

From the Desk of the Principal:

As you know, LHCS has added to its mission statement to include an additional focus: STEM. While STEM was originally an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, the acronym has taken on a new definition:

The STEM acronym is now used to **define an approach to learning** which

- promotes the importance of achievement in critical thinking
- promotes students actively exploring real world problems
- promotes project learning
- integrates science, technology, engineering and mathematics within all subject areas and promotes pointing out the connections (i.e.: engineering of railroads in history, the science of sound waves in music, the math in timing of music, math equations in science and then all of the technology used to learn, share, track, develop all of these disciplines)
- attempts to make these four subjects/disciplines tangible and exciting to students
- demonstrates that some problems have more than one right answer (inventions, proving a thesis in a paper)

As you know, there are very few “new” ideas in education. Each of these ideals may not be new, but are shown to benefit the students in many ways – therefore there has been a resurgence in this method of teaching. Children are wired to explore, question, experiment and invent, the very essence of science and engineering. The STEM approach gives students the tools to foster this inquiry and incorporate each child’s natural scientific tendency into all learning.

Much of the current education system is designed to impart a fixed body of knowledge. But, in this technological environment, we also need to “initiate a lifelong journey of creative thinking and agile learning.” (Oracle ThinkQuest White Paper, 2009) One statistic states that *80% of the jobs that today’s Kindergarteners will hold have not been invented yet.* (Ed Barlow, 1996) Preparing students for jobs that do not yet exist requires ingenuity. By using a STEM approach, schools can prepare students for the 21st century’s global marketplace.

Today’s students will enter a workforce that is vastly different from that of their parents. Increasingly, they must be able to: **work in teams** that are cross-functional and often **global** to **solve complex** and **important problems** that critically affect the world while responding creatively to **rapidly changing business landscapes** using **rapidly evolving technologies.** (Oracle ThinkQuest White Paper, 2009)

The STEM ideals are fast becoming a part of Minnesota’s Educational Standards. The current Minnesota Science standards have added a focus on engineering, including the development of inquiry skills and the understanding of how science works. Students must apply science and math skills to problem solving, learn how to practice engineering design through hands-on activities and develop an understanding of how engineering relates to society. In addition, Minnesota’s Math standards will now be connecting mathematics to other content areas--especially science, technology and engineering—and is embedded in the *Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Mathematics* (2007). Chances are that we’ll see STEM integration standards for other subjects as well.

Because Lake Harriet students are ideally suited to thrive in a STEM focused environment and because of the above information, the STEM approach to learning was recently added to the school’s Mission Statement.

At Lake Harriet Community School, we already provide multiple STEM opportunities through existing curriculum and technology use. We have been working to identify all the ways STEM is already a part of learning at Lake Harriet. By examining what we are already doing -from a STEM perspective, Lake Harriet can pinpoint how best to further integrate the STEM approach into our teaching. This will also position Lake Harriet for future STEM partnerships and funding opportunities.

PTA News and Updates

Tonight (Tuesday, April 19) there will be an all-school PTA meeting starting at 6:45 to discuss and approve applications for 2011-2012 grant funding. The Finance Committee met last week to review all grant applications received by the 4/12 deadline and offer its recommendations. All PTA members may now vote on these recommendations for inclusion (or not) in the annual budget, which will be set at the May 17th meeting. We will also be establishing a nominating committee to identify candidates for all open offices, including President-Elect, Treasurer-Elect, Secretary, Communications Coordinator, and Fundraising Co-chair, with elections also occurring on May 17th. Please show your support for the school and your kids by getting involved!

Understanding the Adolescent Brain and Helping Teens Succeed in School and Life

Presented by: David Walsh, Ph.D.

When: April 21, 2011

Where: Washburn High School Auditorium

Refreshments: 6:30 PM

Presentation: 7 PM- 8:30 followed by book signing

Dr. David Walsh is a father, grandfather, award winning psychologist, best-selling author and frequent guest on national radio and television. He founded and led the National Institute on Media and the Family until 2009. In 2010 he founded Mind Positive Parenting at www.DrDaveWalsh.com. His newest book, *Smart Parenting, Smarter Kids* will be released in June. The evening's presentation—based on his national best-seller *Why Do They Act That Way? A Survival Guide to the Adolescent Brain for You and Your Teen*--will explore the mysteries of the adolescent brain and how parents can help their teens and themselves survive and thrive.

Join us for an entertaining and informative evening with Dr. Walsh speaking on understanding our children's brain and how to help them succeed in school. For information on transportation and childcare please contact: Dick Sullivan @ 952-428-1773.

Community Meeting

When: Thursday, May 5th, 6:00-8:00 pm

Where: Linden Hills Park Building.

