



*Back to School Night
Middle School Scholars
Mission Grammar School
Thursday September 24, 2009*

Introductions from the Middle School Team:

Mr. Hayle, Lead Teacher, 8th Grade Homeroom Teacher
Middle School Math and Science

Hello families and scholars of Mission Grammar school! It's with great pleasure that I take this time to welcome you to open School Night! Thank you for taking the time to both meet with me and read through this packet with your scholar. My name is Albert Hayle and this is my first year teaching at Mission Grammar School. I am honored to have the opportunity to work with you and your scholar this coming school year. I am the 8th grade homeroom teacher and I also teach math and science to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade scholars. As the 8th grade homeroom teacher, I look forward to working with the scholars and supporting them in their intellectual, social and emotional growth as they prepare for their transition to high school. I am blessed to have your child in my classroom and I thank you in advance for all your cooperation and support for this coming school year. I hope you enjoy open school night, I hope we will communicate regularly to ensure your child's progress, and I hope this school year brings you and your family many blessings as we embark on this educational journey together!!

I am excited and also looking forward to developing and coaching the basketball team at Mission Grammar. It will be the inaugural season for the team; family support will be essential to our success. Please take the time to remind your child everyday how proud of them you are and how you value and appreciate all their effort towards achieving their educational goals!! I am so excited about this upcoming school year. I look forward to working with you!

Email: ahayle@missiongrammar.org

Be Humble in your Passion,

Albert N. Hayle
Lead Teacher Middle School
6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Math/Science

“Life is a beautiful struggle, people search through the rubble for a suitable hustle, some people using their noodle, some people using their muscle, some people put it all together, make it fit like a puzzle.”

-Talib Kweli (Hip-Hop Musician)

Ms. Rosien, 7th Grade Homeroom Teacher
Middle School Social Studies and Literacy

Dear Scholars and Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to a new year at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Mission Grammar School! Thank you for taking the time to meet us this evening as well as for taking the time to read through this information packet with your scholar. My name is Tabitha Rosien and I am new to Mission Grammar this year. I will be teaching Social Studies for 6th, 7th and 8th grade as well as literacy for 7th and 8th grade and religion for 7th grade scholars. I have received a Bachelor's degree from Boston College and also completed a Master of Science in Elementary Education from Northwestern University. I have spent the past three years teaching at a Catholic grammar school on the west side of Chicago, Illinois and am thrilled to be returning to the New England area to work with the bright scholars at Mission Grammar.

Reading, Writing, History and Religion each help us to develop a deeper understanding of ourselves, the world around us, and our individual place and role within that world. Across all academic areas we will be exploring essential questions and investigating those questions through daily reading, writing, reflection and discussion. My hope is that through these practices scholars will have the opportunity to build upon their literacy background and master ways in which they can effectively express their opinions, experiences, hopes and dreams.

My expectation for every scholar is that he/she sets personal goals throughout the year and actively works to meet and exceed those goals. Furthermore, I expect students to take their own learning and the learning of the class community seriously by demonstrating respect for themselves, their peers, the classroom, and the learning process. This respect is demonstrated by a dedication to reading, writing, homework, participation and through positive interactions in classroom discussions and activities. I expect scholars to put forth their best effort in all they do, and they can expect the same from me in return.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns throughout the school year please feel free to contact me by setting up an appointment, leaving a message at the school, or sending me an email (trosien@missiongrammar.org) or a note with your scholar. I am truly excited to be working with you this year and thank you in advance for your support and assistance. I look forward to meeting each of you.

Respectfully,

Ms. Rosien

email: trosien@missiongrammar.org

Ms. Losito, 6th Grade Homeroom Teacher
Middle School Literacy

Hello families and loved ones of Mission Grammar scholars,

If we have not formally met yet, I want to take the time to introduce myself to you. First of all, my name is Sara Losito and I am the sixth grade homeroom teacher and language arts teacher for the middle school. I am teaching through the Urban Catholic Teacher Corps in conjunction with Boston College. This is a program which collaborates with Catholic schools in the Boston area while teachers make a two-year commitment to teach and work on their Master's degree from Boston College.

I have a bachelor's degree from The University of Dayton in Middle Childhood Education and have taught seventh grade in the Dayton, Ohio area. This is my second year in the Boston area, as well as at Mission Grammar School. I am so excited to continue to teach your children at Mission Grammar!

