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MANCHESTER ACADEMIC CHARTER SCHOOL
NEWSLETTER
NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM MACS.

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MACS PRESENTS:
THE REV & GRAM FAMILY FUND

We are pleased to announce a new initiative: The Rev & Gram Family Fund. This charitable fund will meet the emergency needs of our students in extraordinary situations. From time to time, there are special circumstances which detract students from attending school or focusing their full attention on learning. These personal situations are beyond the scope of the school and have often been responded to by individual teachers or staff. By pooling our resources, our MACS community can assist students and families during their time of need.

Because we believe a quality education is one of the best opportunities a child has to reach his or her potential, the Rev & Gram Family Fund will be used to bridge the gap between what students have and what students need, when encountering an emergency.

Families, teachers, and staff are asked to contribute to the Rev & Gram Family Fund and funds will be disbursed to students and their families in times of need to minimize the impact on the students and keep them in school. No gift is too small. Donations can be made to Rev & Gram Family Fund by visiting http://macsk8.org/donate/.

CHILDREN’S
MUSEUM PARTNERSHIP

Recently, Mr. Scoumis let the cat out of the bag about our partnership with the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh and our middle school moving to the Museum Lab in 2018.

Our partnership doesn't stop there; the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh has graciously invited all MACS families to participate in a free one-year family membership (valued at $135).

The foundation of this wonderful relationship continues to build, and it is off great, as was shown when MACS hosted the first Family Night of the school year at the Children’s Museum.

On the evening of October 20, 2016, the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh closed its doors to the public and hosted our students, staff, and their families for an unforgettable, interactive, and fun-filled night to remember.

MACS is excited about this continued partnership and looks forward to many, many more events and collaborative efforts alongside the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh.
**COLLEGE/ CAREER DRESS UP DAY**

Students were able to “dress up” as their favorite professional or wear their favorite college attire. The proceeds of the monetary donations went to Tickets for Kids, an organization that generously donates tickets for students to various events throughout our region. Students and staff contributed to this fundraiser and together collected a grand total of $193.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

This year our staff has been working hard to ensure that MACS students are being provided with the most engaging and innovative instructional approaches. This summer we had 30 representatives attend the Bucks Institute Project-Based Learning workshop. BIE offered teachers professional development on how to design, assess, and manage projects that engage and motivate students. Project Based Learning is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. MACS staff worked collaboratively, across grade levels, to formulate challenging real-world problems that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration for the 2016-2017 school year. Thank you to the Hienz Foundation for sponsoring the Bucks Institute Project Based Learning Workshop.

MACS staff also attended a Singapore Math curriculum training to equip teachers with new strategies and techniques to present our math curriculum. We feel this training has helped content delivery as well as student understanding.

In October, we had a representative from Google Classroom join our team. The workshop was an exciting opportunity in which teachers and support staff learned to connect our students on Google Classroom as well as track progress and student achievement. Google Docs, Gmail, Cloud tools, and virtual reality field trips are just a few of the amazing tools we are looking forward to utilizing this school year!

**OREO DAY**

Oreo Day was another success this year! Students from all across MACS participated in Oreo-themed activities on September 30th. We had a blast engineering with Oreos in first grade, shopping at an Oreo Store in second grade, and counting calories in third grade. Even Ms. Butler’s 7th and 8th graders joined in on the fun creating timelines of the history of Oreos. This special day really got the students excited about learning! Christopher Smith, 2nd, said, “This was the best day ever!” We were overwhelmed by the generosity of MACS families and had more than enough Oreos to go around! Thank you for your support! We are looking forward to some more cross-curricular fun in the future!

**THE WHITE HOUSE FRONTIERS CONFERENCE**

The conference was hosted by President Barak Obama, in Pittsburgh. What an exciting time to be a student at MACS and be invited to experience such a dynamic conference. Our students were able to join a conversation with Atul Gawande and other global innovators in medicine and health care to discuss future health breakthroughs.

When students have a genuine interest in science, it truly does show. This was displayed by two 7th grade students, Ryen Harrison and Thailand Hopper. Both young women were selected to attend this conference by Mr. Henderson, Mrs. Koloshinsky, and Dr. Sanchez a professor from the University of Pittsburgh who works with the middle school.

Ryen and Thailand were both honored and happily accepted the invitation to attend the conference. Thailand was specifically happy, because this was an opportunity of a lifetime, to share the same room as President Obama.

At the conference, there were tables, exhibits, booths, robots and virtual reality creations and so much more.

“I visited a bunch of different tables and saw different inventions. My favorite exhibit was seeing a robot made of cans,” said Ryen.

Ryen compared the set up to a science fair. Both 7th graders expressed how they would recommend this conference to their peers because it was interactive and a lot of fun.

“I got a chance to meet people that are actually doing SeaPerch,” said Thailand. SeaPerch is an innovative underwater robotics program. Our students are given the opportunity to participate in the SeaPerch after-school program at The Citizen Science Lab on Tuesday evenings.
**HIGH SCHOOL FAIR**
The high school fair has been occurring at MACS for many years. Because our students attend a K-8 choice school, the decision on where to go for high school may be a bit more difficult than one would think. Students in grades 6-8 and their families gathered to meet representatives from many area public, charter, and private schools to gain information about their options. This year, we were joined by Cardinal Wurl North Catholic, Pittsburgh Public, Propel Schools, Holy Family Academy, Ellis School, and Neighborhood Academy.

At the High School Fair, the families talked with students of these schools and the admissions officers to find out what school would provide them with the best fit. The high school fair helps to make the transition to high school easier, helps our students schedule their shadow days, and identifies initial steps to take in the application process for the school of their choice.

The high school fair also helps our MACS middle school teachers make and maintain relationships with other schools. It ensures tracking of our students and that appropriate preparation for their high school career is taking place.

**READING OUT OF SCHOOL OFTEN (R.O.S.O.)**
The ROSO program has been in operation for 5 years. Statistically, we have found that approximately 75 percent of our students are participating by reading the required number of minutes per week, doing so on the required number of days, and completing and returning the books and logs to his/her teacher.

Our experience shows reading improvement for most of those students who participated fully and that parent support is required to get those who do not participate to participate.

As the parent of a MACS student, you can support and monitor your child’s ROSO reading by:

- If necessary, reminding your child to read his/her ROSO book.
- Checking that your child completed the daily entry on the book log.
- Signing the book log each day that your child reads at home.
- Reminding your child to return his book and completed log to his teacher on the date due.

A change from the previous ROSO years is that your child’s participation in ROSO will NOT be counted in his/her GPA. Students will NO LONGER receive a weekly ROSO homework grade. In the past, their score was a weekly homework grade for reading/language arts classes.

Additionally, each week we will select a ROSO student of the week from each classroom. We will spotlight one ROSO student of the week on the MACS’ Facebook page, where the student will have his/her interview uploaded for viewing.

Finally, students who continue to participate in ROSO and qualify for the quarterly celebrations will be invited to attend a special field trip. We hope that your child participates fully in ROSO and, as such, reaps the benefits of the program!

**NEW STAFF & STAFF CHANGES**
At MACS, a quality education for every student is our focus. Without these new faces and familiar faces in their roles, we wouldn’t be able to kick off the 2016-2017 academic school year on the right foot. Welcome, new staff and congratulations to those in a new position.

**THANK YOU**
Since the school year began, we have had a number of individuals and organizations offer time, support, donations, or contributions to the continued success of MACS. Thank you for all that you do!
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.