

# THE LP BULLETIN

NOTES, QUOTES, AND LOST COATS

The LP Bulletin #04  
September 8th, 2016

## UPCOMING LP EVENTS

Friday, September 9th - Kindergarten BBQ - 5:30 pm  
Saturday, September 17th - Cradles to Crayons - 1:30 pm  
**Curriculum Review and Potluck Supper Dates - Please See Below**

## HEADLINES

### The Parent Handbook

A recent conversation with an LP parent highlighted for me how essential The Parent Handbook is for the operation of our community. The parent homed in on two salient characteristics: The Parent Handbook is chock-a-block full of practical information about the school and the year ahead; and second, despite its excessive, sometimes meandering length, it vividly conveys the school's core values, its guiding principles and its idiosyncratic nature.

All parents, by now, should have received the Handbook as an email attachment. It is also posted on our website. That's a first step. What is the second? Here is my expectation: If you are new to our community, you really need to read this document, cover to cover. (Sorry!) If you are relatively new to the school, you should probably review it carefully for the first several years of your LP journey. And if you are a long-term veteran and more or less 'know the ropes,' there are always annual changes to The Parent Handbook that you need to pay attention to.

Recognizing, then, that we are communicating with parents at different points in their LP journey, here is what we are going to do to further facilitate the conveyance of the crucial information contained in the Handbook:

1. All new LP parents will receive a hard copy of the Parent Handbook (sent home via back-pack mail today.) We understand that it is easier for many of us to read long documents, at least initially, in hard copy rather than on a computer screen--and that for further nightly review and devotional contemplation, a hard copy may be more suitable for the bedside table. (You think I'm kidding!)
2. Annually, we will send all parents, including new parents, the

**CURRENT 'HABIT OF THE HEAD, THE HEART, AND THE HAND'**

Mindfulness

**WORD OF THE WEEK**

Artifact  
Prompt



All School Meeting was very exciting this week! We had shares from Kindergarten, First, Second, and Third grades.



electronic version of the Handbook with information that highlights key changes from the year before. This highlighting of changes is not intended to discourage another annual review of the entire Handbook, but rather to facilitate quick identification of what will be different.

3. The new edition of The Parent Handbook will be posted on our website, and the version of the Handbook highlighting major changes this year will be posted on the Parent Portal. (That's still to happen for this year; we'll let you know when it is done).
4. Conservation of natural resources, a desire to reduce our carbon footprint, and to contain costs to the school are the three major reasons we moved from routinely producing hard copies of the Handbook to annually producing the electronic version. Overall, moving toward e-communication is the correct direction for us, but we recognize that it may be an unhappy compromise for some. Therefore, for any parent who wishes to read the Handbook in hard copy, we will, with an attendant parental pledge to do that reading, provide a hard copy on request.

Making the Handbook and its annual editions more readily accessible will, we believe, lead to increased knowledge among LP community members--and tranquility among nations. Both are worthy goals.

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## **Handbook Highlights**

Another occasional feature of this weekly publication, along with its regular explanations (e.g., about Curriculum Reviews--see below), Calendar Reminders and Announcements, is that it often references the Handbook. This year, in addition to those occasional references, we will also, every now and then, 'call out' particularly time relevant sections of the Handbook for your attention.

To wit, for new parents who want a 'Roadmap' for the year, you should review the section entitled "The School Year"(c. page 12) which conveniently categorizes school events in terms of parental participation as 'Top Priority,' 'Lesser Priority,' and 'Optional.' You can fill in your calendars accordingly.

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## **Curriculum Review Mornings**

These are about to begin. The schedule is:

Monday, September 12th - 7:50 am - Grade 4  
Tuesday, September 13th - 7:50 am - Grade 5  
Wednesday, September 14th - 7:50 am - Grade 6  
Thursday, September 15th - 7:50 am - Grade 3  
Friday, September 16th - 7:50 am - Grade 2  
Monday, September 19th - 7:50 am - Kindergarten  
Tuesday, September 20th - 7:50 am - Grade 1

Curriculum mornings are an opportunity for parents to briefly see the start of the school day, and then to hear about the curriculum from your child's teachers. Here is how they work:

We will allow the first great horde of children gathered in the lobby to go upstairs as usual at 7:45. Parents of children whose class is having the Curriculum Morning, however, should wait in the lobby until 7:50 so that the children have a chance to unpack and put their items away free of a crowded classroom.

At 7:50, parents who are here for the Curriculum Morning will be invited to go up to the classroom. The compactness of our classrooms will become quickly evident to you when you arrive, so after a tour of your child's desk (if you are invited to see) and a tour of the room (if your child wishes), we encourage you to find

a spot on the periphery and briefly watch the start of a day--albeit an unusual one for the children because of all the visitors.

At 8:05, promptly, parents should head downstairs to the ballroom for the presentations, which will be over, at the latest, by 9:00.

Here is a cartoon from a recent New Yorker magazine which humorously portrays the tradition of curriculum presentations now unfolding in classrooms across the land. It is not, of course, at all descriptive of the curriculum here--either past or present.



The New Yorker Magazine - September 5th, 2016

## **Quote of the Week**

'Hold a book in your hand and you're a pilgrim at the gates of a new city.'

