information Release Forms" which were used to create class lists and the School Directory. The information (student name, address, phone number, parents/guardians names and email address) now comes from the on-line emergency cards.

Parents will receive a form during the first week of school that will allow them to EXCLUDE any of the above information from the School Directory and class lists. If the office does not receive a form indicating what information to exclude, we will use the information given on the on-line emergency card as of Friday, Sept. 19.

At the beginning of the school year you should make sure your child's contact information is correct, and look for the Directory Exclusion Form if there is any information you do not want published.

Notice to 6th Grade Parents

from the office

Before the sixth grade students' files go to the junior high school, Marcia will go through and purge them of extraneous papers. These papers are destroyed unless parents would like to have them. For some students, there will not be any extraneous papers.

If you would like to have the papers from your child's file, please notify the office in writing by the last day of school, June 19th. The school of-

office will let you know when you can come in to get the papers.

Annual Yard Sale Sails to New Heights!

by Maureen Ryan-Friend & Wendy Schaad

Well, once again our McT community took an ordinary event and supersized it! We grossed \$3600! Many thanks to the tireless committee of Jean Bradley, Darlene Butler, Julie Greenspan, Tina Narbonne, Kim Nolan, Brenda Simpson, Mariah Staayer who have been meeting and planning since February! Many thanks to the Hospitality Committee who contributed beautiful cakes, pies and other treats that raised over \$100 of our total! Thanks to all of our volunteers who fit this event into their busy schedules: Sandy Billings, the Chang family, Malcolm & Luke Phillips, Lisa Raye, Amanda Dindal, Suzi Yarin, Tina Watlington, Julie Janke, Karen Anderson, Steve Simpson, Vikki Spaulding, Petra Charisse, Mimi Kirkman, Tina and Bryce Conners, Deb Simon, Janis Raguin, Suzanne Ward, Natasha Wood, Francesca Riccardi's sons Stephan and Nathaniel & Trish Zarola (for the donation and delivery of biggest ticket item - a living room set!). Several great service organizations came at the end for donations and our "free for all" saved a lot of land-fill space. Thanks to Astrid and Guy for their support.

Most of all, thank you to all in the community who donated items and came back to shop! Start saving for next year! Questions (978) 635-1520.

Thank You From Sloyd

by Heidi Kupferman

I'd like to give a huge thank you to all the volunteers who helped in the sloyd program this year. Because of you, the hallway galleries were always graced with student artwork, miles of materials were cut and organized and ready for little hands to use, loads of ceramic work were loaded into the kiln, and students greatly benefited from your support and patience.

Thank you to my committed crew of weekly volunteers: Karen Dean, Pauline Thorpe, Laura Post, Mignon Ammerelaan, Karen Anderson, Tina Watlington, Stacy Harris, and Jean Smith.

And thank you to the numerous parents, too many to list, who came in to help with special projects throughout the year.

Needless to say, I'll be looking for weekly volunteers for next year too. If you're already interested, please e-mail me at hkupferman@mail.ab.mec.edu.

I wish everyone a happy and creative summer.

Last Lost & Found Fair

The last Parker Damon Building Lost & Found Fair of the school year will be held the last week of school. All items will be sorted, and ones with names will be returned to school offices for students to pick up. All items with no identifying names will be displayed on tables outside the multi-purpose room at the bottom of the main staircase. Students will be reminded to check the tables for missing items. Parents/guardians can check the Lost & Found Fair anytime the school building is open (on school days from 7 am until 9 PM.) Please remember to sign in during school hours. All items left at noon on June 19 will be given to charity.

Dates To Remember

Wed, June 11..... Community Assembly: 6th grade Variety Show

Wed, June 11..... PTSO meeting 7 PM

Friday, June 13 Ice Cream Social - 5:30 - 7:30 PM

Friday, June 13 Reception for Marcia - 6 - 7 PM

June 16 - 19..... Lost & Found Fair

Thurs, June 19..... Last Day of School: 12:15 dismissal

Friday, August 22..... Class Placement on-line 3 PM

Friday, August 29..... Class Lists on-line

Wed, September 3.....School Opens 9:15 AM

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):

- Tammie Kaminski, Carolyn Imperato, Julie L'Heureux and Yaso Aravinthan for being Snack Sale Supervisors since April break;
- Lynne Densen and the Hospitality Committee for snacks, beverages, flowers and paper goods for the May APS School Committee meeting;
- the McCarthy-Towne staff for breakfast goodies for the Parent Appreciation Reception;
- Tamara Cuthbert (McT parent), Suzanne Joris (Merriam parent) and 15 fabulous members of ABRHS class of 2008 for cleaning and weeding the planting beds on Senior Community Service Day;
- Maureen Ryan-Friend, Wendy Schaad and a wonderful committee for running a very successful Yard Sale.

