



McCarthy-Towne Bulletin

November 5, 2010
Volume 40, No 3

November Days

by David Krane, McT Principal

In this space last November, I wrote that there was no doubt that fall was over and winter was beginning to assume its place in the seasonal hierarchy. Snow flurries and freezing temperatures were becoming the rule. But as I write this, it is 74° outside and the third grade trip just last week is still being talked about as a day of remarkable weather, just perfect for walking around Plimoth Plantation. Beautiful weather will temper even a long and tiring bus trip.

Last week at the School Committee meeting, I made a presentation around the literacy work that is being done with students in the primary grades here at McT. I'd like to talk about one piece of that here and how it is a very powerful tool in building literacy skills with children. All of the teachers, from Kindergarten through grade 6, including CASE teachers and many of the specialists, use this in their classrooms and it is something that can be done at home, too. The Read Aloud in the classroom is a huge part of literacy instruction. It is appropriate across the grade levels and it is useful and enriching in all the content areas. It is also a tool that involves and engages all the students in a classroom as they can work to listen and think about text as it is being read. Asking questions and forming ideas becomes what they do and all children respond to it. Reading with your children, reading to your children and listening to your children read is a big part of bringing the classroom home. Newspapers, cookbooks and even the back of a cereal

box are all resources at your fingertips, too. Families who read together send the message that reading is a joyful experience and joyful learning is what school is about.

We have begun, among the faculty and staff, a yearlong professional development effort aimed at developing a common language that we can all use when we speak with students. We will be using a book, *The Power of Our Words*, as we explore "teacher language that helps children learn." Robin Kynoch and Caitlin Walsh will be leading this process, as developed by the Northeast Foundation for Children. The Foundation is behind the curriculum and the philosophy of the Responsive Classroom, of which this study of Teacher Language is a part. We will also be welcoming a facilitator from the Foundation for our Professional Day on November 2. This all day workshop is titled *Responding to Misbehavior*, and this is another strand of the Responsive Classroom philosophy. As we weave these strands into the culture of the classroom and of the school community, we are making an effort to provide children and staff with the tools and strategies to prevent behaviors that can lead to conflict. Clear language that is the same in every classroom is a wonderful start. As Paula Denton, author of *The Power of Our Words*, notes in her introduction: "Language is one of the most powerful tools available to teachers. It permeates every aspect of teaching and learning." We are all looking forward to beginning this exciting process.

Mark Your Calendar

NOVEMBER

8-19

Winter Clothing Drive for Cradles to Crayons

11, Thursday

NO SCHOOL, Veterans Day

17, Wednesday

Scrip Orders due

PTSO Meeting, 7 PM

18-30

PDB Lost & Found Fair

19, Friday

Family Game Night, 6-8 PM

24, Wednesday

Early Dismissal (1 PM)

No PM Kindergarten

25-26, Thurs./Fri.

NO SCHOOL, Thanksgiving

26, Friday

Acton Turkey Trot, 9 AM

DECEMBER

7, Tuesday

Principal's Coffee,

9:30-10:30 AM

8, Wednesday

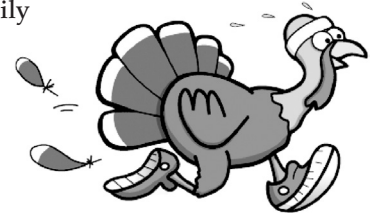
PTSO Meeting, 7PM

24-Jan. 2

NO SCHOOL, Winter Recess

Second Annual Acton Turkey Trot

Registration is now open for The Second Annual Acton Turkey Trot, a 5K Race and Family Fun Run/Walk to benefit the Acton Food Pantry. **The race is scheduled for 9 AM on Friday, November 26** and will begin and end on the main school campus on Charter Road. Register online (www.mktix.com/abce). You can also drop-off or mail your registration to A-B Community Ed. (15 Charter Road). Registration forms are available at Community Ed. or can be found online—<http://comed.ab.mec.edu>. Not a runner but want to help? Please contact Ryan Bettez (bettezfamly@yahoo.com).





from Tammy Sarnelli, PTSO chair

Thank you to parents who joined the PTSO discussion at our October 13 meeting. I am reaching out to all of you. **The Junior Chair position remains open!** I think, like me, you may be worried about taking on the Senior Chair position next year and the time and energy it may require. I would like to give you a list of what I do as the Senior Chair and how much time it takes.

