



# Lake Harriet Community School News

A Weekly Publication of the Lake Harriet Community School PTA

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LHCS News

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December 18th, 2012

## **FIFTEENTH ISSUE FOR '12-'13**

### **From the Principal**

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Caring Adults of Lake Harriet Community School:

As you are aware, there was a shooting at a school in Connecticut on December 14, 2012. Because the incident happened in an elementary school, this may be of very great concern to all students and their families.

We wanted you to know what we have done at this school to address this event. But first we have some suggestion for you as you help your children and youth cope during this stressful time.

**Adult's Role:** Try to be calm, reassuring, and focused for the children. Parents and guardians need to get the support they need from other adults so they are able to effectively guide the children. Talk about family and community values, communication, and treating each other in a caring way.

**Talk and Listen:** Find out what the children's fears and concerns are and address them as directly and calmly as possible. Reassure them that you, extended family members, and other adults are here to help and protect. Give children time to talk, follow their lead – when they are ready to return to their regular routine, let them. If they have further concerns, they will probably come back to talk. Let them know they can talk at any time.

**Create a Safe Home Environment:** Turn off the TV. Constant images, strong emotions, and reports of the shooting are not helpful at this time. If you need to watch the news, do so after the children have gone to bed. If teenage children want to watch the news, make sure that you are with them to help process the information and images.

Keep to bedtime routine. A good antidote to stress is sleep. Children need reassurance at bedtime. Read to them, keep family faith traditions, and allow nightlights and hall lights to stay on. Some children may want extra assurance. Lying down with children, especially young ones, or sitting in a youth's room until they fall asleep may be helpful.

**Use Your Resources:** Community resources are available to you and your families to help you talk to children include counselors, members of the faith community, public health and sexual assault and domestic abuse programs.

**Start the Discussion:** Here are some remarks that might help you start a discussion with your children about today's events. Use whatever is comfortable for you.

"What has happened today is horrifying, and our hearts and brains are having a hard time taking it all in. What we know at this point is: (give facts, as you know them.)"

"When scary things happen, it is important to take a big breath or whatever it is you do to help calm down. Pay attention to the facts. Be careful not to spread rumors."

Be careful to avoid dramatizing the drama – try to calm yourself and others instead of fanning the excitement.

"It is still important for you and me to be able to express our feelings and share our thoughts and concerns. Do you want to talk about what has happened? We can talk whenever you want."

**Possible Discussion Questions:**

What have you heard about the shootings?

How are you feeling about what happened?

Is anyone you know worried about this happening at your school? How can we help that person?

How did what you heard or saw affect you?

Who are your friends, supporters and resources for help?

How can you be a friend or peacemaker to other students and adults in this family, neighborhood, or school?

At Upper Campus, we have taken the following steps:

- Reviewed with staff safety procedures
- Reviewed procedures of Code Red with students and ran an additional Code Red drill
- Confirmed that all security systems are in working order
- Consulted with our school psychologist and social worker on information for parents (see below)

At Lower Campus, we have taken the following steps:

- We keep all doors locked.
- Social worker and principal have a presence in the halls and carry walkie-talkies for communication.
- The school emergency management team will meet this week to reflect and review our emergency plan looking for strengths and areas of vulnerabilities.
- After winter break we will continue practicing our "Code Red" lockdown procedures. By State law we need to conduct five fire drills and five life-threatening emergency lockdown procedures.
- This fall all students have taken a walk to our emergency evacuation site with their teacher. The primary site is True Apostolic Assembly @ 3520 W. 43rd St. The secondary site is Linden Hills Park @ 3100 W. 43rd St.

We have support in the buildings through Maggie Quinlan and Lynne McCoy, Social Workers and Julie Hirsch, School Psychologist, if students need to talk. The below link to the National Association of School Psychologists has resources for parents on how to help their child after a traumatic event: <http://www.nasponline.org/>

We are concerned about the safety of all of the children in our community. We must be careful, as we talk to our children that the violent acts do not carry over to the way we treat each other. Adults must role model tolerance and care for all children. If you have any questions or concerns, please call us.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Rynchek, Principal - Upper Campus (612) 668-3316  
Jan Parrish, Principal - Lower Campus (612) 668-3212

## **From the Principal**

### **Information For School Success (part 2)**

*"Life doesn't require that we be the best, only that we try our best."*

H. Jackson Brown Jr.

**BE THERE.** It is important that you understand that regular attendance in elementary school (K-8) sets up a pattern for your child's entire school career. Show your child that school comes first by trying to keep days off for illness and family emergencies. Also, schedule routine doctor and dentist appointments for after school or over school breaks.

