



Hanlon School Newsletters

April 2017

From the Desk of Mrs. Cronin:

April 28, 2017

Dear Hanlon Families,

At a recent Site Council Meeting, we were treated to a short presentation by Steve Ouellette, WPS's Director of Innovation and Technology. Together with Mark Goguen, Hanlon's Instructional Technology Coach, he presented a draft of Westwood's Guiding Principles for Instructional Technology. This document outlines our Vision, Mission, and Goals for Technology in school. The presentation sparked a lively discussion amongst the parents and teachers present. One dilemma shared by parents was related to monitoring children's internet use at home. We want to say "yes" when our children ask to research or look up something online at home, but how can we be sure they won't stumble upon something inappropriate? Did you know that there are many safe search engines linked through the Hanlon library website? Search engines like KidRex and SafeSearchKids are often used in classrooms during research. While it is a wonderful resource, the internet can be like the Wild West, and children of all ages should be closely monitored while online. Students learn about safe internet search practices in the classroom, and I hope these resources help families when searching at home.

Inclusive School Committee Update

As part of our School Wide Inclusion Theme, every student and staff member created a sentence strip that began with the sentence starter, "I feel included when..." In classrooms, teachers led discussions on the importance of feeling safe and included while in school, and that something as simple as a welcoming smile can brighten someone's day. These sentence strips were linked together to form a giant paper chain that was presented by Inclusion Ambassadors from each classroom at the April All School Meeting. You can view the chain hanging on bulletin boards across from the

Main Office. Each grade level was assigned a color, and the colors represent the colors of the Olympic Flag.

We are eagerly anticipating our next Inclusive School event: Mix It Up at Lunch. The goal of Mix It Up is to encourage conversations between students who typically might not sit together at lunch. Teachers spent time creating partnerships within their classrooms and students will sit with their partners one day at lunch. Ice breakers such as: What is your favorite place to spend time in the summer?, and Would you rather eat a popsicle or an ice cream sandwich?, will be provided to get the conversations going. Our hope is to foster the beginnings of new friendships and to encourage healthy social risk taking. Teachers will debrief the experience in classrooms each time we do it. The first Mix it Up is planned for Wednesday. We hope to do this several times this spring.

Dining Fundraiser

The Hanlon PTO invites you to a Dining Fundraiser at ChinaRama, this Friday, May 5th. [Click here to see the flyer.](#)

Hanlon Arts Night

Ms. Goodwin and Ms. Pickering are looking forward to showing off the fantastic artwork and performances of Hanlon students at our Annual Arts Night on May 10th. [To see the flyer, click here.](#)

Teacher Appreciation Luncheon

On behalf of the Hanlon Staff, I would like to give a warm thank you to the families who donated to the Teacher Appreciation Luncheon given the Thursday before April Break. Teachers were delighted to see the wide array of delicious lunch treats. Special thanks to Joanna Hamilton, Meredith DiBattista, Pauline Papantoniadis, Pam Quinn, Jin Ding, Amy Meredith, Maria Kelleher, and Ted and Jen Brown. Teacher Appreciation Week begins on May 8th, and our PTO has several things up their sleeves to celebrate our teachers.

Math League Meet

Congratulations to Hanlon's Math League for their stellar performance at the district-wide Math Meet! Hanlon students had their most successful meet ever.

Grades 3 and 5 teams both took 3rd Place, and a Grade 4 team got 1st Place. In addition, 5th grader Vic G. got one of the top scores on the written exam. Students in Math League have been coming in early every Friday morning to practice their skills and solve math problems with their grade level peers. The students show incredible commitment and work ethic. Math League is run entirely by parent volunteers. Thank you to everyone who helped to support the League this year, and extra thanks to the coordinators: Michelle Peck, Sara Michelmore, Hongmei Xu, and Amanda Drainville.

Book Fair

The Hanlon Book Fair and Ice Cream Social was a great success! We used a new vendor this year: Park Street Books, and the new format was very well received. Children were overheard exclaiming over the great selection of books and the opportunity to purchase Westwood gear. The owner of the book store pulled me aside to compliment Hanlon students on their politeness and respectful behavior as they browsed. Many thanks to Amanda Drainville, Trish Donnelly, and Kathy Beggan for coordinating this great event, and to the parents who volunteered to help children shop.

April is Poetry Month

If you spent time at Hanlon this month, you probably noticed that the walls are lined with staff members' favorite poems. As children move about the building, one can hear them stop to read and recite the poetry chosen by their teachers. In addition, students have been invited to carry a "Poem in Your Pocket," a tiny, pocket sized poem printed on colorful paper. This spotlight on poetry was the brainchild of Barbara Silverstein, Hanlon Librarian, and supported by Ms. Sharpe and Ms. Goodwin. Ask your child(ren) to share their favorite poems with you!

News from the Health Office

Ms. Davie, Hanlon School Nurse, has put together a tip sheet to help you protect your children against ticks. [Click here to read more.](#)

Spring Cleaning

Hanlon School welcomes used playground equipment like balls (soccer, basketball, kickball, tennis, etc.), jump ropes, hula hoops, skip-alongs, sidewalk chalk, sand toys,

and heavy duty plastic trucks. They can be dropped off in the main office at any time during the school year.