- Developing the monthly PTSO agenda (20 minutes)
- Sending emails to the treasurer and fundraiser chairs for updates and follow up on emails (20 minutes)
- Meet with David Krane to review the agenda (20 minutes)
- Chair the PTSO meeting (90 minutes)

Only 2.5 hours in a month for the Senior Chair! The PTSO is not carried by one person, but by many dedicated parents who spend countless hours giving to the school. Please give the Junior Chair role a chance.

The next PTSO meeting will take place on Wednesday November 17th at 7 PM in the Faculty Lounge (the room at the top of the stairs). Come and join the discussion. We will have a speaker, Kate Crosby, come discuss tips for energy conservation at home. McT is making huge efforts to “reduce the juice” and this will give you ideas on how to talk to your children about conserving energy.

Remember that you can always find PTSO information on our website—www.mctptso.org.

BMI Notification to Families

The school nurses will be conducting hearing, vision, height and weight screenings soon. Because of a Massachusetts State mandate (105CMR200.500) passed in April 2009, the school nurses will collect height and weight measurements to calculate Body Mass Index (BMI) for students in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10. The BMI is a “weight for height for age” index. BMI can be a useful tool in the early identification of possible health risk factors among developing youth.

BMI does not tell the whole story about your child’s health status, and BMI does not distinguish between fat and muscle. For example, if a child is very athletic and has a lot of muscle, his or her BMI may be high even though he or she is not overweight. That is why we will encourage you to share the results with your child’s health care provider. Your child’s doctor or nurse is in the best position to evaluate his or her overall health and will be able to explain to you the results of the BMI screening.

Notification of BMI results and resources will be sent in a confidential manner to all parents/guardians of students in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10 who participate in the height and weight screening. Parents and guardians may waive their child’s BMI screening by submitting a written request to the school nurse. Students’ privacy will be respected at all times during the process of measuring height and weight, calculating BMI, and notifying parents/guardians of results.

News from the Sloyd Studio

We’ve only been in school for eight weeks, but the display spaces are beginning to overflow with amazing student artwork! Be sure to take time to admire the 3rd grade art cars with artist statements in the library, 2nd grade ceramic turtles with 5th grade fossils in the glass cases, and Kindergarten puppets standing tall above, and 1st grade animal paintings with 4th grade paper weavings on the Sloyd corridor wall. The all-school “weave-a-wish” project will be coming down soon to make room for new work, so don’t forget to add your wish before it’s too late.

Sloyd greatly appreciate large Ziploc bags, paper grocery bags, and newspaper.

Lost & Found Fair

The three little kittens lost their mittens, so they went to the Parker Damon Lost & Found Fair! Did you lose something at school too? Then please visit the fair. It is located in the lower level of the Parker Damon Building, at the base of the stairs. **Items will be displayed on tables from Thursday, November 18 until Tuesday, November 30.** Stop by any time during school hours and look for your missing items. Adults will need to sign in at the office first. If you have any questions please contact Nicole Lippa (lippanicole2008@comcast.net).

Game Night!

Looking for a fun way to spend a Friday night with your kids? Are you stumped about what gift to get that special someone? **Tackle both in one fell swoop and bring your family to McCarthy-Towne's Family Game Night on Friday, November 19 from 6–8 PM.**

Come on down and play loads of games from award-winning Gamewright®, including Rat-a-Tat-Cat, Slamwich, Hiss, Scrambled States of America, Sleeping Queens and many, many more. Be the first to play some of their new games, including Forbidden Island (FamilyFun magazine Toy of the Year) and Sumo Ham Slam (Dr. Toy's Best New Product pick). We've got games that are age-appropriate from toddler to adult. All of the games will be available for sale, and half of what you spend goes to the McCarthy-Towne PTSSO to help support our school's assistants and other programs. You can also purchase homemade baked-goods, with all proceeds going to the McT PTSSO.



