



Center News

Mary McDowell Center for Learning

A Monthly Newsletter for Parents

Center News is published the first Friday of each month by the Mary McDowell Center for Learning, a Friends school for children with learning disabilities.

January 2010

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To find out my name, see page 10.

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Debbie's Note

Happy New Year and welcome back! It was terrific to see so many of you at the Winter Performance. All of our singers, dancers, musicians and actors were fabulous. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make our performance such a success.

“Teachers are our greatest public servants,” said Solomon Ortiz, a fourteen-term Congressman from Texas, “they spend their lives educating our young people and shaping our nation for tomorrow.” The Mary McDowell Center is fortunate to have some of the most dedicated and gifted teachers in New York City. Their excellence goes beyond their skill in the classroom. Our teachers make home visits, write and act in plays, comfort crying students, keep children company who are waiting to be picked up long after dismissal, meet for hours before school, after school and on weekends to develop new curricula, serve on various committees, volunteer for the Annual Event—I could go on and on.

Our faculty consists not only of capa-

ble, talented educators but of individuals who love children and understand their needs. Nurturing comes naturally to our teachers. They are not just caring and compassionate because their jobs require them to be—they are caring and compassionate because that is who they are. My thanks for all they do can never be overstated.

In January and February the school will once again be transformed into a museum for MMCL's 10th Annual Museum Week. The middle school division's museum will be on January 27th and 28th and the elementary school division's will be the week of February 1st. Each of the classes will offer presentations based on their fall/early winter social studies curriculum and include hands-on displays, performances, exhibitions and other projects throughout the school. We hope many of you will come to the museums to see our students' incredible work.

On a final note, we will be launching our sixth annual Read-A-Thon on

Continued on page 4

MMCL is proudly celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary this year! In the spirit of looking back, we've dusted off the archives to bring you some of our favorite trivia from years past. How well do you know your MMCL history?

- 1) What is the name of the child-loving reptile who came to visit in 1985 and decided to stay?
- 2) What was Mark Doty's first job at the school?
- 3) What piece of furniture did we bring from the Brooklyn Meeting House as a memento of our time there?

Stumped? See page 10 for answers.

Upcoming Events You Won't Want to Miss!

January 20 & 21 **Aladdin Junior** performances at 7pm at Summit Street; to reserve a seat call 718-625-3939 and ask for the middle school front desk or email elizabethl@mmcl.net

January 27 6th and 8th Grade Museum Day at Summit Street

January 28 7th Grade Museum Day at Summit Street and Read-A-Thon begins

Jan. 30 - Feb. 6 8th Grade Trip to Costa Rica

February 1 - 5 Elementary School Museum Week at Bergen Street

February 24 Coffee & Chat at Summit Street

P. A. News

We hope you've had a great holiday break and that your 2010 has gotten off to a wonderful start. Our December 3rd PA meeting, which was also Sibling Night, was jam-packed with more than 40 parents. We had the pleasure of having Annette Spallino, coordinator of Sibling Services at the AHRC, enlighten us about the unique relationship traditional learners have with their LD siblings. Annette covered many pertinent topics including issues for different age groups, fears and strategies to make sibling interactions as harmonious as possible.

While Annette spoke to parents, MMCL staff and teachers conducted Sibling Workshops with 40+ brothers and sisters of MMCL students up in the classrooms. Both the kids and teachers gave rave reviews, including Raine, age 10, big sister to Stella Sroge Johnson of the Obadiah Room. Raine was jazzed to be in Beth's group, excited to learn about famous people with LDs (like Albert Einstein and John Lennon) and especially enjoyed the school tour.

We received feedback that teachers were also energized by the experience. Franziska reported that she was thrilled to be assigned an adorable group of 5 and 6 year olds. Among the activities youngsters took part

in were an "icebreaker" exercise, reading a modified version of Patricia Polacco's *Thank You, Mr. Falker* (which is about the author's own struggle with learning to read) and ending up with a tour of MMCL.

