



# Hanlon School Newsletters

September 2015

From the Desk of Mrs. Cronin:

## September 1, 2015

Hello Hanlon Families,

On behalf of the staff, we are all looking forward to welcoming you and your child(ren) back to school. You will see some new faces out on the playground in the morning, as Hanlon has been fortunate to hire several new staff members. You read about some new hires in my summer letter, but I thought I'd reintroduce them.

- Barbara Lindsay is our full-time Literacy Specialist, replacing Tanea St. Pierre. Barbara has been in Westwood serving as Literacy Coordinator prior to coming to Hanlon.
- Carla Goodwin is our Art teacher, replacing Robert Worth after his move up to Thurston Middle School.
- Jessica Smith is taking over as a Special Education teacher after Phyllis Small's retirement. Ms. Smith comes to us from Thurston Middle School.
- Marie Mullen has also been hired as a Special Education teacher. Amber Sleath-Crowley, our former Special Educator accepted an offer to be a full-time 3rd grade teacher at Martha Jones here in Westwood.
- Maureen Reynolds (former Instructional Assistant in Kindergarten and intern prior to that) has been hired as the first grade long term substitute in anticipation of Valerie Sharpe's maternity leave. Ms. Sharpe and Ms. Reynolds will start the year together in 1S.
- Susan Bunker is an Instructional Assistant, coming to us from Deerfield.
- Bridget Kelly is a Kindergarten Instructional Assistant working on Fridays. She is a new staff member, but not new to the Hanlon community!
- Emily Kessel is a full-time intern in the Lesley University Master of Education program.

Please join me in welcoming this talented group of educators to Hanlon!

Warmly!

Sarah

**September 11, 2015**

Hello Hanlon Families,

On Tuesday, we gathered for our first monthly All School Meeting (ASM) in the Hanlon gymnasium. It was so special to see the entire student body and faculty gathered in one room! The vision for ASM is to bring our school together as a community on a regular basis, and celebrate what is happening in and around classrooms. This year, we kicked off our ASM by reading the book *If You Plant a Seed* by Kadir Nelson. The story was used to set the theme of our school year: Planting seeds of kindness will cause kind behaviors to “grow and grow” within our school. As adults, many of us tell our children, “If you can’t say something nice, don’t say it at all.” At our ASM, we challenged students by saying, “If you can’t say something nice, think harder.” This theme of spreading kindness will be woven throughout our school all year long.

On Wednesday, we practiced our first fire drill. Students were well prepared by their teachers, and the entire building was safely evacuated in under four minutes. We will practice fire drills and lockdown drills several times this year.

Thank you to the parents who were able to attend the Welcome Principal’s Coffee. I got lots of great ideas for future Coffee topics. If you were unable to attend but would like to suggest a topic, please email me with your idea.

The warm weather has encouraged many families to bring their dogs along on the walk to school. While many students love dogs, there are an equal number of children who are fearful. Please remember that dogs should always be leashed, kept on the parking lot side of the fence, and closely supervised by adults.

Please remember to update your emergency contact information in the district’s Aspen database. Aspen is available on the District Website. At this point about half of Hanlon families have updated their information, and we need 100% to ensure that our

PTO directory is current, and that our main office has the most current emergency information. Parents of new students and kindergarten families should pay special attention to the Media Permissions question. In order for students to have their photos in classrooms, on slideshows, on the website, etc., we need the Media Permissions to say "yes." If you have trouble finding it, please feel free to email me at [scronin@westwood.k12.ma.us](mailto:scronin@westwood.k12.ma.us), and I can do it for you.

We are looking forward to seeing many parents and guardians at Curriculum Night this Thursday, September 17th. Classroom presentations for students in Grades K-2 will take place from 6:00-6:45PM. All parents are invited to gather in the gymnasium at 6:45 for a General Meeting, including my Principal's Welcome, as well as presentations from our Specialists and PTO. Classroom presentations for students in Grades 3-5 will follow immediately after our General Meeting. Please remember that this is an adults-only evening. See the PTO Updates box for information about a Curriculum Night fundraiser. The PTO will be collecting dues, distributing Directories, and selling flannel Hanlon pajama pants in the school lobby, so bring your checkbooks!

Warmly,

Sarah

### **September 25, 2015**

Hello Hanlon Families,

It's been a busy couple of weeks here at Hanlon!

Now that students are back in the routines of the school year, it is remarkable to see the hard work they are doing. I try to get into classrooms every day. Some days, I can spend time in every classroom, other days I am able to make it to a few. This week, I took note of writing in particular. In kindergarten classrooms, September writing often consists of drawing pictures and labeling words and sounds. Children 'read' their stories by telling what was happening in each picture. By second grade, students were writing across multiple pages. When they finished one story, they immediately

began another. Fourth graders were working on adding sensory details. I read stories that described the smell of cinnamon in a donut shop and the glint of wrapping paper under a holiday tree. The fifth graders were using poetic techniques to draft three poems, revise and edit, and then type their final draft poems using Google Docs. It is quite impressive to see the rigor present in Hanlon classrooms and the output of our students. And it's only September!

Thank you to the following parents who volunteered their time to help out with Picture Day this Tuesday: Mary Beauregard, Ted Brown, Stephanie Finegold, and Amy Meredith. They helped to keep the lines moving, entertained students who were waiting, and made sure that every student looked his or her best.

This week, teachers in grades K-2 across the district will attend training for the Foundations program. Based on Wilson Reading System principles, Foundations builds a foundation for reading and spelling in the younger grades. Many teachers have already begun using Foundations in their classrooms. My own children used Foundations both in Newton and now in Franklin, and I have been impressed with the gains they have made in reading.

I am thrilled to announce that Valerie Sharpe, first grade teacher, welcomed twin girls on Friday. Eleanor, Audrey, and mom are all doing well! Maureen Reynolds, long-term substitute teacher, has led the class with great skill, confidence, and ease. The first graders will thrive under her leadership. We look forward to welcoming Ms. Sharpe back in late January.

Our wonderful lunchroom aide, Ms. Jahn, is leaving Hanlon in two weeks. The students, teachers, and I will miss her warm smile, patience, and overall kindness. We have been fortunate to have her. The position is posted to [Schoolspring.com](https://www.schoolspring.com). If you know of someone who would like to work in our lunchroom for two hours a day, plus an extra hour covering Ms. Goldstein's desk when she goes to lunch, please have them email me at [scronin@westwood.k12.ma.us](mailto:scronin@westwood.k12.ma.us). The salary is \$15.60/hour.

The Westwood School Department is looking for a person to attend the monthly school committee meeting and take the minutes. The meeting is generally held on a Thursday night and is 1 1/2 to 2 hours long. The minutes then have to typed and submitted to the Superintendent's Administrative Assistant. The salary is \$20.00/hr.

We are looking forward to seeing many Hanlon families at our PTO sponsored Fall Family Fun Night from 4:30-6:00 PM on Tuesday, October 6th. Bring a blanket and a picnic and join the Hanlon community for an evening of play. Please see the PTO Updates section of the website.

Have a great weekend!

Sarah

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Sarah Cronin, Principal

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