A Hebrew saying quoted in Anne Michaels' novel Fugitive Pieces (Vintage, 1998; p 156)

## **Habit of the Head, Heart and Hand: Mindfulness**

We continue to discuss this topic with our children. Here is a definition and some links provide by Ms. Cesarz:

Mindfulness:

1. The quality or state of being conscious or aware of something; "Their mindfulness of The LP's values and traditions allowed them to better understand the teacher's decision."
2. A mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique.

And some links:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sarah-rudell-beach-/8-ways-to-teach-mindfulness-to-kids\\_b\\_5611721.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sarah-rudell-beach-/8-ways-to-teach-mindfulness-to-kids_b_5611721.html)

<https://pedleymiths.wordpress.com/2013/03/30/exam-stress-mindfulness-and-the-711/>

The "7/11" breathing technique referred to in last week's LPB --and which Mr. Robinson incorporated recently in his PE lessons--is described in this link, along with some general background on 'mindfulness.'

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## **The Parent Portal (II)**

Last week there was a brief announcement about updates to our website, including an important new feature--the password protected Parent Portal. The Portal is password protected for several important reasons, and I implore you to maintain that protection. The portal is intended only for current LP parents, and no one else--not for your child, not for your best friend, not for someone interested in the school. (There is quite a bit of information about the school elsewhere on the website; no one but a current parent needs access to the portal.) It is vitally important that tight control be maintained because there are many people who do not like personal information, including identifiable pictures of their children, on the Internet.

If you believe the password has been compromised, you must so inform us instantly. The password is easy to change and we will do so as many times as necessary to protect confidentiality. Our first line of defense, however, is careful usage, and that depends on each of us. And I caution about the curiosity and quick eyes of older children: discovering passwords becomes for some of them a game, and you must be cautious around them. (Teachers have more than once learned that lesson here!)

There is great convenience to us in having a Parent Portal (most schools have them) and we want to enjoy that convenience while avoiding the pitfalls.

Here's an example of the convenience: Never has The Blue Book been in the hands of parents in the first week of school--as it was last week. And never could we update it as efficiently and effectively as we can now. We've already been able to change some vital parent contact information in the Blue Book, keeping it absolutely current. Also, this week, we've added in the traditional class picture (not available last week) so you can begin to learn the names and faces of your child's classmates.

I hope you and we make good use of this new feature of our website going forward, and I hope we are able to be mindful of its vulnerabilities and the obligations each of us has when we use its current password. Please keep it 'safe.' (And if you've misplaced or forgotten it, email Claire.)

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## **Our Class Coordinators**

This distinguished group, whose names were in last week's LPB and whose names are also in The Blue Book, met this week as a group for the first time. There was much talk about their general role, and you can be expecting an email from each of them shortly describing how you can help make this a great year for your child's class.

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## **Upcoming Events**

The Fall is a busy time at LP. Here, is a quick note on some of our upcoming events for those of you new to the school:

**Cradles to Crayons** volunteer opportunity is on Saturday, September 17th from 1:30-3:30. Many LP children and families did this last fall and had a wonderful time together packing up clothing and toys for lower income families. Sign up with Maggie at [mseitz@learningproject.org](mailto:mseitz@learningproject.org).

**Field Day** is on Friday, September 23rd from c. 10am to 1:30ish. The whole school, weather permitting, will be playing games together on the Teddy Ebersol fields along the Esplanade, across from the Charles River Park high rise apartments. Limited Parking by the (long closed) MDC swimming pool is available. Parents are welcome to come watch at their convenience. More details, later.

**Fall Adventure Trip:** A canoe adventure with Mr. Robinson, for grades 4, 5, and 6 is on Saturday, October 1st, from 9:00-2:00. Sign-ups are due to Ms. Mellen by September 16th.

**The Annual Book Fair** is Saturday, October 15th, 11:00 to 3:00. This is an 'all hands on deck' fun and

fundraising event and the parent sign-up for work slots will be available shortly. You will be hearing more about this event from the Co-Chairs, Gina Powers (mom of Olivia in fifth) and Sarah Rabasco (mom of Lexi in fifth).

Potluck Supper is an evening for parents (without children) to socialize and eat great food prepared by fellow parents. The schedule is as follows:

Thursday, September 29th - 6:30 - 8:30 pm - 2nd and 3rd Grade Potluck  
Thursday, October 6th - 6:30 - 8:30 pm - 4th and 5th Grade Potluck  
Thursday, October 20th - 6:30 - 8:30 pm - 6th Grade Potluck  
Thursday, October 27th - 6:30 - 8:30 pm - Kindergarten and 1st Grade Potluck

## **Word of the Week**

Artifact: An object made by a human being, typically an item of cultural or historical interest: "gold and silver artifacts"

synonyms: relic, article, handiwork.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Admissions Volunteers Needed**

Thank you to those of you who have signed up for our various admissions events this fall! We are looking for a few more volunteers, particularly for the Beacon Hill HillFest Block Party that is taking place on Sunday, 9/18 from 12- 4. We need two volunteers to stand at our table, pass out brochures, and chat with families about the LP. Contact Laura if you have any questions, and don't be shy! If you are brand new to the school, these events are a great way to meet people. Click here to volunteer for this or any other admissions event: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30eod4aaca828a6fb6-admissions>

## **ARTISTS OF THE WEEK**

Coming soon!

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