Special thanks to Annette and also to MMCL parent Lisa Sinsheimer who outdid herself by baking a wonderful array of treats for the event. For more information about Annette's groups at AHRC, visit www.ahrc-nyc.org. Annette is also involved in the Sibling Support Project, which offers sibling workshops—Sibshops, a therapeutic recreational program for sibs with sibs who have LDs or other health issues. Find out more about Sibshops at www.siblingsupport.org.

In addition to the next PA meeting on **February 10th**, here are some PA-sponsored events you can look forward to in the next few months:

March 13th	Family Fun Crafts Day
April 15th	PA Meeting
April 17th	Family Fun Swim Day
April 20-24th	Middle School Spring Book Fair at Summit Street

Until next month,
Cathy and Mindy

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25th Anniversary Celebration

Honorees: Patricia Polacco, Susan L. Weiner & Deborah Edel
Master of Ceremonies: John Patrick Shanley

MMCL's annual spring benefit will celebrate 25 years of outstanding education for children with learning disabilities. It will take place on Wednesday, May 12th, from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM at the Tribeca Rooftop in Manhattan.

We are truly delighted that **John Patrick Shanley**, whose son attended MMCL, will join us in honoring three inspiring individuals whose lives reflect the mission of our school. Hailing from the Bronx, John is an award-winning playwright, director and screenwriter. For his play, *Doubt*, he received both the Tony Award and the Pulitzer Prize. John has written and directed several successful films. For his script of *Moonstruck* he received both the Writers Guild of America Award and an Academy Award for best original screenplay.

Bestselling children's book author and illustrator, **Patricia Polacco** is the 2010 recipient of Adam's Prize, given each year to a person whose triumph over learning disabilities as a child or whose work on behalf of such children merits public recognition. It is named for Adam Weiner, the son of Susan L. Weiner, one of the school's founding board members. Ms. Polacco struggled in school until age fourteen, when a perceptive teacher recognized her dyslexia and helped her learn to read. Early years spent listening to her grandparents' wonderful stories and drawing and painting nurtured her talent for creating books. Last year, Ms. Polacco spent a day with our children and they absolutely loved her.

On the occasion of our 25th anniversary, we are very proud to recognize two women who have shaped the growth of our school and to whom we owe a great deal of gratitude for MMCL's success: Susan L. Weiner and Deborah Edel.

Susan L. Weiner will receive the Founder's Award. It was Susan's vision of a school in Brooklyn for children with learning disabilities that launched MMCL 25 years ago. After two years of planning, Susan ran the school the first year. Susan's son Adam had learning needs that motivated her to initiate the program, though Adam never attended MMCL. Susan worked closely with senior members of Brooklyn Friends Meeting, including Violet Longobardi, Norman Krisberg, Jean Sterrett and Ed Doty as well as with Kay Edstene, then the head of Brooklyn Friends School. Susan has remained a Trustee of MMCL, helping guide it through its amazing growth. For the past 15 years, Susan has worked as a national advocate on behalf of children with cancer and their families, founding the Washington-based Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy. She has served on many advisory committees for federal agencies and national organizations concerned with research, treatment and care for children with cancer.

Deborah Edel will receive the Violet Longobardi Award for Extraordinary Dedication and Commitment, awarded to a person whose tireless dedication and outstanding contributions to the school merit recognition. As school psychologist and admissions director since MMCL's second year, Deborah has played a key role in the school's advancement. She has dedicated her career of over 40 years to helping children with learning disabilities to succeed academically, socially and emotionally. Deborah is also a co-founder and trustee of the Lesbian Herstory Archives and served on the Board of the Women's Funding Coalition.

To find out more about the 25th anniversary celebration, call L.J. Mitchell, Director of Development at (718)625-3939.

Checking in With Our Alumni

Eve Omansky

Eve Omansky moved on from the Mary McDowell Center for Learning in 2001 after three years. She attended The Churchill School and Center, graduating from high school in 2005. After studying science at Farleigh Dickenson College for two years, Eve decided to take some time off to enroll in an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) certification course here in New York City. She applied and was accepted this semester. In addition to rigorous coursework, Eve was required to do two twelve-hour tours on an ambulance. She found it challenging but it also confirmed her decision to become an EMT. She completed the course and took the final yesterday. Eve not only passed, she scored in the top ten percent of her class! She will sit for the state exam next Friday, January 15th. Eve plans to stay on in New York to find full-time work as an EMT. She continues to be interested in science and will attend college part-time while she is working.