Jennifer Sommerness, an independent educational consultant, is hosting another community meeting to continue to discuss inclusive practices in neighborhood schools. We will pick up where we left off last month, but you didn't have to attend the last meeting to join in with us on this one. Please come and join the conversation, and spread the word! All are welcome! Please email me if you have questions, or to let me know you can attend: carl3326@umn.edu. I hope to see you there!

Spring Music Programs

Be sure to attend the LHCS Lower Campus Spring Music Programs in the lower campus gym!

Date: Thursday, May 5, 2011

Morning program: 9:50 Kindergarten: rooms PC, 106A & 108A

Grade One: rooms 102, 107 & 109

Grade Two: rooms 101 & 203

Afternoon program: 2:30

Kindergarten: rooms PC, 106P & 108P

Grade One: rooms 110 & PD

Grade Two: rooms 201, 202 & 204

Get Ready for the Sleep Out for Shelter!



Get Ready for the Sleep Out for Shelter! The LHCS Sleep Out for Shelter is Friday, May 20, 2011. LHCS families that wish to participate will give up their shelter for one night and collect pledges for housing for families who lost their homes due to the earthquake. The LHCS goal is to raise enough money to purchase 8 homes for families in Haiti. Our school is partnering with the American Refugee Committee, whose overall goal is to build 2,000 transitional homes for Haitian families (<http://www.arcrelief.org/site/PageServer>).

We hope that many LHCS families will participate. Parent "toolkits" will be available from the American Refugee Committee (will be provided at the school). These toolkits will contain information about Haiti, the transitional shelters, and provide reflective questions that you can discuss as a family after spending the night in your tent or alternative shelter.

If you are interested in having other LHCS students camp in your backyard, such as your child's friends, you must agree to be the chaperone and complete a criminal background check. Please see LHCS volunteer policy (http://lakeharriet.mpls.k12.mn.us/volunteer_policies_3.html) for more information.

If you want to host other students, you must complete this form in the next several weeks, as the process takes a minimum of 2 weeks to complete. Please fill this form out no later than May 5, 2011. Staff person Jenna Myrland, from the American Refugee Committee, will be coming to the student council meeting on Tuesday, April 19 to help the student council plan for this exciting service learning event. Stay tuned for more information in next week's Connection.

Contact Maree Hampton (mmhampton@earthlink.net) with questions.

SCOOTER CITY Volunteers!

SCOOTER CITY will soon be happening at the lower campus. For one week (April 25 - April 29), all physical education classes will be participating in Scooter City. If you are interested in volunteering during your child's PE class time, Ms. Chase would love to hear from you! You can help run the "restaurant", "car wash", etc. You can contact Ms. Chase by email (cchase@mpls.k12.mn.us) or voice mail (668-7593).

Dance Opportunities

Laura Balfour Dance Company, located in Linden Hills is looking for boys age 11 and 12 to join their

performance youth company. Boys that qualify would attend rehearsal free of charge as well as free class. The company performs for schools, in festivals and other art venues. If you are interested in more information, please contact Laura Balfour [\(612\) 964-9607](tel:6129649607). If you are a boy that is not 11 or 12, or a girl, there are other opportunities through LBDC. Please let me know if you would like more information. Thank you!

Tickets on Sale Now for Parties Galore Fundraisers



These parties are available online now for purchase, go to <http://lakeharriet.mpls.k12.mn.us/> and click on the yellow Parties Galore Button.

We haven't met our fundraising goal for the year, so by attending these parties you are supporting our school all while having a great time! Hurry, parties will fill up fast. Keep your eyes on the website for more parties that are in the works.

May

- Sunday, May 1st - 5th Grade Kickball BBQ
- Friday, May 6 - 3rd and 4th Grade Mom's Party at the Linden Tree
- Thursday, May 12th - LHCSalooza
- Friday, May 13 - Kindergarten – Progressive yoga, wine and cheese party.
- Thursday, May 19th - Lake Harriet Moms - Girls' Night Out at Hot Mama!
- (Must buy by May 20th): Tuesday, June 14th - LHCS Night at the Twins Game! - Against the Chicago White Sox
- Friday May 20th - 6th Grade Party
- Saturday May 21st - All School Casino Night
- Saturday, May 21 - 4th Grade Backyard BBQ and Meat Raffle
- Sun, May 22nd - 1st Grade Bowling Party

June

- Friday, June 3 - 2nd Grade Mom's Cocktail Party
- Saturday, June 4th - 3rd Grade Mamasitas Fiesta
- Saturday, June 4th - 7th Grade - All America BBQ!
- Saturday, June 4th - 8th Grade - " Farewell Lake Harriet . . . Hello, High School!"
- Saturday, June 11th - All School Fiesta

2010 - 11 Connection Contacts:

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Published every Tuesday. Deadline for submission is 4pm the preceding Thursday.

Submissions: email to anna1028@gmail.com or use the online submission form at <http://lakeharriet.mpls.k12.mn.us/connection1.html>. Please try to limit each submission to approximately

150 words in length.