McT Scrip Program Reminder

There is still time to get your Scrip order in for our last order of the year. The deadline is Tuesday, June 10th at 9am. The Scrip order will be placed on the 10th and Scrip cards should be ready for distribution no later than Monday, June 16th, with plenty of time if you are buying them as a group for a teacher's gift.

Remember, with so many people to thank at this time of year: teachers, assistant teachers, support staff, bus drivers, bus and reading buddies, coaches and assistant coaches, just to name a few, what better way to thank them than with a gift card?

Or what about summer? Are you ready for summer vacation and the kids home for 10 weeks? Are you looking for some creative things to do with the kids? Going on a long plane or car ride this summer? Are YOU ready for the never-ending questions:

"Can we rent a movie?"

"Can I get a new book?"

"Can I buy a new PlayStation game?"

"Can I download some songs?"

"Can we get some ice cream?"

What about starting summer off by creating a "summer bucket" for your child(ren). You can fill the bucket with gift cards that they can redeem all summer long. Tailor the bucket for each child. How about giving them a Blockbuster card or a Barnes and Noble card or a Dunkin Donuts' card or a Baskin and Robbins card or maybe a Toys' R Us card?

Specials for the Month of June

Kmart is offering 9% instead of normal 4%

Sears is offering 9% instead of normal 4%

Lowe's is offering 6% instead of normal 4%

PetSmart is new; they are offering a \$25 card at 4%

Please contact Lynne Densen at 978-266-2952 or Maureen Jones at 978-266-2874 if you have any questions about Scrips. Order forms can be found at www.mctptso.org/fundraising/scrip.

Recycling Updates

Hot off the press, there are changes in what can be accepted for recycling. We were getting paid for sending in used DVDs, portable digital DVD players and game station consoles as well as GPS equipment. But alas, no longer. And we've gotten a number of questions about equipment that can be accepted, so here's some info on what we take.

We will be able to use from the box at the main library, water district office or the silver box in the McT lobby: cell phones (please, please, we love them), inkjet and laserjet cartridges, laptop computers, Apple iPods, and digital still and video cameras. And we also accept used books, provided they are: in good condition, list priced at \$13 or more and have been published within the past 5 years.

We are not able to use toner tanks, CDs, DVDs, video games, VCRs, printers, computers and monitors. Also, we do not send in the accessories for the cell phones (chargers, manuals, etc). However, there are a number of places that will accept some of these items. Gotbooks.com accepts CDs, DVDs and videogames as well as books. McT is contemplating having a GotBooks drive or container; if you think you might be interested in coordinating it, send Astrid or me a note:

atrorstorff@mail.ab.mec.edu or

deb.simon@comcast.net. Costco has a trade-in

and recycling program for older equipment including computers, monitors, printers and fax



machines. You need to be a Costco member; here's the link. <http://www.greensight.com/CostcoTrades/Common/equiptypes.aspx?SiteXfrMsg=1>.

And if an item has an ounce of life left in it, see what you can offer or receive on the Acton freecycle group (see freecycle.org for details).

And a gracious thank you to the many people who've been donating. It makes a difference!

Tidbits from Tina

by Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

I have spent the year sharing Jane Nelsen's thoughts from her book, *Positive Discipline A-Z*. I find her approach to parenting both practical and insightful, and I encourage you to use her suggestions as you parent your children. While I get a summer vacation from working with your children, you do not! Keep up the good work you do as parents and enjoy your kids as you spend time together this summer. They may drive you crazy at times, as children tend to do (It's their job, I think!!), but they will also fill your heart as you watch them grow. Take time to smell the roses and to make memories with them!
See you in September!

Family Photo Day

Our annual Family Photo Day fundraiser has been set for Sunday, September 28, 2008. Julie L'Heureux (McT Mom!) will be taking photos at the Acton Arboretum from 8:30am to 3:00pm. Sittings are scheduled every 10 minutes and cost \$40 per family grouping (\$35 goes directly to McT!). The sitting fee includes one 8X10 photo. You can see examples of Julie's wonderful photographs at [Http://www.sunlightphotography.net](http://www.sunlightphotography.net).