Eve maintains her friendships with some of her MMCL classmates and visited both 20 Bergen and Summit Street recently to see staff. She spent part of a day in the nurse's office at the middle school observing and learn-



ing. The middle schoolers asked her about college and life after MMCL. They really enjoyed chatting with her and asked her to visit again soon.

Kris Hallam
Mother of Andrew Corby, 1999 graduate

Continued from page 1 (Debbie's Note)

Thursday, January 28th. The Read-A-Thon brings students together with family and friends to encourage reading and build literacy skills and to raise money for our sister school, Lwamaya Primary School, in Uganda and for several other worthy causes. This year we will kick off the program with Wacky Hat Day, when both students and faculty are encouraged to wear their wildest, zaniest hats to school. In addition, elementary school students will end the program with Pajama Day. The Read-A-Thon will last through Friday, February 26th. Please see page 13 in the newsletter for more details.

With the Read-A-Thon in mind, I'd like to tell you about an excellent book I read called [Half the Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide](#). Written by *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof

and his wife Sheryl WuDunn, it argues that empowering women in the third world is the key to ending poverty. By making education and health care readily available to them and providing them with other resources, women can become critical agents of economic and social change in their countries. We can help, the authors write, by contributing to organizations that work to empower women and by volunteering. Reading [Half the Sky](#) reinforced my belief that educating everyone, especially girls, is essential for putting an end to poverty. It also reaffirmed our commitment to raising money for such worthy causes as our sister school in Uganda and Red Hook Rise in Brooklyn. I can't recommend a more powerful account of how empowering women can change the world. Our community service projects make a difference in the lives of these women and people all over the world.

Debbie

News From the Divisions

Preparing for Museum Week

We are looking forward to our tenth annual Museum Week. Middle school museums will take place January 27th and 28th and elementary school museums will take place the week of February 1st. Ten years ago, a group of teachers and administrators, working to develop a model to authentically evaluate what students were learning in their social studies curricula, came up with the concept of a museum. Students in each class would present an 'exhibit' to teach other students, teachers and their parents what they had learned. As the school has grown, museum week has grown

to include the youngest students through the eighth grade. Over the years, students have been involved in a whole range of projects from cooking Native American tribal delicacies, to presenting PowerPoint presentations about the slave trade, to re-enacting scenes from the lives of famous women, to creating a game matching presidents with their quotes. Not only has the museum week model allowed us to achieve our goal of authentic evaluation, it offers the added benefits of opening our doors to families and inspiring younger students as they witness the exciting work that older students are doing.

Lower Elementary

The lower elementary division is excited about this year's Museum Week, to be held during the week of February 1st. Museum Week highlights the lower elementary students' social studies curriculum from this year's first semester. Some classes are working with Bill Borman on art projects that will be displayed in the classrooms for your viewing pleasure. In previous years, projects have included a class performing a skit, a class showing a video that it has created and displays of books written by the children. There are often activities which involve audience participation, thereby making Museum Week guests part of the social studies learning experience.

This year's Museum Week themes in the lower elementary division are:

Anderson Room – Families
Krisberg Room – Markets
Longobardi Room – NYC Subway

In the coming weeks, parents will receive a form from Heather Burchyns, asking you to schedule your time to visit the classrooms for Museum Week. Each classroom showcases its projects on one day only at three different times –15 minutes each session. You will be able to choose the session that works best for you.

The form will indicate the specific date and times of your child's classroom presentations. Please be mindful of this as you are selecting your time to visit us. We look forward to seeing you at Museum Week!

Elementary

Students are busily preparing for Museum Week. All classes are working on projects that derive directly from their social studies curricula. Students are studying, researching, building and practicing their re-enactments. A notice will be sent home shortly inviting parents to take part in the scheduled events in their child/ren's classroom. Each class has three scheduled presentations to accommodate as many visitors as possible. Parents will be asked to sign up. As a preview, examples of what you might be learning about in elementary division classrooms are: the men and women

who built the Brooklyn Bridge, the politics behind building the Empire State building, where the Iroquois lived in North America, how they built long houses and their myths. Upper elementary classes will be demonstrating all they have learned about Medieval England including, among others, the lives of monks, how castles were protected and the role of trades people.