Take a break from your regular Friday night routine, have some fun, and support McT at the same time! We need parent volunteers to sell games and baked-goods and to help give out demo games. This is a super fun and easy way to give back. If you're interested in volunteering, email Tracey Smith (tracey@gristmillmedia.com). Please contact either Tracey Smith or Sarah Auerbach (sbauerbach@gmail.com) with any questions about Game Night.

Are You Receiving McT Email Reminders?

Are you receiving the weekly email reminders that detail all the happenings at McCarthy-Towne? The McT News Yahoo! Group is a moderated group for current McCarthy-Towne families. The group helps update families about school events and messages (early dismissal due to snow day, school announcements, etc.) and PTSSO events and messages (reminders about upcoming events, need for volunteers for a particular event, etc.). We only send McT and AB Public Schools information, so you will not receive unnecessary emails. To sign up please visit the PTSSO website—www.mctptso.org. On the far right there is a place to sign up, or you can email Lynne Densen (densen@verizon.net) and ask to be added to the list.



UNICEF Boxes

If you collected UNICEF donations on Halloween, don't forget to bring them into school. We have a collection bin in the Office. Thank you.

Principal's Coffee

Families are invited to spend some time with our Principal, David Krane on **Tuesday, December 7, from 9:30–10:30 AM**, in the McT Conference Room. So mark your calendars and come learn about Responsive Classroom while enjoying some coffee and breakfast treats.

Clothing Drive for Cradles to Crayons



The McCarthy-Towne Student Council is sponsoring a "Winter Clothing" drive for *Cradles to Crayons* (C2C) of Massachusetts. The collection (collection bag will be located near the front entrance) runs from **Monday, November 8 through Friday, November 19.**

Cradles to Crayons (www.cradlestocrayons.org) is a charitable organization that provides basic essentials to low-income and homeless children age infant–13 years throughout Massachusetts. More than ever, families have a vital role to play in helping children in low-income families stay safe and warm during the cold winter months. With your help, *Cradles to Crayons* can equip them with the everyday essentials they need to thrive in the coming year.

The following gently used items are desirable donations for this organization: clothing to include girls and boys pants (Size 0–Adult L), winter coats, jackets, sweaters, winter boots, shoes and girls sneakers, gloves, mittens, hats, and scarves. All items should be clean, serviceable, and complete such that a child receiving the item would feel valued. (If possible, please place items in a plastic bag labeled with the sizes). New items in the original packaging such as underwear, socks, and pajamas are also appreciated.

So please gear up for winter by going through your closets and identifying items that your children can donate to *Cradles to Crayons*! Thank you.

McT Mornings Revival

Calling all knitters, artists, linguists! We have had strong interest in bringing back McT Mornings. A McT parent has graciously offered to teach a computer class in our newly upgraded computer lab. If you have a special interest, skill or talent that you would like to share with our community by teaching a class, please contact Patty in the office (plee@mail.ab.mec.edu). These programs offer our children some additional enrichment before school for some added fun and learning while helping to fund our PTSSO. We are looking to begin classes in January after the holidays.

Printer Cartridge and Cell Phone Recycling

Here is an easy way to raise money for McCarthy-Towne: bring in your old toner cartridges, ink cartridges, and cell phones. You can drop them off in the McCarthy-Towne lobby in the big plastic bin right next to the front door. We will recycle them and the profits go directly to the school. If you have any questions, please contact Laurie Taylor-Teran (ltteran@yahoo.com).

Visitors and Volunteers

from the office

All non-staff must remember to sign in when visiting the school during school hours. Enter the school through the front doors only, sign in and get a name tag from the McCarthy-Towne office. Staff members have received ID badges and have begun wearing them. Any adult without a name tag will be asked to return to the office to sign in. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our school safe for all.

