



Newsletter

<https://sites.google.com/a/northampton-k12.us/nps/our-schools/jackson-street-school>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Northampton-Public-Schools-Massachusetts/179921372117715>

<https://www.facebook.com/jacksonstreetpto> <http://www.jspspto.org/>

You may also connect with us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/NPSDistrict>

Ms. Alessi's website: <https://sites.google.com/northampton-k12.us/mindfulnessatjss>

JSS Office 587-1510

Volume 24 No. 7

October 11, 2019

If you wish to have a copy of this letter written in Spanish, French or Arabic, please contact the school department at 587-1315. Si le gustaria esta carta en Espanol, es posible. Llama 413-587-1315. Si vous voulez une copie de cette lettre en Français, veuillez contacter le Département de l'École 587-1315. إذا رغبت أن يكتب لك هذه الرسالة بلغة عربية، يرجى الاتصال بالمدارس في 587-1315.

MESSAGE FROM MS. AGNA

JSS COUNCIL ELECTION

Congratulations to Ms. Rebecca Ossorio on her election to the JSS Council – and thanks to her for stepping up to serve on the council!

ASSEMBLY DATES

Here are the assembly dates for the rest of the school here – I've put them into the MARK YOUR CALENDAR section too!

Nov. 4 – 10:30AM – Special service dog presentation – with a guest reader and owner!

Dec. 20 – 1:30PM Winter Solstice Celebration

Jan. 16 – 2:15PM Honoring MLK, Jr.

Feb. 7 – 9:10AM TBA

Mar. 6 – 9:50AM TBA

Apr. -3 – 10:30AM JFK Jazz Band performance

May 28– 2:00PM KDG - JSS Grads (tentative date)

June 12 – 9:15AM Ms. Agna reads "A Fine Fine School"

DISTRICT ATTENDANCE POLICY

As I said in Wednesday robo call, the Attendance Policy we sent home in backpacks last Friday was the wrong one – the following is the current one, pages 10-11 of the Northampton Elementary Schools Handbook:

DAILY ATTENDANCE, CALENDAR, and CANCELLATIONS

Regular attendance is important to a student's academic success and establishing positive social relationships. A student who is not in school by 11:00 AM will be considered absent and needs to bring a written excuse to her/his teacher upon returning to school. The note should list the days missed, the reason for the absence and must be signed by the parent or guardian. The following is our daily schedule for this year:

Hours for students: 8:50 AM to 3:00 PM.

Dismissal on Half Days: 12:20 PM.

Pre-school: 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM or 12:30 PM to 2:50 PM Monday through Thursday

If a student is unable to attend school, parent/guardians are asked to telephone the school between 8:45 and 9:45 A.M. This call should be made for the safety of the student. The school will call the home of any student whose parent/guardian has not notified the school. The school notifies the Attendance Officer when a student is repeatedly absent. The school may file a criminal complaint against a parent whose child is absent for more than seven (7) full days or fourteen (14) half-days in a six month period. See M.G.L. c. 76, sect. 2. The court can take a variety of actions against a parent including the imposition of a fine. Further, under the law known as Child Requiring Assistance law, the school has a school-wide attendance program, and can bring an action under that statute for the court's involvement in getting a child to attend school on a regular, consistent basis.

A. Tardiness

A student is considered tardy if he/she arrives at school after 8:50 AM. A student who is tardy must report to the office to make

certain that his/her name will not be placed on the absentee sheet, thus preventing a needless call home. A note explaining the reason for the tardiness should be sent with the student the next day. Students who arrive late because of a late bus will not be marked tardy, but must report to the office. When there is a pattern of tardiness, parent/guardians will be notified and the school attendance officer is notified also. A pattern of tardiness can be an indicator of parent/guardian neglect and may be reported to the Department of Social Services.

FOR GUIDELINES ON DETERMINING WHEN A CHILD SHOULD REMAIN AT HOME DUE TO ILLNESS, SEE HEALTH AND SAFETY SECTION.

ATTENDANCE/TARDY LETTERS

All Northampton Schools, including JSS, are sending home letters to families, alerting them to potentially excessive absences and tardies. These letters will be sent periodically throughout the year. If you have questions/concerns, please feel free to contact me.

SAFETY NEWS

As reminder from our first newsletter:

DOGS ON THE PLAYGROUND

All schools have a “no dogs on the playground” policy – for the safety and comfort of all. If you do need to bring your dog to school for any reason, please either keep it in your car or stand with it at the far end of the parking lot, letting your child(ren) know that you’ll be there for pick-up. Thank you so much for your understanding and cooperation.