Students are very excited. We hope you will visit our classrooms and help celebrate the hard work of students and staff.

Middle School

On the 27th and 28th of January, the middle school students at MMCL will turn 133 Summit Street into a museum, complete with exhibits that are sure to inform, amaze and open your mind. The sixth and eighth graders' museum

will take place on January 27, and the seventh graders' will take place on January 28. Presently, students and teachers are hard at work preparing for this much-anticipated annual event. Sign up sheets will be sent home to parents in the next week so that you can schedule your visit.

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Upper School Update

Last month, I wrote about Emily Futransky's appointment as Assistant Director of the upper school, beginning fall 2010. While she continues to direct the lion's share of her energy and time toward her current middle school students and responsibilities, she has brought her characteristic *joi de vivre* to upper school planning discussions. Over the past couple of weeks, she and I conducted another round of 8th grader pizza lunches, which we have used as a forum to seek student input.

The pizza lunches centered on three topic areas: arts, extracurriculars and athletics. During this round students separated into three groups based on the topics that were the most interesting and important to them. The electives group kicked-off the discussion series. These students talked about the clubs and activities that make an upper school lively beyond the classroom. From a social committee to the idea of a film appreciation society, the students came up with a wonderful range of ideas. The athletics group discussed topics

including the sports that should be offered, how training/practice should change from middle to upper school, and some of their priorities in gym and fitness facilities. Finally, the arts group talked about wanting a curriculum that nurtured and challenged them to develop their formal skills in a variety of mediums. In addition, they helped us to think through some of the responses that we received from an arts questionnaire circulated at the previous round of pizza lunches.

We will continue to hold pizza lunches and other activities that provide students an opportunity to help us plan for the new upper school. Their insights are invaluable and it is wonderful to see them become excited about different aspects of the new division. Ultimately, we want as much input from them as possible. After all, nearly everything we do at MMCL is for them.

Kirk Smothers
Upper School Director

Continued from page 5 (News From the Divisions)

Sixth graders will culminate their study of Ancient Egypt by writing research papers about their favorite Egyptian gods and using things like costumes and posters to make short, individual presentations. Seventh graders will work more collaboratively, preparing things like skits and dynamic presentations to convey what they have learned about the formation of the colonies and the U.S. government. Eighth graders have been studying the experiences of Native Americans and African Americans during slavery and western expansion and will work together to create presentations and stations that focus more heavily on audience interaction. Last year, for example, eighth graders created a life-sized board game based on the Underground Railroad and invited audience members to participate.

Museum day at the middle school is a wonderful opportunity for all involved to learn something new, show support and build community at MMCL. Students and teachers are excited to share with you all of the interesting projects they have been working on. We hope to see you there!

**Heather Burchyns, Mark Doty,
Courtney Nuzum Jimenez and
Beth Schneider**



Mayan counting system

Photos from last year's Museum Week



Board (floor) game based on the Underground Railroad

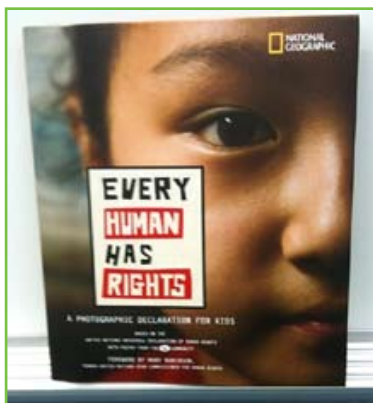
P.A. Grants

Developing a Current Events Curriculum for Sixth Graders

By Erica Fry

During the 2008-2009 school year, three weekly Current Events periods were added to every sixth grader's schedule. The timing was excellent. Because it was an election year, we focused on the presidential race for the majority of the year. However, since not every year is an election year, we needed a more universal Current Events curriculum to provide our students with ongoing relevant and appropriate learning opportunities.