**BETTER CONCENTRATION.** Looking for a fun way to improve your child's concentration? Try this quick game. The first player makes one motion, like clapping or spinning around. The second person copies him and adds another movement. Continue adding motions until someone forgets the sequence. The last player to get it starts a new game.

**TICKET PLEASE.** If you want to limit your child's TV time, try this idea. Every week give your child seven slips of paper. Each is good for one hour of television. Remind them to plan ahead. For example, if they want to watch a two hour movie on Saturday, they will need to save an extra during the week.

**HOW WE LEARN.** You can make learning easier; you just have to know what works and what doesn't.

- By simply believing you can work at becoming smarter, it will produce higher achievement.
- Sleep is when our brains consolidate, or make permanent what we have learned so don't stay up all night cramming.
- To off load anxieties, put them on paper. It frees your working memory and the mental space for thinking and problem solving to focus on the task at hand.
- To make new vocabulary stick, space out study sessions over several weeks. The spacing effect helps us form stronger and more lasting memories by exposing ourselves to information over time.
- Recalling information is more effective than reading over it. That's because testing doesn't simply measure what you know, it reinforces what you know. Every time you summon facts from memory, you strengthen your brain's hold on the material.
- We are most engaged in learning when our motivation is intrinsic, stemming from the task itself rather than some external reward.

- To master any skill, you must eliminate mistakes. Find a coach or a critic who can tell you whether you're doing something wrong, and then repeat the correct way until it becomes second nature.

(Information from the 2012 Resources for Educators and the 8-12-12 Parade)

Sincerely,  
Merry Tilleson  
Assistant Principal Upper Campus

### **Winter Break starts 12/22 School resumes Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Don't forget winter break begins at the last bell on December 21st and classes resume on Wednesday, January 2nd.

### **Peer Mediation News**

This year at Lake Harriet Upper we have 5 returning 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Mediators: Aidan B., Alison C., Spencer K., Maya K., and Kaitlyn V. They have been busy this fall engaging in a variety of interesting activities.

African Visitors. First, the Mediators had a unique opportunity in October to meet with 15 African adults from 13 countries (Chad, Togo, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan, Togo, and Zimbabwe) who were visiting the U.S. on a 3-week study of conflict mediation strategies. We were their only school visit and they were very interested in learning how youth resolve conflict. The mediators demonstrated their skills in a mock mediation, answered questions, and asked some of their own questions about mediation in their home countries. Many of our new 6<sup>th</sup>- and 7<sup>th</sup>-grade Mediators were able to observe. It was quite a learning experience for all.

First-grade and Third-Grade Bully Lessons. Second, our 8<sup>th</sup>-graders visited Ms. Lyga-Jones's 1<sup>st</sup>-grade classroom at the Lower Campus in October. They read two books about bullying and had a discussion about how to stop bullying. They learned about standing up to bullies, and reporting bullying behavior to adults. They even got to sing and dance when Ms. Lyga Jones played one of their favorite anti-bully tunes.

The 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Mediators visited Ms. Hollembeak's 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade classroom last week and read two more books on bullying. They answered questions, and were invited back to share some of their mediation strategies.

New Mediator Training. Finally, the 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Mediators are involved in the training of our new 6<sup>th</sup>- and 7<sup>th</sup>-grade Mediators. Our new mediators were selected by their teachers and peers this fall. The mediators are receiving specific training in conflict resolution, and learning the importance of remaining unbiased and keeping information confidential. Our 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Mediators are sharing their wisdom with the new Mediators, who will be ready to begin their own mediations in January 2013.

New Peer Mediators: Leah C., Ogden M., Izzie M., Isabelle K., Grace S., Penn B., Nico K., Ginger W., John H., Jane C., Zoe S., Max M., Ronan P., and Claire R.

Please remember, students in grades 6-8 can use the Peer Mediation program. A teacher, student, or mediator can request mediation by filling out a request form on the Lake Harriet webpage or in the main office, or by contacting Julie Hirsch (School Psychologist). All mediations

are voluntary and each disputant must agree to follow basic ground rules. The mediations occur during the school day with an effort to minimize loss of academic time. Please encourage your middle schooler to use the Lake Harriet Peer Mediation program! If you have questions or comments about Peer Mediation, please contact Julie Hirsch, School Psychologist at 668-3318.