MCAS RESULTS

Our current 4th and 5th grade caregivers, if your children were at JSS last year, should receive your child’s MCAS (state test) results in a mailing from our school this week. The tests were given last spring. Since this is my final year and final MCAS mailing, I’ve decided to share the letter that I send with the results – in English and in Spanish. Here it is:

October 2019

Dear JSS Families of Students in 4th and 5th grades,

Please find enclosed the MCAS results for the spring 2019 test period for your child. He/she/they took these as 3rd and 4th graders. There is information included that, hopefully, answers some/all of your questions about how to interpret the results. I want to tell you the following important things:

- 1. These tests are a “snap shot” of your child – his/her/their test-taking abilities, mainly, as well as a reflection of the teaching by the educators at JSS. The teachers and I will review the results together. We are given “item analyses” – the questions that students did well on and the ones that they may have struggled with. This will help us understand how we can better teach our students at JSS.*
- 2. This is just ONE test. Fortunately, in our district, we believe in “multiple measures” – that is, we cannot conclude anything about our students based on just one test. We look at their progress and participation in the classroom, the teachers’ assessments, as well as information that you provide us. We believe strongly in looking at the “whole child” – academically, socially and emotionally – to truly assess learning.*
- 3. Over the years, I have recommended that families decide whether or not they want to share these results with their children. You know your child best. If you think he/she/they will find these interesting and/or helpful, you might want to let them see them. However, because of all the cautions I wrote above in #’s 1 and 2, I think it is fine not to show them.*
- 4. If you do decide to show them, please read the following to him/her/them, from me:*

Dear JSS Student,

I know it was a while ago that you took the MCAS tests – it always takes a long time for the Massachusetts Dept. of Education to send the results to us. You’re even in a different grade from when you took them! It is so important to me that you know that MCAS is NOT the only way we think about who you are or how you learn or even how much you know. These tests were just a “snap shot” from a few days last spring – they don’t necessarily even give the whole picture of what you knew then.

Some people don’t like to take tests – some people get nervous, some people have a hard time concentrating and working on their own, in silence. It’s not how we usually do things at JSS – students and teachers work together, talking (sometimes), moving around the room, looking information up on computers and in books, and checking in with teachers. That’s not how the MCAS works so we don’t take these results as the ONLY way we judge how well we’re teaching or how well you’re learning.

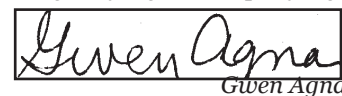
If you did well on MCAS, please feel proud of your effort – I know that your teachers feel proud too. If you didn’t do as well as you hoped, please do NOT get discouraged or think that you are not a good student. Here’s a “Little Ms. Agna Story” - I didn’t do so well on these kinds of tests. Luckily my teachers and my family told me not to worry and to keep trying – to persevere, as we say, in the Growth Mindset

work we do! And I did. So, I want you to do this – and remember that we know that you are a FINE FINE student in our FINE FINE School, doing such FINE FINE things for others and yourself by helping your families, your pets, your neighbors, your teachers, and more. I am so very proud to be your principal – the best job I could ever have.

Love, Ms. Agna

Have a safe and happy 3-day weekend – see you on Tuesday, October 15.

Yours gratefully and respectfully,



Gwen Agna

JSS PRINCIPAL POSTING

The job posting for the JSS Principal is on the website, “SchoolSpring” – at the following link:

https://www.schoolspring.com/job.cfm?jid=3183383&fbclid=IwAR3ctFKNv2AUkYzCLRnc86M5jQFb-b_GjJJ62jM6Mw-zeelKou1px3Kn6fVM

Please feel free to share.

JSS Art Corner

Welcome to the first edition of the JSS Art Corner. My name Ms. Lilly, and I have been the art teacher at JSS for eight years. I plan to use this space in the monthly News Letter to give an Arts update for one grade a month. This month I want to highlight the fifth graders. During our first few several weeks of school the fifth graders learned about Street Art, and Graffiti lettering and painting. They created their own Font style on dark paper, and painted using a combination of white tempera and colored chalks. This textural and painterly effect allowed the fifth graders to explore mixing colored chalk by reducing the amount of dust. The final projects are hanging in our hallways for families to see. Our second project we are working on is creating three-dimensional shapes and or letters by using a ruler to connect the shapes/letters to one Vanishing Point. The next step to this lesson is to create a Value Scale of color, or gradation of colors to give the 3-D shapes shading enhancing the shapes use of perspective.