A Parents' Association grant allowed me to spend time last summer developing such a curriculum. I utilized a design framework, loosely based on the "Understanding by Design" model developed by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, to identify the enduring understandings that should be developed over the course of the year and the essential questions necessary to guide each learner's engagement in the process. Three primary strands are addressed within the curriculum: understanding the news, world geography and human rights. All of our learning activities address one or more of the understandings and are related to the exploration of the essential questions within each of the three strands. Through



One of the resources used in the curriculum

For example, in a recent class, the students read a *New York Times* article about 25 Chicago middle school students who were arrested on charges of reckless conduct

after a food fight that took place in their school cafeteria. Considering the geography of the story helped our students to connect the events to their own experiences. It took place in a major American city (like ours), in a middle school (possibly like ours), as a result of a food fight (a context with which they are all familiar). After reading the article, the class participated in a student-led discussion of the impact of the events on the rights of the students and others in their school community. These included the right to safety, the right to equal protection under the law, and the right to expect that a punishment match the severity of the crime. Activities like this one provide students with a framework they can apply to any news story in order to make sense of the events presented and to consider their impact on the people involved within the contexts in which they live.

We want our students to become critical and informed consumers of news media and for them to participate actively in the process of accessing information and developing opinions about the events in their world. To this end, the Current Events curriculum will remain flexible and adaptable, changing as needed to address the strengths and challenges represented within our diverse community of learners.



Students consulting maps as they discuss current events

How Does Your Engine Run?

MMCL's Occupational Therapy (OT) department attended the Alert Program conference on September 20th and 21st, 2009. The course reviewed sensory processing/integration theory and also taught participants how to increase an individual's awareness of his or her body using the analogy of an engine running "too high," "too low" or "just right." The course also discussed how to use different strategies to achieve an optimal arousal level for learning, or a "just right" state.

When our engines are running too high, the following feelings or behaviors may be noted: excitement, overstimulation, overwhelmed, body fidgeting or anxiety. When our engines are running too low, the following may be observed: slumping posture, sleepiness or lethargy. When our engines are running just right, we are functioning at our best and learning occurs most easily. Feelings or behaviors observed in this optimal state are: calmness, focus, alertness, adequate posture and readiness.

How is YOUR Engine Running? When do you feel low energy, high energy or just right during your day? The arousal state of the body is an unconscious process that fluctuates. For example, you may start your day ready to go but then finding yourself stuck in a boring meeting, you may use strategies to help keep yourself awake, such as drinking coffee, tapping your foot, chewing on your pen, fidgeting in your seat and/or doodling. Having self-awareness and self-understanding can help match your energy needs to your surroundings.

The Alert Program identifies five ways to consider changing and managing your engine levels. These include inputting stimulation to 1. oral motor (mouth), 2. vestibular and proprioceptive (movement), 3. tactile (touch), 4. visual (look) and 5. auditory (listen). Some strategies for each sensory area follow.

1. Oral motor: suck on hard candy, eat something crunchy and/or eat a cold popsicle.
2. Movement: rock in a rocking chair, ride a bike and/or do isometrics/lift weights.
3. Tactile input: pet an animal, fidget with coins in pocket and/or receive a massage.
4. Visual input: watch a fish tank, dim lighting and/or open windows/shades.
5. Auditory input: listen to a variety of music, hum and/or read out loud.

Although the course material was quite familiar to our department, we came away from the conference with an array of strategies to help meet student needs and get a better sense

of how to impart the concepts of sensory processing to the MMCL community.

Various strategies have been implemented in the lower elementary division. During Language and OT class, the focus is on introducing the language concepts of the program and doing various activities to increase awareness of the students' engine states. The core concepts of the Alert Program were reviewed at a morning meeting with the teachers to help promote carryover and a shared language. Sensory break cards that distinguish activities that either help to increase or decrease arousal levels were made and distributed to classroom teachers. In this division, teachers primarily organize whole-group sensory breaks and occasionally allow students to take individual sensory breaks depending on their needs.