Bus Registration

Bus Registration for the 2017 - 2018 is now open and runs through June 30th. All information is available [here](#).

School Committee

Did you know that Tony Mullin is Hanlon's School Committee Representative? If you have questions anything else regarding Westwood Public Schools, contact Tony at tonymmullin@gmail.com.

April 7, 2017

Dear Hanlon Families,

You may have heard your child(ren) talking about our newest All School Theme: Inclusion. This theme is very near and dear to my heart, and you may not know it, but the idea was formulated with the help of the Hanlon Site Council. You may remember that Site Council is a group of parents, staff and community members who care deeply about school improvement. In our discussions, we have talked about the perception that Westwood can be somewhat homogenous, and that the world our children experience here doesn't necessarily look like the world they will enter as adults. This means that we have to work harder to prepare children to become contributing citizens in a global environment.

At the elementary level, we focus on building the foundations that will enable kids to engage in difficult, yet important topics and conversations in ways that are age appropriate for each grade level: we take a proactive approach to teaching things like empathy, tolerance, perspective-taking, debate, and ... **active inclusion**. We teach students that our differences make us interesting, and that despite visible and invisible differences we have a lot in common.

After hearing about the discussions happening in Site Council, a group of Hanlon teachers got together to form the Inclusive School Committee. They have put together a

series of experiences to promote this idea in classrooms and around the building. Teachers, support staff, and I have been reading aloud from books that embody the Inclusion theme. You can see some of the books on the list [here](#). Students have each written sentences that begin with “I feel included when...” These sentence strips will be linked together to make a large paper chain the will be presented at our next All School Meeting. We have also planned several “Mix It Up at Lunch” days, where children will sit with peers that they typically might not sit with. We will provide games and icebreakers to get them talking and hopefully making some new connections. Many more ideas will be explored and implemented later this year and next year. Stay tuned for more information about how you can support these ideas at home!

Enrichment

Students got a taste of Africa on Monday when the storyteller Eshu came to share his folktales. After telling several stories to audiences in the gym, he spent the rest of the day in 5th, 2nd, and Kindergarten classrooms helping students write their own creative stories. You can visit [Eshu's website here](#). Many thanks to Serena Valentino for coordinating Eshu’s visit, and to our Hanlon PTO for funding the program.



Science Fair

Congratulations to all of the young scientists who displayed their work at our 3rd Annual Science Fair! Hanlon students investigated and designed the coolest projects: Which cereal stays crunchy in milk?, How to dissolve gummies and Peeps, Hand Germs, Bread Mold, Bouncy Eggs, Soda Corrosion, Wind Turbines, and many more! It was a great night for science and a great night for kids! Many thanks to the volunteers and coordinators who made this night a success- especially Michelle Peck, Sara Michelmore,

Stephanie Finegold, and Jennifer Crawford.



Looking for Something to Do Over April Break?

Here is a link to the [Cambridge Science Festival](#) - an excellent city-wide festival that takes place annually during the April School Vacation week. They have many, many different hands-on, engaging ways for families to explore science concepts. The event makes it seem as though the entire city is an open-air science museum. If you are around during Vacation Week, check it out!

Tech Tidbit

Recently, grade two students participated in a series of lessons about the internet, online safety and the district's CLEAR policy. The following concepts were introduced:

- The internet is millions of connected computers and devices that communicate and share information. In other words, a world-wide network of computers.
- The internet is a tool that can be used to find information, play games, shop, enjoy music, pictures and videos, communicate with friends and family and get work accomplished.
- The internet is like a neighborhood (there are safe and unsafe places).
- Key safety points: 1) ask parents first, 2) only communicate with friends & family, 3) stick to "just right" places, 4) don't share personal information 5) use strong passwords, 6) report cyberbullying.

Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held on the afternoon and evening of April 12th. Spring conferences are a great way to connect with your child's teacher to discuss your child's growth so far this year. If you have any specific questions or concerns you would like your child's teacher to address, it is often helpful to share them with the teacher ahead of time so he/she can be adequately prepared to address these items during conference.

Yearbooks

It's time to order your Hanlon Yearbook! Yearbooks cost \$35 and must be pre-ordered for families who want them. We do not order extras. Go to www.coffeepond.com. Go to Order: Yearbooks. The password is Hanlon2017. Orders are due by Friday, April 28th.

Kindergarten Registration is Open!

If you or someone you know has a child who is eligible to join our 2017-2018 Kindergarten class this Fall, this is the time to register. Planning for next year is already underway! [Here is the link](#) to the online registration portal.

Bus Registration

Bus Registration for the 2017 - 2018 is now open and runs through June 30th. All information is available on the district website.

School Committee

Did you know that Tony Mullin is Hanlon's School Committee Representative? If you have questions about the Superintendent Search, the Proposed Budget, or anything else regarding Westwood Public Schools, contact Tony at tonymmullin@gmail.com.

**Hanlon Elementary School, 790 Gay Street, Westwood, MA 02090 781-325-7500 x.8424
Sarah Cronin, Principal**

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