HALF DAYS & CONFERENCES!

October 21-25 is a week of half days at the elementary schools. Hopefully you’ve signed up for a conference with your child’s teacher – if not, please contact them or the office on how to do this.

Bag lunches are available for students by request in advance. The menu has changed, and bag lunches will now include: Sunbutter & Jelly, Baby Carrots, Apple & Milk.

Sign-ups for bag lunches were available in classrooms during Open House.

If you were not able to sign up during open house, you may sign up by calling the office at 587-1510, or emailing: dejohanson@northampton-k12.us. Please be sure to include the student’s name and classroom.

GARDEN NEWS

Students have been busy in the garden this fall exploring, working, and harvesting with their classes and with garden educator Hope Guardenier from School Sprouts. Each class visits the garden with Hope three times in the fall. The greenhouse will allow us to extend our growing season well into the fall this year. Students have also gone to the garden with their teachers to read, write, observe caterpillars, draw sunflowers and so much more!

JSS HARVEST WEEK is October 28th- November 1st!

Our school will celebrate Harvest Week this year with cooking projects in classes, read alouds, garden visits, and a Harvest Festival and Garden Work Party on Wednesday afternoon.

Harvest Festival and Garden Work Day, Wednesday, October 30, 3:00-5:00 p.m. We will get the garden ready for winter from 3:00 to 5:00 while enjoying harvest foods and doing some harvest games and activities in the garden. Families are invited to make or bring harvest snacks or foods such as muffins, veggies and dip, fruit, cider, popcorn etc. Watch out for more info and sign-ups for the harvest festival coming soon!

Thank you summer volunteers! Our summer volunteers took good care of our garden--they watered, weeded and more! This fall students have harvested carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuce, potatoes, squash, and other healthy foods.

PTO NEWS

Coffee Hour

The next Caregivers Coffee Hour will take place next Wednesday, October 16th from 9-10am in the Family Center. All caregivers and younger sibling are welcome to join. Join other caregivers for coffee and snacks. Ms. Agna usually joins the conversation.

Can’t make it next week? Coffee Hour occurs on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month.

PTO Meeting

The October PTO meeting has been rescheduled and will take place next Wednesday, October 16th from 6:30-8:00pm in the JSS library. All Caregivers are welcome. Snacks & Childcare will be provided.

One Last Call for Class Representatives!

Interested in being a class representative? This is an easy, fun way to get to know the other families and the teacher in your child's class better. Class representatives maintain a class e-mail list and serve as a liaison between the teacher and the families to make sure everyone is aware of classroom needs and special events. Thank you to all who have volunteered so far!

We're still in need of representatives for the following classes: Ms. Martinez, Ms. Cameron, Ms. Flinker, Mr. Kimani & Mr. Slattery.

The time commitment is small, and you can send messages from where ever is most convenient for you! If you're interested in being a class rep, please contact Beth Maurer, Volunteer Coordinator, at jssvolunteers@gmail.com.

INTERESTING TALK!

Nikole Hannah-Jones

The Problem We All Live With: The Achievement Gap

Wednesday, October 23, 6:00pm

Springfield Symphony Hall

Nikole Hannah-Jones is an award-winning investigative reporter covering racial injustice for The New York Times Magazine. A MacArthur "Genius" Award recipient, she investigates the way racial segregation in housing and schools is maintained through official action and policy. Nikole has written extensively about school resegregation across the country and the utter disarray of hundreds of school desegregation orders. She has also chronicled the decades-long failure of the federal government to enforce the landmark 1968 Fair Housing Act and wrote one of the most widely read analyses of the racial implications of the controversial Fisher v. University of Texas affirmative action Supreme Court case.

IMPORTANT MEETING!

Derechos Básicos en la Educación Especial – en español / Basic Rights in Special Education October 22 at JFK starting at 6:30 p.m.

Audubon News

Join Now & Save 50%

New one-year individual and family memberships are just \$32! But hurry, this offer ends November 30. Call 413-584-3009.

Halloween Bats

October 26, 2019 (Saturday) 10:00am - 12:00pm

Location: Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton MA

Audience: Adult/Child (suitable for children 5 - 12 years)

Members: Adult \$7.00, Child \$7.00

Nonmembers: Adult \$10.00, Child \$10.00

When you think of Halloween, do you think of bats? In Massachusetts we have seven different species. Learn how to identify the various types of bats, how they "see" in the dark, what they eat, and the important roles they play in the ecosystem. Participate in a bat scavenger hunt and make a bat craft.