Appointments can be scheduled by contacting Sandy Billings SandyBillings@verizon.net. Please include your name, phone, 3 time choices, and number of adults/children/pets to be photographed. Send payment to Sandy at 33 Mohegan Rd, Acton, MA 01720. Make checks payable to McT PTSO. Don't delay, book today!

Box Tops for Education



Last chance for Box Tops!! Bring in any Box Tops to your classroom teacher and don't forget to keep on saving those Box Tops for next year's

collections.

Have a great summer!

A Message from Food Services

It has been a pleasure serving the students and faculty all year!

This month's Healthy Snack Recipe is from Eatingwell.com.

You won't mind serving dessert on a busy weeknight after assembling these quick parfaits.

Makes 4 parfaits

ACTIVE TIME: 5 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 5 minutes

EASE OF PREPARATION: Easy

2 8-ounce containers (2 cups) nonfat peach yogurt

1/2 pint fresh raspberries (about 1 1/4 cups)

1 1/2 cups fresh, frozen or canned pineapple chunks

Divide and layer yogurt, raspberries and pineapple into 4 glasses.

NUTRITION INFORMATION: Per serving: 109 calories; 0 g fat (0 g sat, 0 g mono); 3 mg cholesterol; 23 g carbohydrate; 5 g protein; 3 g fiber; 58 mg sodium; 113 mg potassium. Nutrition bonus: Vitamin C (60% daily value), Calcium (15% dv).

1 1/2 Carbohydrate Servings

Exchanges: 1/2 reduced-fat milk, 1 fruit

Notice to 6th Grade Parents

Your child will bring home two important items today. Please check their backpack for:

1. A large manila envelope from Assistant Superintendent Susan Horn containing the booklet "Red Flags and Resources";
2. A letter regarding participation in interscholastic sports at the junior high school and green form that must be submitted this summer in order for a student to participate in team tryouts.

The last day of school is

Thursday, June 19th.

Dismissal is at 12:15.

Have a wonderful summer!

SUN SAFETY FOR CHILDREN

Childhood sunburns can increase your child's risk of developing skin cancer as an adult. Even a suntan can be harmful to children. Tanning is an outward sign of internal skin damage. Research shows that much of the damage to skin is done in the first 18 years of life. Protecting skin and eyes during these early years can reduce the risk of some types of skin cancer by up to 78%. Melanoma is a cancer of younger people and can start as early as adolescence.

Youth and Skin Cancer

- 50% of lifetime exposure to UV light occurs during childhood and adolescence.
- It can take less than 10 minutes for a child's skin to burn.
- Children with severe sunburns are at an increased risk for skin cancer.
- A person born today is twice as likely to develop malignant melanoma compared to someone born only a decade ago and 12 times more likely as someone born 50 years ago.
- Being sun safe is the first step to reduce the chances of getting skin cancer later in life.

Teach Children Sun Safe Habits

Children learn healthy habits best at a young age. Therefore, it is important to begin protecting your children from the beginning and teach them the importance of sun safety. With sun damage accumulating over a person's lifespan, beginning sun safety habits at a young age should be a priority.

- Maximize protection between the hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Wear sun protective, light colored clothing including long sleeved shirts and pants made of tightly woven fabric.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat that protects head, face, ears and neck. If a baseball cap is worn, make sure to use sunscreen on ears and neck.
- Wear UV-protective sunglasses with 99%-100% UV absorption.
- During peak sun hours (10-4pm) seek shade. Shadow rule-if your shadow is shorter than you, the sun's rays are at their strongest and you should seek shade.
- Encourage children to play in shaded areas, especially during peak sun hours.
- Use a sunscreen of SPF 15+ and apply a generous amount (about a palmful) 30 minutes before going outside.
- Reapply Sunscreen every 90 minutes or after swimming, towel drying or perspiring, even if the label says the product is waterproof. Don't forget the lips and ears-both areas can burn just as easily.
- Strongly discourage the use of tanning beds.

Further information can be found on the following web sites:

www.shadefoundation.org

www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/choose_yourcover/guide.htm

(Summarized by the APS/ABRHS Nurses, 5/2008)