

McCall Middle School September 2017 Newsletter



Welcome to a new school year at McCall Middle School!

I hope that your children are enjoying the start of school. On behalf of the entire faculty and staff, I would like to extend a very special welcome to our students who are new to Winchester and/or new to our school.

I continue to be honored to work in such an amazing district and in a community that prides itself on providing its children with a first-class education. It is thanks to outstanding educators, students, and parents that this school and community is so very special. I am extremely fortunate to work with a cadre of exceptional educators at McCall.

One of the many great things about Winchester is how the community works closely with the schools to support our children. At a recent meeting of the Winchester Coalition for a Safer Community, I received several flyers that I wanted to be sure that I shared with you. They may be found at the end of this newsletter and are as follows:

- Top Ten Back-to-School Tips to Help Your Child Thrive
- Hidden in Plain Sight – Coming to McCall's Open House on October 5th
- Keeping Kids Safe Online – An Evening with Katie Greer, National Internet Safety Expert
- Annual Medication & Sharps Safe Disposal Day
- Winchester Anonymous Tip Line
- Voices 4 Recovery & Remembrance Event

Open House – Save the Date

At this year's Open House on Thursday, October 5, 2017 from 7:00-9:00 p.m., you will be able to meet your child's teachers and be introduced to his/her courses. More information will be brought home by your child as the date approaches.

School Picture Day – Save the Date

Wednesday, September 27, 2017 is our School Picture Day. Information regarding how to order pictures will be sent home with your child a few days prior to our scheduled Picture Day.

Parents/Guardians Bringing Student Items to School

An important part of our job as parents and middle school educators is helping our students develop the key attribute of responsibility. This is an important challenge we face as adults who live and work with

middle school children. With the importance of this challenge in mind, I request that you help your McCall student remember the main items he or she needs to take to school such as lunch, books, homework, instrument, appointment notices, etc. Please work with your child to develop strategies to insure that he/she brings all necessary materials (i.e. lunch, homework, charged Chromebook, etc.) to school daily. Parents are discouraged from bringing these items to school for their children.

If a parent does bring an item to school, we will not be using the Public Address System to call students to the office except in emergency circumstances as this course of action is very disruptive to the learning environment. Your support in this regard will be most appreciated. There are three bins located in the main office labeled Grade 6, Grade 7, & Grade 8. If a parent/guardian is dropping off an item for their child, we ask that the child's name be written clearly on the item and the item be placed in the appropriate bin. Students should check the bins between classes if they are anticipating someone bringing something to school for them. This will greatly reduce the number of announcements that we have been making during the instructional day.

Drop-off and Pick-up Safety Reminders

As you are aware vehicular safety in our school drop-off and pick-up areas continues to be a major concern of our school community. We ask that every parent exercise utmost care in the drop-off and pick-up areas in front of McCall and along Mystic Valley Parkway at the back of the school. Remember that the both the side and rear parking lots are for buses and staff parking only. **Parents should not drop off or pick up students in either the side or rear parking lots.** Despite the signs that are posted in both of these parking lots, some parents/guardians continue to drop-off and pick-up in these areas.

Dance/Activity Night Schedule – Save the Dates

The McCall Student Council will help sponsor school dance/activity nights once again this year and admission will be \$10 per student. Doors open for all dance/activity nights at 7:30 p.m. and we ask that parents/guardians make arrangements to pick up their children in front of McCall at 9:30 p.m. promptly. Students will not be permitted to walk home from school dances/activity nights.

The 2017-2018 Dance/Activity Night Schedule is as follows:

- **Friday, October 13, 2017 - Grades 7 & 8 Dance/Activity Night**
- **Friday, October 27, 2017 - Grade 6 Dance/Activity Night**
- **Friday, March 9, 2018 - Grades 6 & 7 Dance/Activity Night**
- **Friday, April 27, 2018 - Grades 6-8 Dance/Activity Night**

“Spain, France & Italy” June 2018

Looking for that perfect family vacation? Does your child ever dream about traveling abroad?

Then come to the informational meeting on Monday, May 22nd at 7pm in room A209.

“Spain, France & Italy” is a 12 day trip that will take place at the *end* of the 2018 school year.

