

# THE LEARNING PROJECT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PARENT BULLETIN #24  
February 16, 2012

## Half Day Tomorrow Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>!

Dismissal at 12:15pm – No After School

Please contact the Front Office with any special dismissal plans

### Our 100<sup>th</sup> Day Celebration . . . and the 80 Days to Go

Yesterday our Kindergarteners celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> day of school. They wore crowns and counted the number of jumping jacks they could do in a hundred seconds and the number of fish they could color . . . and so forth—altogether, an exciting day. And, for all of us, this annual Kindergarten ritual is a reminder that we are now well past the ninety-day midpoint of our school year and hurtling towards June.

Eighty school days (what we have left) in ‘child-time’ is a *lot* of time, and much can happen between now and June. And, especially, if your child is not quite yet where we (or you) would like him or her to be at this point in their life journey, we should seize this opportunity of the remaining time in this school year and not let this precious time slip through our hands.

One key to student achievement, of course, is a child’s own desire and motivation to succeed, and sometimes we need to nurture that flame, one flicker at a time. One very important message that children need to consistently and repeatedly hear—both at home and in school—is that *school really matters*, that it is a place of serious, hard work and perseverance; a place where obedience to rules and civility are required; and a place where respect, kindness and cooperation are essential—not optional. These are ideas that children must have deeply embedded in their thinking, otherwise there is little chance of building the motivational foundations necessary for their achievement.

A second key to student achievement, and another message we must frequently reinforce for our children, is that we want them to regularly do *their personal best*. Learning is not a competition. It is not about what someone else can do, or not do. What ultimately matters for each of us is the answer to the question: Have you done the very best that you can do? If the answer is “Yes,” we are on the right trajectory, and achievement is guaranteed to follow. If the answer is, “No,” or if we are told about a comparison to someone else, then we have to do some re-adjustment in thinking.

We work hard at this school to make the daily experience of our children both serious and joyful. There are many moments of laughter and even zaniness in the course of a school day. But, I am also mindful that our children live in a world awash in entertainment, and that the joyfulness that we seek in learning is fundamentally different than the commercial entertainment that preoccupies our culture.

Not everything worthy of accomplishment is ‘fun’ and school, in actuality for most children, is far more ‘serious’ than ‘fun.’ That’s just the way it is—and the sooner children understand this basic idea, the

### Attachments

- Hill House Spring Session Sign-up
- March Calendar
- Auction Donation Form

### What’s Due

- > Hill House Sign-Up (due Friday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>)
- > Special Friends Sign-Up (due Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup>)

### Upcoming Events

**Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Play

**Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>**  
1<sup>st</sup> Grade Field Trip to Berklee Theatre

**Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>**  
Half-Day – 12:15 Dismissal  
No After School Today!

**February 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>**  
February Vacation

**Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>**  
Girl Scouts 3:20-4:45  
Computer Club 3:20-4:15

**Wednesday, February 29<sup>th</sup>**  
Knitting Club 3:20-4:15

**Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup>**  
6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Festival

**Thursday, March 1<sup>st</sup>**  
Chess Club 3:15-5:20

**Friday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
1<sup>st</sup> + 4<sup>th</sup> Ice Skating Trip

better off they will be. And, in time, they may even come to understand how deeply satisfying it is to work hard, to learn, and to achieve.

### **Valentine's Day**

Speaking of a moment of pure frivolity, we just had one, and it was quite splendid—and certainly not devoid of lasting value. We talked, today, in Staff Meeting about how this particular ritual of handing out and receiving cards can be particularly valuable for certain of our children. And so it was, on Tuesday.

The day was also 'valuable' in a very particular way for our Sixth Graders. Thanks to all of you who supported their bake sale, they earned \$474.81 for their spring trip to Washington D.C. . . . while also distributing happiness and several zillion calories throughout our community.

### **A Correction**

Last week I grossly misrepresented the number of performers we had at our second Performance Festival. There were, in fact, 45 'acts' on the official list, and many of them involved more than one performer. By my quick count, there were at least 65 children who stood up in front of their schoolmates—more than half of the school! I guess one characteristic we don't do a good job developing is 'shyness.'

### **Vacation Reading**

Learning Project children, in general, are avid readers—a fact I witness at least twice a week when I supervise Quiet Read in sixth and fourth grades. That said, please provide time for your child to read over the coming vacation week.

This is an especially important plea to the parents of our first graders. Many of our first graders have made enormous progress these first 100 days learning to 'crack the code' and they should not be away from reading for seven long days. In many cases, their skills are still vulnerable to the perils of neglect, and so they need to practice *every* day. So, please read to and with them *every day* over the February break, and help us keep their good momentum in this amazing process called 'learning to read.'