Registration is required.

Register online or call 413-584-3009 to register by phone.

For more information, contact:

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary
127 Combs Road
Easthampton, MA 01027
arcadia@massaudubon.org

Spiders are AMAZING

October 26, 2019 (Saturday) 10:00am - 12:00pm

Location: Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton MA

Audience: Family (suitable for children 4 - 12 years)

Members: Adult \$6.00, Child \$6.00

Nonmembers: Adult \$8.00, Child \$8.00

Spiders are a diverse group of arachnids displaying beautiful patterns and colors as well as unique survival strategies. While all spiders have toxins, most of these defensive compounds have little effect on people. Come gain an appreciation for these eight-legged neighbors of ours. We will enjoy some spider games, search for different spiders outdoors, and make a spider craft for Halloween.

Registration is required.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR – We're always adding new dates so keep checking. PLEASE check the Northampton Public Schools website for district calendar updates.

Parents Hour in the Family Center the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, from 9-10AM, beginning Wed. Sept. 4. The JSS PTO meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month.

The Walking School Bus (Fall & Spring) – Ms. Agna alternates on Fridays around 8:10AM between the bike path (starting behind Stop and Shop) and Hampshire Heights, starting at the bottom of the hill near the CVS plaza.

Mon. Oct. 14 NO SCHOOL – Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day Holiday

Tues. Oct. 15 -Fri. Oct. 18 NATURE'S CLASSROOM for 5th graders – details to follow...
Coffee Hour in the Family Center 9-10AM

Wed. Oct. 24 Coffee Hour in the Family Center 9-10AM

Mon. Oct. 21-Fri. Oct. 25 Family/Teacher Conferences – half-days in the elementary schools (Evening conferences on Oct. 22 & 24). Dismissal every day at 12:20PM

October 28-Nov. 1st HARVEST WEEK at JSS! See article above!

Mon. Nov. 4 10:30AM All-school assembly: Special service dog presentation – with a guest reader and owner!

Tues. Nov. 5 Election Day – NO SCHOOL/Faculty & Staff Professional Development Day
PTO ELECTION DAY BAKE SALE!

Mon. Nov. 11 NO SCHOOL – Veterans Day (observed) Holiday

Tues. Nov. 26 HOLA ends

Wed. Nov. 27 Thanksgiving Break begins at 12:20PM

Thurs. & Fri. Nov. 28 & 29 NO SCHOOL

Wed. Dec. 4 Staff/Faculty Work (Half) Day dismissal at 12:20PM

Fri. Dec. 13 Grades 1-5 Progress Report Cards go home in backpacks/folders

Fri. Dec. 20 – 1:30PM All- school Assembly: Winter Solstice Celebration

Mon. Dec. 23 -Wed. Jan. 2 (first day back) NO SCHOOL – December Holiday Break

Thurs. Jan. 16 –2:15PM All-school Assembly: Honoring MLK, Jr.

Fri. Jan. 17 NO SCHOOL for students – Staff/Faculty Work Day

Mon. Jan. 20 NO SCHOOL – MLK, Jr. Day

Fri. Jan. 31 KDG Progress Report Cards go home

Fri. Feb. 7 9:10AM All-school assembly - TBA

Mon. Feb. 17-Fri. Feb. 21 NO SCHOOL – WINTER RECESS

Thurs. Mar. 6 9:50AM - TBA

Fri. Mar. 13 Staff/Faculty Work (1/2) Day – dismissal at 12:20PM

Fri. Mar. 20 Grade 1-5 Progress Report Cards go home

Fri. Apr. -3 10:30AM All-school Assembly: JFK Jazz Band performance

Mon. Apr. 20-Fri. Apr. 24 – NO SCHOOL – SPRING RECESS

Fri. May 15 Staff/Faculty Work (1/2) Day – dismissal at 12:20PM

Mon. May 25 NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day

Thurs. May 28 2:00PM KDG students host our JSS Grads (tentative date)

Fri. June 12 180th Day – potential last day of school unless there are no snow days to make up
9:15AM All-school Assembly: Ms. Agna reads “A Fine Fine School”

ALL GRADES PROGRESS REPORT CARDS GO HOME ON THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL