It was the second week of school and one of our fabulous kindergarteners was crying outside of the room – it was early in the day and the school year so this isn’t that uncommon. I shared a story with the student about how I cried my first two weeks of kindergarten and have been in school ever since. Not wanting to spend 40 years in school, the child stopped crying and decided to head to class.

MACS staff is very excited about this (our 16th) school year. Personally I feel it’s our strongest staff ever. We welcome a second third grade class. We welcome new staff members Ms. Davis, Mr. Brazil & Ms. VanBeek. We welcome all the new faces in kindergarten and throughout 1-8 grades. We certainly miss last year’s 8th grade but expect terrific things from them. And now we watch as the MACS class of 2009 headed off to college at a record rate.

We have internet and computer programs developing so every home can be equipped to succeed. The Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program was brought back, allowing students to try and enjoy an extra serving of fruit or vegetables throughout the week. We are working harder to develop and teach curriculum aligned to the Pennsylvania’s common core, and it is our goal to make MACS a place everyone enjoys and learns.

I do have a special request this year that all parents attend at least one family night. The more the better!

Please feel free to call or write... 412.322.0585, 412.996.6505 or vsoumis@macsk8.org.

Thanks,
Vas Scoumis,
Chief Executive Officer
GO PITT!
MACS Celebrates 15 Years

Extraordinary
Wonderful
Rewarding
Dedicated
Challenging
Safe Place
Amazing

These are just a few reflections from faculty and staff that have been part of the MACS family from the beginning. There is much to celebrate and be thankful for as we reach this milestone in MACS history. We at MACS are proud to be a part of Dr. Betty and Rev. James Robinson’s vision to serve the needs of our children and youth from all over the Allegheny County community. It is easy to sit back and smile while thinking about the number of students that have come in and out of our doors these last fifteen years, excited to learn and eager to grow. We are privileged to provide for them exactly what they need to start on a path of success.

We are grateful to all who helped us celebrate fifteen years of MACS on August 24 at the Manchester Craftmen’s Guild. The Anniversary Celebration was a night to remember as we welcomed Kimberly Gill, Tony Dungy, and Mark Nordenberg as our special guests to commemorate this achievement with us. Thank you to our guests, sponsors, donors, and committee members for making this celebration possible and enjoyable.

Our vision for the next 15 years is unanimous: to expand MACS, come together as a community, and continue offering the best education possible to as many students as possible. We look forward to the growth planned for new students, a new playground, and a new building. The future holds endless possibilities for us, and with your support, we will be able to continue providing students with academic excellence and promising futures.

Thank you to all who have been and continue to be a part of this journey. Here’s to another 15 years of MACS!

Reflections

Tracy Carr:
I knew I made the right decision to come here and have been here for almost 14 years.

Frances Goshay-Whitley:
I love my job. I love seeing each kid grow. I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else but with my kindergarteners.

Stacy McCandless:
I feel like I am surrounded by family.

Vasilios Scoumis:
I am grateful.

Beth McCaskey:
Looking forward to 15 more years!

Patricia Davenport:
I am happy to be here. Wouldn’t trade it for all the money in the world!

MACS strives to integrate technology into the student learning experience. Computers and iPads are used in conjunction with lessons on a regular basis inside the classroom. The sixth, seventh, and eighth grade classes will be the first to participate in the One-to-One Computing program. Each student will be assigned a laptop to use for the duration of the school year, both in and out of the classroom.

By assigning each student their own laptop for the year, teachers may more fully take advantage of the communication and learning tools available in both their lessons and assignments. We know that students are adept at getting online and finding information; however, we also realize the importance of teaching them how to use these tools in a responsible way.

Entrusting a laptop to a student sends a strong message that we believe they are mature and capable and we expect a high level of achievement. Students are responsible to have their laptops charged and ready for use in class when they are needed.

The laptops were distributed to the appropriate students at the beginning of the year. Thank you to Mr. DiMucci and Ms. Stout for their time, talent, and support to make One-to-One Computing possible!

See more pictures at www.macsk8.org.
New Year, New Grade, New Floor

A fine new group of students have found their way to the third floor to begin their first year as middle schoolers. The transition from elementary to middle school is full of excitement, fear, and growth, and MACS is confident that our fifth grade class will succeed with the help of Mrs. Kruk. We interviewed a few fifth graders to see how the year has started off:

1. How do you like being on the 3rd floor?
   - Allia & Mia: The 3rd floor feels like the 2nd floor.
   - Damian: I feel like a 6th grader. Now we are treated like teenagers.

2. What is the biggest difference between elementary school and middle school?
   - Allia: When you are in middle school you are more grown up. In elementary school you usually have to sit in the back of the car and your mom tells you what to do.
   - Damian: The work gets harder in middle school.
   - Mia: In middle school you get to do stuff by yourself. We don’t always have to walk in a line or be watched.

3. What are you most looking forward to about the 5th grade?
   - Allia: More advanced work
   - Damian: ROSO & more homework
   - Mia: More of a challenge

MACS Welcomes New Faculty Members

We are pleased to welcome two new faculty members to the MACS family!

Jackie Davis is the new second grade teacher. She is from Coatesville, Pennsylvania and graduated in 2011 from California University of Pennsylvania where she received her undergraduate degree in Early Childhood Education. Ms. Davis has taught internationally in India and Haiti before beginning her teaching career in Pittsburgh. Before joining MACS, Ms. Davis taught second grade for two years at Urban Pathways Charter School here in Downtown Pittsburgh. She enjoys children’s literature, arts and crafts, and extreme sports.

“I’m really looking forward to working with so many of the talents and gifts possessed by MACS students and parents as I join their journeys to discovering and nurturing the greatness possessed by each of them. I’m also very excited to be working with such a dynamic and talented group of educators in this building as I begin to expand my experiences as an educator of our young children.”

Nehemiah Brazil is the new second grade teaching assistant. He is from Pittsburgh’s Northside and graduated from Perry Traditional Academy where he studied Secondary Math Education. Mr. Brazil is a basketball enthusiast, having played at CCAC for two years, Kutztown University for two years, and professionally in France for nine years. Now settled in Pittsburgh, Mr. Brazil keeps busy as a husband, father of four, and the basketball teams Program Leader at Urban Impact.

Change A Heart Volunteer

This year we are partnering with the Change A Heart Franciscan Volunteer Program and welcoming our first AmeriCorps volunteer at MACS. Kimberly VanBeek will be serving as our External Affairs Specialist for the 2013-2014 school year. Ms. VanBeek, is from Mayville, Wisconsin—the land of brats and cheese. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater in 2012 with a BBA and worked for her local Habitat for Humanity affiliate as the Development Associate prior to coming to Pittsburgh. Ms. Kim is one of 11 Change A Heart members this year who are serving local nonprofits and living in community together. We hope Ms. Kim is the first of many AmeriCorps volunteers at MACS!
Our Mission:
We foster the dreams of all children by providing an outstanding and dynamic education in a nurturing environment.

Our Vision:
We will continue to be an educational center of excellence and become a community pillar of support where students excel, families are engaged, teachers are empowered, and alumni flourish.

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