



The Pelham Press



A BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE PELHAM OFFICE AND THE PTO

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

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January Events	Upcoming Events
1/18 No School, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day 1/19 Family Tea Time, 3:30 PM 1/22 K Museum Walk 1:20-4:00 PM (sign up required) 1/23 Cardboard Challenge 1:00 PM 1/25 All School Meeting, 9:30 AM 1/29 No School, Curriculum Day	2/1-2/28: Black History Month 2/1-2/5: Black Lives Matter at School Week 2/12: Report cards sent home virtually 2/15-2/19: No School 2/24: Early Release Day, 1:20 PM

Dear Families,

The events of the past week have left many in our community feeling emotionally drained. As a staff, we met on Wednesday for professional learning, where we read a chapter of *Onward* about fostering optimism through telling empowering stories. There was a section in the text about setting intentions and using affirmations. (Our Kindergarteners are skilled at this!) One affirmation coming to mind lately is: "The only way out is through."

While we are all doing our getting-through, I hope you are finding pockets of joy. My family has been embracing bird watching at the bird feeder and making predictions about which paperwhite bulb (of the many scattered in jars throughout the house) will grow the tallest. Even inside, nature is grounding.

Here are a few updates from around the building.

Teaching and Learning

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released [a statement on January 5th](#) regarding MCAS for this year. There will be shortened tests for all students in grades 3-8 using a "sampling approach," where students will take a portion of the MCAS assessment in each subject. More information to come as we develop our schedule and plan for supporting students in taking these modified MCAS assessments.

Our first **Cardboard Challenge** will take place on Saturday, January 23rd at 1:00 PM! Students will use the Google Meet code: **artchat** to access the event. [Here is a link to a padlet](#) with more information. There is also a flier below with the link to the padlet and some examples of cardboard creations.

Our student-run newspaper, the *Paw Print*, had their first meeting this week. Stay tuned for the first edition of the year, hitting inboxes soon!

Mr. Arabian, our PE teacher and resident fitness expert, will be offering community workouts each week, starting Wednesday 1/20 at 7:00 PM. Google Meet Code: pelhamworkouts. More information below.

The Kindergarteners will be holding their Museum Art Walk on Friday, January 22nd outdoors on the playground from 1:20-4:00 PM. Sign ups will be shared with the K community. In order to maintain social distancing safety measures, we'll ask that other folks please avoid using the playground just during this window of time.

Emotional Wellbeing

It was joyful to see students at virtual snack time this week. I am really looking forward to hosting **optional** class playground recess meetups in the coming weeks. Under current state guidelines, outdoor gatherings must be fewer than 25 people. Families should plan to remain on campus. All students must wear masks and maintain 6' distance. School facilities (bathroom, water) will not be available. If there is extreme weather, we will reschedule. All recess meetups will take place from **11:30 AM-12:00 PM**.

- Kindergarten: Mon 1/25
- Grade 1: Tues 1/26
- Grade 2: Wed 1/27
- Grade 3: Thurs 1/28
- Grade 5: Mon 2/1
- Grade 6: Tues 2/2
- Grade 4: Wed 2/3

Antiracism

This month's all school read is *Mixed Me!* By Taye Diggs. The story is all about celebrating your unique identity. Here is the [Common Sense Media review](#).

Our next staff/family book group discussion in February will focus on *We Want to Do More Than Survive* by Dr. Bettina Love. Dr. Love's Abolitionist Teaching Network has some wonderful resources for educators and families. She is facilitating a number of webinars and panels in the next month or so on topics such as "Black Futures and Black Joy," and "Co-Conspiratorship: How White Educators Should Teach Black History."

[Black Lives Matter at School Week](#) will be February 1st through the 5th this year. Recognition of this week of action has been endorsed by the Massachusetts Teachers Association. One hopeful outcome is for schools and districts to examine their systems and policies with an antiracist lens in order to create meaningful changes, including:

- o Ending zero-tolerance policies and implementing restorative practices in schools
- o Hiring more Black teachers
- o Including Black history and ethnic studies in all K-12 schools

We'll close with a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Where Do We Go From Here?" address: "We must walk on in the days ahead with an audacious faith in the future."

Please reach out with any questions and let me know if there is anything I can do to support your family.

All my best,
Leigh

Pelham Elementary School's

Wednesday Night Workouts with Mr. A

Who: Pelham Elementary School's students, families, and school staff

What: Various forms of exercise that will include follow along workout videos on cardio kick-boxing, yoga, zumba, and much more! In the event of widespread technical difficulties, Mr. Arabian will take over

Where: Google Meet Code: `pelhamworkouts`

When: Wednesday nights @ 7:00 (not including days off from school)

Why: The purpose of these sessions are to build community and help everyone hit the mid-week reset button



Gather cardboard!
Find your scissors!
Get out your tape and glue!



Come join us for the
**Pelham Family
Cardboard
Challenge**

Click this red box for more information

Saturday
Jan. 23,
2021
@1pm

Qs?
Contact Emily Stewart
stewarte@arps.org