In the elementary and upper elementary divisions we have formalized a movement break program. This program consists of a choice of a movement break card and a two-minute timer to increase students' self awareness, increase students' self regulation and increase attention to help their bodies be ready to look listen and learn. Additionally, high/low/just right energy charts have been created and used for students during the sensory motor classes and during pull-out sessions to help increase students' awareness of their energy levels before and after activities. Using the Alert Program terminology has been very helpful when teaching students about their sensory needs and when developing strategies for sensory diets.

The OT department has found the Alert Program to be a simple, successful framework for supporting children to self regulate and function optimally at home and school. Children learn what to do when they need to sit down and concentrate if their engines are running high or low. Teachers learn what they can do during transitions to wake up engines and minds for better focus in the classroom. Lastly, parents learn what they can do to keep their child in an optimal alert state using simple changes in daily routines such as movement before school, packing crunchy food in a lunch box or jumping on a trampoline after school. These changes may be all that is needed to keep engines running just right.

For more information: <http://www.alertprogram.com/>

Alyssa Fagan
Occupational Therapist Lower Elementary Division

Diane Lupow
Occupational Therapist

Lynnette Dagossa
Occupational Therapist

The Mary McDowell Center Fund 2009-10

We would like to thank the following individuals who have so generously contributed to this year's **Mary McDowell Center Fund**, the school's annual fund. Each year, we depend on the annual fund to provide direct funding for educational initiatives that tuition alone does not cover. We need everyone's participation to reach this year's goals of \$250,000 and 100% parent participation.

No gift is too small, and every gift counts. In this, the school's 25th anniversary year, please think carefully about what you can give, and please stretch your giving to the fullest extent possible.

We are very grateful to all of you who have given.

As of January 6th, 2010*, contributions total **\$168,477**.

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Trudy Craney-Germans
Randall Doud and Susan Lightfoot Doud
Nancy Feinberg
Kenneth Fuller and Anni Beherec

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Alumni and Parents and Grandparents of Alumni continued

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Beth Schneider and Steve McFarland
Bevin Small
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Foundation, Inc.

**Due to printing deadlines, all gifts received after January 6th, 2010 will be acknowledged in the February Center News.*

This report gratefully acknowledges gifts received between July 1, 2009 and January 6th, 2010. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this report. If there are any errors, please accept our apologies and notify the Development Office at 718-625-3939, ext. 2223.

Birthday Book Club

Thank you to the following families who recently participated in the Birthday Book Club. This is a great opportunity to bring new and wonderful books to our library.

Susan Kent-Miller and Neil Miller for Davis Miller

Lyn Koppe and Stewart Otley for Zachary Otley

Josephine and Riccardo Fischioni for Matthew Fischioni

Philip and Anne Marie Thomas for Philip Thomas

Kellie Hart and Alasdair Philip for Emma Philip

Answers to MMCL history questions from page one

- 1) Myrtle
- 2) Physical Education teacher
- 3) Wooden bench in the reception area

January 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 SCHOOL RESUMES	5 Boys Basketball vs. Bank St. 4pm - home Girls Basketball vs. Bank St. 5pm - home	6	7	8 Penn & Levi Rooms Trip to the Met	9
10	11	12 Girls Basketball vs. C&C 4pm - home Boys Basketball vs. Montessori 4pm - away 8th Grade Parents' Meeting at 7pm at Summit Street	13	14 Meeting For Martin Luther King Boys Basketball vs. C&C 4pm - TBD	15 NO SCHOOL for ES	16
17	18 Martin Luther King Day NO SCHOOL	19 7th Grade Parents' Meeting at 7 pm at Summit Street	20 Aladdin Junior at 7 pm @ Summit Street	21 Aladdin Junior at 7 pm at Summit Street	22 Penn & Levi Rooms Trip to Cloisters Fry Room Trip to the Met	23
24	25	26 Girls Basketball 2-day tournament vs. C&C, Friends & Churchill 3:30/5pm at Churchill	27 6th & 8th grade Museum Day Girls Basketball 2-day tournament vs. C&C, Friends & Churchill 3:30/5pm at Churchill	28 7th grade Museum Day Boys Basketball 2-day tournament, 4pm at Churchill	29 Last Day of First Semester Boys Basketball 2-day tournament, 4pm at Churchill	30 8th Grade leaves for Costa Rica
31						

MS = Middle School (Summit Street)

ES = UED + ED + LED

UED = Upper Elementary Division

i.e. Penn, Coffin & Fry Rms.