### **Kindergarten Start Time**

An early reminder: In mid-March we will be making the final shift in our Kindergarten start time, moving the official time back from 8:15 to 8:00. We will start that on Monday, March 19th—three weeks after we return from February vacation.

Michael McCord

## **Announcements**

### **Hill House Spring Session**

Attached is the sign-up sheet for the spring session of Hill House programs. Registration opens on February 28<sup>th</sup> for Hill House members and on March 1<sup>st</sup> for non-members. Classes begin the week of March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012. If you would like to apply for a scholarship from Hill House please let Dana know and she will register your child for their program. Please return the LP registration form to Dana by **Friday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>**.

### **Kingsley Montessori Speaker Series – The Impact of Technology on the Growing Child**

On Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm join child development and behavior management expert Lynne Griffin to learn how you can create a proactive approach for establishing ground rules for technology for this plugged-in generation. Lynne Griffin is a nationally recognized expert on relationships and family life. RSVP to [Karen\\_d@kingsley.org](mailto:Karen_d@kingsley.org) or 617-226-4932.

### **Lunch Week 2012**

Look for Lunch Week forms to come home via backpack mail on Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. As you will note from your Blue Book calendar, Lunch Week for grades 1, 2, and 5 is held during the week of March 12<sup>th</sup>, and Lunch Week for grades 3, 4, and 6 takes place during the week of March 19<sup>th</sup>. In signing up for Lunch Week, your child is provided with snack and lunch Monday through Friday during their respective week. We regret that, due to logistics, we are unable to offer Lunch Week to our Kindergarteners.

### **Special Friend/Grandparents Day**

The annual LP event occurs each year for the children in grades 1, 3 and 5. We do grades 3 and 5 on one day in the spring, and grade 1 on another. This year the dates are: 1<sup>st</sup> grade – Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup>; and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades – Friday, April 13<sup>th</sup>. On this day, the children are invited (not expected) to invite a “special friend” to visit their classroom. The special friends arrive around 8:10am and go up to the classroom. Around 9:00am, they come down to the lobby and have coffee and a chance to ask Mr. McCord and/or Ms. Cesarz questions about the school. Special friends are sometimes grandparents or other relatives, babysitters, or “just special friends.” They should be human, above school age (certainly no one who would be expected to be in their school at the appointed time), and they should not be a parent. Parents have a standing invitation to visit the classroom by appointment at any (other) time—and indeed, are encouraged to do so at least once in the year—but this is not the right occasion. First graders are receiving their invitations today, in case they want to pass it along to someone special during the February vacation.

### **Boston Children’s Theatre – February Vacation Week**

It is not too late to sign your child up for a class or workshop at the Boston Children’s Theatre during February vacation week. The programs are for children ages 4-13 and are half or full day programs. Younger children will participate in a workshop based on improvisation, drama games and storytelling. The older children will be doing a production of *Annie Jr!* For more information e-mail Jay Pension at [registrar@bostonchildrenstheatre.org](mailto:registrar@bostonchildrenstheatre.org) or call 617-424-6634 x221.

### **MassArt Family Day**

On Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup> from 11:00am – 4:00pm MassArt (621 Huntington Avenue) invites you to drop in for a free fun-filled day of interactive activities and art-making designed and guided by MassArt students. Visitors of all ages are welcome, but activities are best suited for ages 4 and up. For additional information contact: [Katie.loesel@massart.edu](mailto:Katie.loesel@massart.edu), 617-879-7924 or visit [massart.edu/galleries](http://massart.edu/galleries).



## *Artists of the Week*

*February 27, 2012*

*Kindergarten:*

*Nicole Resnick*

*First Grade:*

*Niccolo Imbrogiano*

*Fifth Grade:*

*Owen Sullivan*

*Sixth Grade:*

*Carson Prindle*

**THE LEARNING PROJECT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**Annual Auction 2012**  
**DONATION FORM**

Please complete and return this form by **March 30, 2012**

Donor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Donor Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Description of Donation** - Location, dates and times available, expiration date, size, quantity, any restrictions or conditions, any special selling points, etc. Please be as specific as possible:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Value (*IRS requirement*) \_\_\_\_\_

- We will deliver or send the item to school.
- We need The LP to pick up the item. Please contact us.



**Gift certificates** may be returned with this form. Please check here if you will be sending a gift certificate, and indicate the amount here: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- We have enclosed our gift certificate.
- We will send our gift certificate to the school before April 10, 2012.



Please return this form to:

Andy Gallagher  
The Learning Project Elementary School  
107 Marlborough Street, Boston, MA 02116

or call the school at 617-266-8427 for more information.

*The Learning Project Elementary School is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.  
Your donation is tax deductible as allowed by law.*