We will fly into Madrid, Spain and meet our EF Tour guide where will spend 2 days touring the Prado, the Royal Palace, the Plaza Mayor, and so much more. We will possibly be attending a flamenco tablero as well! *Olé!* We will travel by AVE train from Madrid to Barcelona while viewing the marvelous countryside of this beautiful country. In Barcelona, we will visit the Sagrada Familia, the Montjuic Hill, Park Güell, and of course, the famous Ramblas! Days 6 & 7 will begin our tour of France. *Ooo la la!* Tour Carcassonne, Provence, Avignon, Nice or Cannes! Day 8 *Andiamo in Italia!* ... Here we come!

Our last leg of the tour will begin with a trip to Pisa where we will visit the iconic Leaning Tower well as the Baptistery and Cathedral. On day 9, it is onto Florence, the cradle of the Renaissance and home to Michelangelo and Botticelli. We will spend the entire day visiting Florence on our walking tour through

the Piazza della Signoria, and walk across the Ponte Vecchio where many of Florence's famed leather and gold artisans keep their shops. After Florence, we will travel to Assisi to visit the Basilica of St. Francis and then onto Rome!

Our final day will be spent touring Vatican City, the Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica, the Colosseum, and the Trevi Fountain where we will toss a coin into the fountain and say "*arrivederci*" before we depart for home the following day.

The price of this 12 day adventure is \$3,865.00 for students and \$4,465.00 for adults. This includes: round-trip flights, all inclusive insurance, motorcoach transportation, AVE train transportation, a full-time Tour Director, 5 sightseeing tours led by licensed local guides, 10 overnight stays in hotels with private bathrooms, European daily breakfasts and dinners. This does NOT include: daily lunches, spending money, tips for the Tour Director, local guides and bus drivers.

This trip is open to all 6th, 7th and 8th grade McCall students and their families. McCall students may travel without his/her parent but if a non-McCall sibling would like to join, the parent MUST be on the trip for the non-McCall student.)

Please note this is NOT a school sponsored trip since it is taking place after the 2017-2018 school year.

"Spain, France & Italy is led by Spanish teacher Grace Tripp. This will be Ms Tripp's fourth McCall international trip with EF. If you have any further questions, please contact her at gtripp@winchesterps.org or you can get online at EFTours.com/1901569WD

Policies and Procedures

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

It is important for the continuity and consistency of education that absence from school is kept to a minimum. Chapter 76, section 1 of the Massachusetts General Laws requires all children between the ages of six and sixteen to attend school. A school district may excuse up to seven full-day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions in any period of six months.)

Attendance: If a student will be absent or tardy, a parent/guardian must call the school at **(781) 721-7044 Ext. 1** and provide the student's name, grade, and reason for the absence or tardiness. This call should take place before 7:45 a.m. on the day of the absence or tardiness. Absences due to personal illness, death in the family, observance of religious holidays, emergency medical or dental treatment, or other serious emergencies are considered excused. Parents are requested to schedule appointments for physicians, dentists, or special lessons after school hours. Students who have been absent during the school day may not participate in after-school or evening activities.

Parents/Guardians are strongly discouraged from planning family vacations when school is in session as vacations are considered unexcused absences. In addition to compromising the attendance law, unexcused absences interrupt the educational process of each course in ways that make-up work cannot reverse. Classroom instruction, activities, and experiences cannot be replicated and it is not incumbent on teachers to do so for unexcused absences. It is at the teacher's individual discretion to determine a feasible plan for the missed instruction. If these arrangements are not completed, the student will not receive credit for the work missed. A copy of the current school calendar can be found on the school website and at the beginning of this handbook.

Student Absence Notification Program: Absences due to personal illness, death in the family, observance of religious holidays, emergency medical or dental treatment or other serious emergencies are considered excused absences. Absences for recreational and vacation purposes will be recorded as

unexcused absences and the parent/guardian must notify the principal in writing at least one week in advance of the absence to jgoncalves@winchesterps.org

The Office: Visitors to McCall will use the buzzer system at the front entrance of the school. Visitors should first press the blue button outside of the front door, look into the camera, and when prompted state their name and the reason for visiting before being allowed entry into the building. Visitors may also be asked to show identification. All visitors, including parents and guardians, must first report to the Main Office, sign in, pick up a visitor's badge, and affix the badge so that it is visible. Visitors in the building without a visitor's identification sticker during the school day will be escorted to the main office.