ED = Elementary Division

i.e. Cuffe, Mott, Obadiah, Fell, Fox & Whittier Rms.

LED = Lower Elementary Division

i.e. Anderson, Krisberg, Longobardi Rms.

February 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Elementary School Museum Week, Feb 1st - 5th					8th Grade Returns From Costa Rica
			Boys Basketball vs. VCS 4:15 pm - home			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		Boys Basketball vs. Montessori 4pm - home Girls Basketball vs. VCS 4:15 pm - away	PA Meeting	Girls Basketball vs. Churchill 4:15 pm - home	100th Day of School	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
MID-WINTER BREAK: NO SCHOOL						
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Boys Basketball vs. St. Luke's 4:15 pm - home		Coffee & Chat at Summit Street, 8:30 am	Girls Basketball 2-day tournament 3:30/5 pm at St. Luke's	Girls Basketball 2-day tournament 3:30/5 pm at St. Luke's	
28						

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Read-A-Thon



Dear Parents,

Save the date - on Thursday, January 28th, our fifth annual Read-A-Thon begins to help raise money for our sister school in Uganda and other worthy causes. This is a program that is also designed to bring students together with family and friends to encourage reading and to build literacy skills.

The Read-A-Thon will begin on Thursday, January 28th and end on Friday, February 26th.

Participants may read on their own, in class or with family and friends. Listening to someone else read, or reading to someone else, also counts toward total minutes your child will need to read. Please read the Read-A-Thon rules below.

Attached you will find the record sheet to be used to keep track of the minutes your child reads. When complete,

please sign the sheet(s) and have your child return the sheet(s) and money to the school. We will keep a weekly record sheet at the school and send it home every Friday so you will know how many minutes your child reads at school. You may use the attached Sponsor pledge form to keep track of your sponsors and how much they will donate. At the end of the Read-A-Thon, every class that raises at least \$275 will get a pizza party.

We are all looking forward to participating in the school-wide Read-A-Thon. We will keep you informed about the progress of the program and ways in which you can help your child be successful.

If you have any questions about the program, please feel free to contact either one of us.

Sincerely,
Debbie & Lori

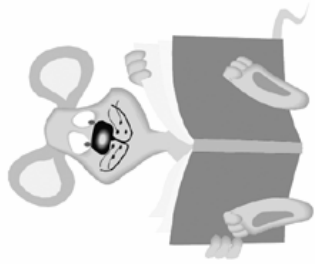
Read-A-Thon Rules

1. Reading before and after school and during recess counts.
2. Reading from before the official beginning of the Read-A-Thon does not count.
3. Assigned reading during class time does not count, but free time reading does count.
4. You can only read a book once for the Read-A-Thon.
5. Reading aloud to other people counts. If you read to your friends or your family members, it counts!
6. Other people reading aloud to you counts.
7. Reading aloud to the dog, the cat or any family pet counts.
8. Reading in a tree, on the bus, in the car, on an airplane, in a hotel and under the bed with a flashlight counts.
9. Reading in the dark, underwater, upside down or with your eyes closed does not count.
10. Getting up early in the morning, or staying up later at night counts - if you have your parent's permission.
11. Reading instead of doing your homework does not count.
12. Reading instead of watching TV does count.
13. Reading over vacation counts.
14. Reading anything counts-even cereal boxes!
15. NO guessing or rounding off minutes. Please look at the clock or use a timer or stopwatch to clock your time.
Please be honest so that it will be fair and fun for everyone!
16. The last day to read for the school Read-A-Thon is Friday, February 26th, 2009.

Read-A-Thon

(Your name)

READING RECORD LIST



Each time you read a book write down the title on this list and ask your parent, teacher or another adult to initial on the same line. At the end of the reading period, count up the minutes you have read and ask your sponsors for the money they have promised you. Remember to thank them and write a receipt.

	DATE	BOOK TITLE	MINUTES READ	ADULT'S INITIALS
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				
21.				
22.				

