A WORD FROM MR. SCOUHIS:
MANLY EXCITING CHANGES AHEAD

For almost 20 years I would get into my car in Avalon and ride to Manchester and begin work. First, it was as a Gym and Science teacher for Manchester Youth Development Center and later, as a science teacher for MACS. Dr. Robinson asked me to be her assistant principal and finally as CEO. On August 20, 2014, I woke up in Avalon and went to work but it was at the Sarah Heinz House. My car and I were a little lost, confused, and somewhat heart broken.

Change is all around us. More kids, new teachers and now a second location. I need to thank the staff, parents, and kids for the willingness to adapt. Not quite, but almost seamlessly we made the changes that were necessary to move forward towards our goal. I also must thank our new partner the SHH for their willingness to share space. We now have a second powerful partner, along with MYDC, that shares a common passion for the education and development of children.

So where do we go from here? Our goal, along with MYDC is to build a free standing middle school directly behind the existing 1214 location. The new middle school will serve grades 5-8 with classrooms, a laboratory, offices, a dining hall, and a new main kitchen that will serve the entire facility. A bridge will link the two buildings and together MACS & MYDC will again serve pre-school thru 8th grade from early in the morning until after dinner. We will just have double the kids.

We need everyone to help as this process continues. Thank you for your support.

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GREETINGS! FROM MRS. MCCASKEY

Welcome back! We are excited to have everyone back and want to welcome our new students and families. It’s a new school year full of exciting changes. As you know, grades 6-8 are temporarily located at The Sarah Helnz House. The students and staff are making the adjustment successfully. The K-8 Reading/Language Arts classes have adopted a new writing series that was piloted in middle school last year, Write Source. We have new staff members, Mrs. Holyfield, 4th grade teacher and Mrs. Clark, 1st grade Teaching Assistant. We have also had some staff resume new positions - Ms. Bush is teaching kindergarten, Ms. Tabor and Mr. Boden are teaching 1st grade, Ms. Jackson is teaching 3rd grade, Mrs. Walker is teaching 4th grade and Mrs. Butler is teaching middle school enrichment classes. As always, we look forward to serving all M.A.C.S. students and families. Let’s work together to make 2014-2015 a successful year!

GRANT PROVIDES NEW TECHNOLOGY

Learning how to use technology is important to thriving in society long after attending M.A.C.S. Students at M.A.C.S. are getting a head start thanks to a grant that allowed for M.A.C.S. to lease 9 Sharp Aquos Boards. Each grade level at M.A.C.S. has a new Sharp Aquos Board to enhance the classroom experience.

Each board is equipped with large touch screens and pen software so that students can write on the screen. The screens allow for students to be more hands-on during lessons and projects. “Instead of using a projector, this is more interactive,” explains Librarian Ms. Stout. As she is giving a demonstration of the board, she discusses how much the new technology will improve the way students learn. “This board will be very useful for diagramming sentences and writing. Students can come up and show how they write by writing on the board. Also, with plants, you can ask where the stem is. Students can come and circle that part of the plant. It’s very visual and interactive.”

The new boards are leaps ahead of the technology that students already have access to. Computer Teacher Mr. Dimucci jokes that the 4 year old laptops in the library are “ancient” compared to the new boards. As the technology guru of the school he is always looking for new ways to keep M.A.C.S. connected to the world by making technology accessible to students and faculty. Recently, Dimucci and Stout helped to switch the wireless system to a Lightspeed Systems web filter. It is specially designed for education purposes by keeping students safe but keeping access to educational filters that are often cut out by other filters due to a key stroke. M.A.C.S. realizes that students need to acquire technological literacy early on and continues to search for new ways to keep their students engaged.

LADY MUSTANGS STAY STRONG

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During the bus ride to the game, she discusses the players’ performances at practice and stats of other schools with Co-Coach Mr. Brazil, who also has experience playing professional basketball in Europe. Davenport and Brazil constantly think of strategies to strengthen the team. “We practice for two hours every day that we don’t have a game. I wish that we could practice more because the teams we play against have been practicing for a long time.” Davenport hopes that the success of the Lady Mustangs will encourage more development of the Sports Programs at M.A.C.S.

“It’s important for the girls to be able to compete and have fun. It builds character and teaches them how to focus” says a focused Davenport as she stares out at the court, watching every move of the girls. Mr. Brazil also wants the girls to build valuable life skills. He instructs the girls throughout the game. “I know you’re tired, but keep pushing. This experience is good for you. Keep playing. Go ahead and shoot. You can’t make it if you don’t try” he shouts repeatedly. He high-fives or hugs every player that returns to the bench.

Besides the art of playing basketball, both coaches believe that the biggest benefit of playing is that the skills learned from basketball transfer into school. “Sports teach discipline and commitment too. If you’re disciplined here you’re going to be disciplined in school. If you want to compete you have to show commitment” explains Davenport, “I am serious when I always tell the girls we are student athletes not athlete students. Being a good student will take them far in life.”
WHAT ARE YOU EXCITED ABOUT THIS SCHOOL YEAR?

ADIA WILEY
1st Grade
“I am excited about learning new stuff like reading, math, and social studies.”

AMBER HOGAN
4th Grade
“I don’t know… I like to draw. I like art class.”

A’NYIA YOUNGER
3rd Grade
“ I am excited about learning something new and we have long lockers now.”

CARL TOMCO
5th Grade
“I am excited about reading because I love to read. I like science because we get to make experiments.”

CHRIS KIRKLAND
2nd Grade
“I might be playing football this year!”

CRYSTAL SMITH
5th Grade
“I am excited about being the oldest person in the school. I like learning about counting by tens.”

D&ANDRE BAILEY
4th Grade
“I am excited about having a football team, because I like football.”