Parents and Guardians Visiting Teachers: Parents and guardians who want to meet with a staff member should first make an appointment with that staff member. Upon entering the building, parents and guardians must first report to the main office, sign in, pick up a visitor's badge, and affix the badge so that it is visible. An office administrative assistant will notify the teacher of your arrival.

Downtown Winchester - Expectations & Reminders for Students

On sunny afternoons, early-release days, and especially on Fridays you will notice many students in the downtown area after school. After several conversations representatives from the police department, school personnel, parents, and store employees I would like to ask for your assistance to reminding students of our expectations of their behavior downtown. The following will be communicated with McCall students and I am hoping that you can also remind them of our expectations:

- Please do not congregate, thus blocking, the sidewalks.
- Please be sure to move aside when people are walking down the sidewalks, especially for individuals with infants and our senior citizens.
- Please be aware of your language and the volume of your voice.
- When crossing the street, please be sure to use the crosswalk.
- Please do not run across the street or down the sidewalks.
- Your help will be greatly appreciated in keeping the downtown area a safe and enjoyable place for everyone.
- Thanks for your cooperation and support!

McCall Extracurricular Activities

Thanks to the generosity of businesses and organizations each year, we are able to offer a wide range of extracurricular activities in the past few years such as 3D Fab Club, Anime Club, Art Club, McCall Buddies, Digital Photography Club, Global Concerns Club, Grade 6 Math Team, Grades 7 & 8 Math Team, Green Team, Heritage Singers, Homework Club, Intramural Athletics, Jazz Band, Mindfulness Club, Multicultural Club, Photography Club, Poetry Club, Rubik's Cube Club, Solo Voci, Student Council, Student Help Desk, Student Leadership Club, WHS Tutoring Program, & Yearbook Club.

We receive some funding for our extracurricular program through the school budget and raise funds for the remainder of the budget for this program. We work hard every year to raise the funds necessary to support these excellent programs for our students free of charge.

In addition, the Winchester Recreation Department's Youth Center (located in the back of the building) will be open every day until 5:00 p.m. (3:00 p.m. on Early Release Days) for those students who choose to participate in this fee-based program.

We want to maintain and expand our extracurricular offerings since we believe that they are an integral part of our middle school, offering opportunities for our students to develop their interests and competencies in meaningful ways. If your business or organization can support us with a donation,

large or small, please contact me directly. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated and acknowledged in this newsletter on a regular basis.

I want to close with a special thank you to those organizations and businesses that have contributed to our extracurricular activity programs for the 2016-2017 school year. Thank you to the generous contribution from the John and Mary Murphy Foundation and thank you to the anticipated support of our very own McCall Parents Association. Without their help, we would not be able to offer the rich and varied extracurricular activities and for that we especially thank our parents.



In closing, I am honored to be serving as McCall's principal and I sincerely look forward to helping provide an engaging and productive school experience for each and every student at McCall. Please don't hesitate to contact us at 781-721-7026 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Jorge Goncalves
Principal



Top Ten Back-to-School Tips to Help Your Child Thrive

From Challenge Success, <http://www.challengesuccess.org>

With kids back in school, these practical tips are helpful reminders for ways to build resilience, share your values, and support the overall health and well-being of your children.

1. Ask your child: "How was your day? Learn anything interesting? Get to spend time with friends?" instead of "How did you do on the math test?"
2. Resist the urge to correct the errors in your child's homework. It's your child's work, not yours.
3. Work done with integrity is more important than an A. Pressure to achieve only high grades can make students resort to cheating.
4. Make time for PDF: playtime, downtime, family time. Research shows PDF is critical for overall well-being.
5. Create a technology-free environment during mealtimes. Every adult and child can benefit from a break from constant interruptions and distractions.
6. Collaborate with your child's teachers. Assume best intentions and work together to solve problems.
7. Fight the temptation to bring your child's forgotten homework to school. Kids gain resilience by learning from small failures.
8. An extra hour of sleep is more valuable than an extra hour of studying. Research shows sleep deprivation can be associated with depression and anxiety.
9. When your child wants to talk with you, stop what you are doing and engage. Does "I hate school" really mean something else: "I am being bullied" or "I don't fit in?"
10. Help your child develop his or her interests and strengths. Discover what your child really loves to do outside of school, not what you think a college admissions officer would like to see on an application.

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

~ MIDDLE SCHOOL EDITION ~

For Adults Age 21 and Over To View



Photo Credit: Akron Children's Hospital

Do You Know What Is In Your Middle Schooler's Room?