Thank You to Our Cooks and Bakers

Thank you to all who supplied food for the School Committee meeting, Fall Social and Professional Day.

All the goodies at the Fall Social were gone by the end of the evening, and very much appreciated by both kids and adults alike.

The Professional Day breakfast and luncheon were wonderful. There was such a great variety of food and the teachers and staff were delighted to be treated to all of this food. Thank you to everyone that brought something and to everyone that helped set-up and clean-up.

Thank You to Fall Social Volunteers!

This year's Fall Social was a huge success. A special thank all our parent and student volunteers who gave their time, effort, and high spirits to make things run so smoothly. We couldn't have done it without you! Our sincere gratitude to:

Cara Barbieri, Rena Barbieri, Sandy Billings, Darlene Butler, Shannon Callison, Debbie Chernin, Suzie Day, Lynne Densen, Suzy Eppling, Cheryl Getsick, Chris Hanlon, Julia Hanna, Nisreen Harianawala, Ana Kerr, Linda Kvasse, Patty Lee, Maddie Mabardy, Jen Mabardy, Rebecca MacNeill, Alex Mojica, Kate Murray, Sandra O'Connor, Emma O'Connor, Deanna O'Donnell, Kathy Olney, Kimberly Pierimarchi, Latha Rao, Michelle Silbert, Josh Spero, Deb Verner, Yining Wang, and Laura Welch.

Tidbits from Tina

from Tina Morgan, McT School Counselor

"Don't just do something, stand there!"

As a parent of young children, I spent much of my time trying to do things to help my little ones. I signed them up for piano lessons to develop their musical talents; I planned birthday parties where every child won one game or another to be sure I didn't damage anyone's self-esteem; I coached soccer, a sport I really didn't know how to play; I arranged play dates and helped resolve conflicts when things didn't go smoothly; I baked brownies for snack sales. I figured, as a good mom, I needed to do things. I was clearly a believer in the old saying, "Don't just stand there, do something!"

As I have gotten a little older and, perhaps, a little wiser, I am wondering about changing my approach occasionally. Are there times we shouldn't "do"? I would argue, yes! When given the freedom to act without our help/guidance/input, it's delightful to see what a child can accomplish, or not, and what they learn from that experience. When our children are successful, their self-esteem expands exponentially as they realize they did it all by themselves! Even if they fail, they learn that we trust them to do their best and that failure is simply an opportunity to do better next time. It's a gift that we need to give more often. So, this month's tidbit from Tina—"Don't just do something, stand there!"

Try it!

Thank You

Thank you to all the members of our community who volunteer in so many ways, including (but not limited to):

Lena Saetre-Grant for ordering, sorting and distributing the McT T-shirt orders.

Julie Agapite, Michele Caterina, Amanda Dindal, Julie Jannke, Natasha Venti, and Tina Watlington for your eagle-eyes in proof-reading all the data for the much anticipated 2010 Directory.

Amanda Dindal, Ana Kerr, Maria Ledebouer-Cid and Amy Miles for stapling Book Fair flyers to the Scholastic newsletter and simultaneously labeling and sorting all the McT Directories for delivery to our families.

Amanda Dindal and Julie Brown-Cook for sorting the UNICEF boxes into class groups.

Karen Dean and all the volunteers who came out to help at the PDB Fall Clean-up.

School Committee Update

by Chris Hanlon

As the School Committee Liaison for the McT PTSO, I attended the October 21 Acton Public Schools SC meeting. Here are a few of the topics discussed that should be of interest to McT families:

McT principal David Krane presented highlights of the school's reading instruction program. He discussed the program's emphasis on meeting young readers at their individual levels as well as the new Reading Room spear-headed by Sharon Ryan. David also discussed the crucial role of parents in fostering interest in reading. Reading with your child and talking about what they are reading have a significant influence on a child's development as a reader. In addition to books read by and to children, David pointed to everyday opportunities such as reading the newspaper and cookbooks as other chances for family reading.