ELIJAH WHITE
3rd Grade
I’m excited about my teacher because I think he’s going to be nice this year.”

BELLA GRAYSON
2nd Grade
“I am excited about prizes and math and vocabulary and dance practice.”

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF SARAH HEINZ HOUSE?

AMANI BENTON
8th Grade
“There’s more room here. The other school was too cramped. I had to push through the hallways.”

AMIRA JACKSON
7th Grade
“We have more freedom and we get to do more things.”

DANA MORRIS
8th Grade
“I like being free here.”

DIAMOND MCGRADY
6th Grade
“I like it because of the swimming pool, trails, the classrooms are nice, and the gym is bigger.”

NEHEMIAH BRAZIL III
7th Grade
“We have more freedom, more activities, and privileges.”

NYAH ANDERSON
7th Grade
“I like the pool and the game room. When we can’t play games we make up our own.”

DISIN MCMAHON-CARSE
6th Grade
“It’s nice. It’s bigger and there are more places to go and more things to do.”

TYLER WADE
8th Grade
“I like the gym the most. It’s big and we can do a lot more things.”
Families attended the first Family Night of the school year to meet their children's teachers and to learn more about the curriculum. Family Nights are held during the third Thursday of every month. However, September's Family Night, "Meet the Teacher Night," was held earlier to initiate a strong partnership between teachers and parents from the start. Mrs. Butler, an Enrichment and Support Teacher for grades 6-8 believes that the first Parent Night is critical to ensuring that MACS students succeed. "Having the first contact be positive is crucial. Also, getting to see the curriculum is important." Parents get the opportunity to see what their children are actually doing in the classroom.

The transparency between MACS faculty and parents develops trust from the parents. "We want parents to get to know us as people," explains Music Teacher, Mrs. Rodack. At MACS, parents become stewards in their children's education because faculty members work to eliminate the barriers that isolate parents from teachers. Mr. Brazil, Teaching Assistant for 2nd grade and father of three MACS students, thinks that transparency builds confidence in the teacher's abilities. "Family Nights help establish a two-way street. Parents need the teachers and teachers need the parents." Family Nights also serve as a reminder of the 30 hour volunteer commitment from parents.

Parents are more than eager to show support for their children's school by meeting the volunteer commitment and attending events. Ms. Banks, MYDC staff member and parent of a MACS student attended Family Night for the first time in order to support her child's teacher. "I came this year for the teachers. We love Miss Davis!" Another reason why parents pay it forward to MACS is because they have seen their children shine in the classroom. Shamar Gilmore, parent of 3rd grade student Naeer Barker, is excited about Naeer's academic success. "He did really well last year. I want him to continue to excel."

However, the most important reason of why parents support MACS and attend Family Night is because of a feeling of community. Student Teacher, Ms. S Jackson explains, "Family Nights are important because they make parents feel welcome-like welcoming them into your home." Christianna Hopper, parent of 5th grader Thailand, agrees. "I love the school so I came. She thrives here. It's more of a family than a school." "I like that!" adds Thailand's father. The family bond is so strong that it extends beyond current students. After receiving a hug from her former teacher, MACS alum, Diamond McLaughlin '13 explains why she is attending Family Night although she has graduated, "I came because my brother goes here and I miss my school."
THE MYDC AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

The beginning of the school year also marks the start of the Manchester Youth Development Center Afterschool Program. MYDC was founded in 1968 to provide more opportunities and recreation for local children in hopes of steering them away from gang activity and other vices of the streets. The afterschool program was established in 1975. Thirty-nine years later, both MACS students and youth from the community attend the afterschool program for food, sports, homework help, or a safe space.

“The hours of 3 to 6 are at-risk hours for youth. Parents are at work and students either go to a sitter or go home alone. Sometimes parents can’t afford sitters,” explains Program Director Melissa Strader. She elaborates further on potential issues that children who are home alone may experience like lack of help for classroom assignments, unreliable supervision, or hunger. The program runs from 3:15PM to 5:50 PM to act as a safety net.

A daily schedule at the after school program starts with supper. Homework help is provided afterwards. Then children participate in two periods of enrichment which ranges from dance, art, computer skills, and physical education. MYDC is a supplement to school.

“We have a high percentage of MACS kids” explains Strader, “Our program extends school days for kids that struggle.” Students can grow and learn in a monitored setting. They also form positive relationships with staff, fellow students, and youth from the community.

Despite having a well-organized program and attentive staff, Ms. Strader expects to experience a few obstacles. One noticeable challenge stems from the middle school’s recent move to Sarah Heinz House. As a result of the move, the MYDC Afterschool Program has a lot more younger children than usual. “We have more younger kids than we’ve ever had before. It will be interesting to see how it navigates.” However, Ms. Strader is not flustered and is working on a new project already. “I want to make profiles for every kid so that we have targeted interactions with them.” She turns back to her computer and keeps working.

For more information contact Ms. Strader by phone at 412.322.0585, ext. 136, by email at mstrader@mydc.org or visit www.afterschool.mydc.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 21 Joe Corbi sale ends
Transition to High School Fair, 6p

Oct 23 Academic Games

Oct 24 Mid. Sch. Halloween Dance, 7p-10p

Oct 28 End of 1st Report
Academic Games

Nov 4 Inservice - No School

Nov 6 PTO meeting, 6p

Nov 7 Joe Corbi Delivery, 12noon - 5p

Nov 11 Veterans Day - No School

Nov 13 MACS Board Meeting, 5:30p

Nov 20 Progress Reports
Math Night, 6p

Nov 24 Avon Sale Begins

Nov 27 Thanksgiving Day - No School

Nov 28 Thanksgiving Break - No School
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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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