An Interactive Exhibit That Will Open Your Eyes

**** Learn How To Identify Risky Behaviors
That Can Start In Middle School****

Join Us In the McCall Middle School Cafeteria

To Explore The Room, Ask Questions And Be Challenged

***Thursday, October 5, 2017 (opens at 6:15 p.m.)
@ McCall Open House***



<https://winchestercoalitionsafercommunity.com>

Keeping Kids Safe Online:

An Evening with **Katie Greer**,
National Internet Safety Expert

Monday, October 30, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

“What apps should I be worried about?”

“Is my child being cyberbullied?”

“Is social networking safe?”

Did you know there are several apps, such as The Vault, available for keeping texts and photos secret, and many of them are free?

Please join expert **Katie Greer** on **Monday, October 30** at 7:00 p.m. at **McCall Middle School**. This program will cover issues around the latest apps such as SnapChat, Ask.fm, and Kik, as well as other important topics, including online privacy, digital responsibility, cyberbullying, texting, sexting, and more. Greer helps adults navigate the digital waters covering what’s new, what’s now, and what’s next when it comes to children and technology, and she provides parents and caregivers with proactive initiatives to keep kids safe.



Former *Director of Internet Safety* for the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office and *Intelligence Analyst* with the Massachusetts State Police, Greer has worked closely with the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces and schools throughout the country to educate thousands of students, parents and educators on the issues of digital technology safety and cyberbullying. She will be speaking to all the students at McCall Middle School.



This presentation is sponsored by Winchester Savings Bank in partnership with the Winchester Coalition for a Safer Community.

#GOTDRUGS?



Annual Medication & Sharps Safe Disposal Day*

Saturday, October 28

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Tent Outside Transfer Station Gate

15 McKay Avenue, Winchester

**You Don't Want Them, But Someone Else May ...
Dispose Of Them Safely On This Day!**

*Sponsored by The Winchester Coalition for a Safer Community, in
partnership with the Winchester Police Department and the U.S. Drug
Enforcement Administration*

***Also Winchester's Hazardous Waste Collection Day (DPW Yard)**

Winchester Anonymous Tip Line

**Text the word
“Winchester”
and your tip to
847-411**

*100% Anonymous -- No Caller ID
Call 911 for Emergencies*



**See Something?
TEXT SOMETHING**



Include any details you can
(e.g., date, time, license plate, address)

*Sponsored by the Winchester Police Department, in collaboration
with the Winchester Coalition for a Safer Community*

Mystic Valley Public Health Coalition

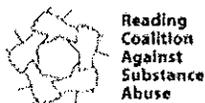
Malden Medford Melrose Reading Stoneham Wakefield Winchester



MELROSE
SERGEANT ARBERY
FOUNDATION



Stoneham Coalition



Reading
Coalition
Against
Substance
Abuse



Voices 4 Recovery & Remembrance Event

*Be part
of our
Luminaria
Walk*

Tuesday September 26, 2017
6:00 to 7:00 pm
Reading Memorial High School
62 Oakland Rd. Reading, MA

*Join us as
we gather
@
Memorial
Hall*



Come because you

...care about prevention

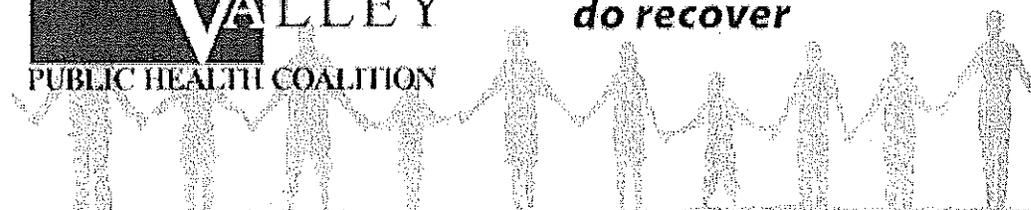
...have survived the struggle

...need to be around a supportive community

...want to honor those we have lost



**Prevention works,
treatment is effective
& People can and
do recover**



www.mysticvalleypublichealth.org

***"Malden, Medford, Melrose, Reading, Stoneham, Wakefield and
Winchester working together to address substance abuse and
improve the health of the people of the Mystic Valley."***

Learn more @ www.mysticvalleypublichealth.org
www.reading.k12.ma.us/community/rcasa