### **AMC Math Competition**

Congratulations to the 71 Lake Harriet middle school students who participated in the AMC-8 math competition test in November! The AMC-8 is a very challenging math test offered to middle school students around the country. 8th graders Connor G, John L, and Emma S, 7th graders Mathais G, Andrea K, Peter K, Nico K, and Max V, and 6th graders Charlie F, Evan L, Noah S, Isadora W and Tommy W were high scorers for the school.

### **The 2012-13 School Improvement Plans are posted on the MPS website.**

The School Improvement Plan (SIP) is the annual action plan for our school. The Administration prepares our SIPs using assessments of student achievement from the MCAs, MAP, and other assessments, as well as school climate survey data to set forth the goals, strategies and staff professional development plans for the school.

Each school in the Minneapolis Public School (MPS) district is required to make their School Improvement Plan (SIP) available to families and the community.

More information and the 2012-13 SIPs for LHCS upper and lower campuses can be found here. **[http://lakeharriet.mpls.k12.mn.us/school\\_improvement\\_plan\\_2](http://lakeharriet.mpls.k12.mn.us/school_improvement_plan_2)**

District information, links to the SIPs for all MPS, and much more very interesting data can be found at these district links:

**<http://fundedprograms.mpls.k12.mn.us/sip>**

**<http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/performance>**

Please contact Christine Sanguinet ([christine.sanguinet@mpls.k12.mn.us](mailto:christine.sanguinet@mpls.k12.mn.us)) if you have further questions.

### **LHCS Pledge Drive**

The LHCS Pledge Drive runs through the end of the year! Every pledge counts, any amount. 100% of your pledge is tax deductible and 100% goes directly to LHCS. This holiday season, make a pledge and give the gift of education!

Please check with your employer to see if there is a corporate matching opportunity for your pledge to the LHCS pledge drive. Every dollar counts! Here is a list of matches from last years drive:

- AT&T
- Wells Fargo
- Thrivent Financial
- UBS
- Ameriprise
- IBM
- General Mills
- American Express

Thanks for your continued support of LHCS!

## **Community News**

### **FitClub**

WHAT: FitClub (Geared toward adults-families welcome). Join us for an amazing, heart pumping, calorie burning, high-energy workout. Guaranteed to jump start your new lease on life. Sweat to popular programs like P90X, Insanity, TurboFire, Combat and MANY more!

Come join us for a FREE 30-45 minute workout and COMMIT to get FIT!!

DATE & TIME: EVERY FRIDAY AT 6:45AM

WHERE: Lake Harriet Upper

WHO: Adults (Families welcome)

COST: FREE

Gianna Bari Lassiter is a Fitness Coach. Equipped with an M. Ed. in Human Development and a passion for helping people live a healthier lifestyle, Gianna is ready to end the trend of obesity and the effects of chronic disease by bringing people together to share in the journey of Fitness, Fun and Friends.

To reserve your spot email Gianna Bari Lassiter at [Gianna\\_BL@msn.com](mailto:Gianna_BL@msn.com) or call 612-269-8242.

### **Shop at Target & give back to LHCS.**

We know of a terrific way to raise funds for Lake Harriet Community School. It's easy, and all you have to do is use your Target® Visa® or Target® Card. You save 5% off all your purchases and we will receive a percentage of the amount of each purchase in the form of a cash donation from Target through the Take Charge of Education® program. It's easy. Just visit [www.target.com/tcoe](http://www.target.com/tcoe), or call [1-800-316-6142](tel:1-800-316-6142) to designate Lake Harriet Community School. *The school ID for LHCS is: 64892.* So, if you're going to Target anyway, please consider using your Target® Visa® or Target® Card. Big thanks to those who are already doing their part to make a great school even better. Grandparents, alumni, neighbors and friends can take part, too!

Don't have a Target card that designates LHCS? Just visit <http://www.target.com/tcoe> to sign up.

Questions please contact us at 612 370 4913 or at [linden hills@minneapolis parks.org](mailto:linden hills@minneapolis parks.org)  
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Published every Tuesday. Deadline for submission is 4pm the preceding Thursday.

**Submissions:** email to Mark Fullerton: [marksatva@gmail.com](mailto:marksatva@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.