In regards to reading instruction and other areas of professional development, the district's budget was described by one committee member as "miniscule". When asked how the School Committee could help, David answered that more money committed to professional development would allow McT teachers to extend their learning and improve instruction for our children.

Superintendent Steve Mills discussed what he anticipates to be severe budget constraints in the upcoming fiscal year (2112). He spoke out strongly in support of using our reserves (and some extra money that we have from the federal government and state transportation money) to make sure that we are prepared for the years to come. He did offer to return the money to the taxpayers as an abatement in the tax rate IF the School Committee committed to his request/requirement that there would be no teacher layoffs in the next school year and the SC committed to supporting level SERVICE (NOT level funding, which would result in a decrease in services) for next year's budget.

The School Committee officially accepted the PTSO funds from the five elementary schools. After the amounts given by each PTSO were announced, a brief discussion ensued about the disparity in fund raising. Dr. Mills termed the disparity as "troublesome", although it is somewhat offset by Community Education funds. McT PTSO funds were among the highest of the five schools. Committee members acknowledged that the issue of pooling PTSO funds was discussed and tabled last year, but that the discrepancy in fund raising was not a closed issue.

School Committee members emphasized that they welcome hearing from parents and other members of the public on these or any other issues affecting the schools. To e-mail all members of the Acton Public School Committee, write to apsc@acton-ma.gov. You can find individual committee members' e-mail addresses at <http://ab.mec.edu/about/members.shtml>.

MCAS Dates for Spring 2011

Students in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 will be taking MCAS tests in the spring of 2011. Please avoid scheduling trips and appointments during the MCAS testing periods.

English Language Arts (grades 3, 4, 5, 6)

Week of March 21

ELA Composition (grade 4)

Tuesday, March 22

Make-up date—Thursday, March 31

Mathematics (grades 3, 4, 5, 6)

Week of May 9

Science, Technology & Engineering (grade 5)

Week of May 16

Food Service Recipe of the Month

Maple-Cinnamon Applesauce

From Wellness Magazine

Turn fresh fall apples into delicious maple-and-cinnamon-spiked homemade applesauce with this easy recipe.

Ingredients:

- 6 McIntosh or tart apples, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 Golden Delicious or sweet apples, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
- ¼ cup water
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Directions:

Combine apple pieces and water in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to maintain a simmer. Cover and cook, stirring once or twice, until the apples are very soft and falling apart, about 30 minutes. Mash the apples to the desired consistency and stir in maple syrup and cinnamon.

Refrigerate for up to 2 weeks or freeze for up to 6 months. Makes 3½ cups.

Nutrition:

Per 1/2-cup serving: 77 calories; 0 g fat (0 g sat, 0 g mono); 0 mg cholesterol; 20 g carbohydrates; 0 g protein; 2 g fiber; 1 mg sodium; 127 mg potassium.

1 Carbohydrate Serving

Exchanges: 1 fruit

McCarthy-Towne School – NOVEMBER 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
7	8 Winter Clothing Drive for <i>Cradles to Crayons</i> (runs through Nov. 19)	9	10	11 NO SCHOOL Veterans' Day	12	13
14	15	16	17 SCRIP Orders due PTSO Meeting, 7 PM	18 Lost & Found Fair Begins (runs through Nov. 30)	19 Last Day of Winter Clothing Drive for <i>Cradles to Crayons</i> Family Game Night, 6–8 PM	20
21	22	23	24 Early Dismissal (12:15 PM) No PM Kindergarten	25 NO SCHOOL Thanksgiving Recess	26 NO SCHOOL Thanksgiving Recess	27
28	29	30 Lost & Found Fair Ends	DECEMBER 1	DECEMBER 2	DECEMBER 3 December McT Bulletin is published	DECEMBER 4

Upcoming PTSO Meetings

Mark your calendar now! PTSO meetings are usually held the second Wednesday of each month at 7 PM in the Faculty Lounge (top floor). Everyone is welcome to attend!

November 17 December 8 January 12