My goals for the year are to challenge your children academically, spiritually, and socially in order to best prepare them for middle school, high school, and society. I want to push them to always give their best, as well help them to understand the importance of giving respect to themselves, others, and their property. I hope by the end of this year these middle school scholars will have been challenged while learning and maturing into even more cooperative, assertive, respectful, responsible, empathetic, and self-controlled students and citizens in their homes and communities. I look forward to working with you throughout the school year to ensure the best possible year for your child in his/her academic journey! Please contact me throughout the year so that we can discuss your child's progress and development.

My Best,
 Ms. Sara Losito
 6th Grade Homeroom Teacher
 slosito@missiongrammar.org

Middle School Daily Schedule
2009-2010

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:10-8:30	Arrival, CPR	Arrival, CPR	Arrival, CPR	Arrival, CPR	Middle school Meeting
8:30-9:20	Literacy 6 th Social studies 7 th Math 8 th	Literacy 6 th Social studies 7 th Math 8 th	Literacy 6 th Social studies 7 th Math 8 th	Literacy 6 th Social studies 7 th Math 8 th	Literacy 6 th Social studies 7 th Math 8 th
9:20-10:10	Literacy 6 th Math 7 th Social Studies 8 th	Literacy 6 th Math 7 th Social Studies 8 th	Literacy 6 th Math 7 th Social Studies 8 th	Literacy 6 th Math 7 th Social Studies 8 th	Literacy 6 th Math 7 th Social Studies 8 th
10:10-11:40	Math/Science 6 th Literacy 7 th /8 th	Math/Science 6 th Literacy 7 th /8 th	Math/Science 6 th Literacy 7 th /8 th	Math/Science 6 th Literacy 7 th /8 th	Math/Science 6 th Literacy 7 th /8 th
11:40-12:15	Religion 6 th Religion 7 th Religion 8 th	Religion 6 th Religion 7 th Religion 8 th	Religion 6 th Religion 7 th Religion 8 th	Religion 6 th Religion 7 th Religion 8 th	Religion 6 th Religion 7 th Religion 8 th
12:15-1:00	Recess/Lunch	Recess/Lunch	Recess/Lunch	Recess/Lunch	Recess/Lunch
1:00-1:50	Computer 6 th Science 7 th S.R.T. 8 th	Social Studies 6 th S.R.T. 7 th Science 8 th	S.R.T. 6 th 1-1:30 Gym 7 th Science 8 th	S.R.T. 6 th Study Hall 7 th Science 8 th	Social Studies 6 th Science 7 th S.R.T. 8 th
1:50-2:30	Social Studies 6 th Computer 7 th Science 8 th	Art 6 th Science 7 th Computer 8 th	1:30-2:00 Gym 6 th Art 7 th Gym 8 th	Social Studies 6 th Science 7 th Art 8 th	Peace Games/ Community Building
2:30-2:45	Homeroom/ Closing Circle	Homeroom/ Closing Circle	2-2:30 Gym 8 th / Closing Circle	Homeroom/ Closing Circle	Homeroom/ Closing Circle

Curriculum Overviews

Literacy Curriculum

6th, 7th, & 8th Grade English Language Arts: Reading, Writing, & Word Study

- We are using the Literacy Collaborative approach where scholars are taught to think of themselves as Readers and Writers.
- Students learn through a workshop model which fosters group work, independent thinking, and teacher conferences.
- There is a 1.5 hour literacy block of time every morning so students are having rich reading and writing experiences daily.
- Both Reading and Writing have journal components. Scholars use them to think deeper about their reading and writing, gather ideas, and communicate with the teacher.
- Scholars develop language around literacy by listening to and discussing interactive read-alouds. Having common experiences with text allows for rich connections and learning.
- Every child is reading trade books at his or her own level while practicing and applying the skills in our standards.
- Within the workshops, students experience guided reading and writing which is a small group instruction for students working on similar goals.
- Individual conference time is also built into both workshops.
- Word Study is an opportunity for scholars to focus on spelling principles while learning new vocabulary words each week. During the week we will focus on the spelling principles of our vocabulary words, their synonyms, antonyms, and the context of how to use these words. At the end of each unit, the students will be tested on the spelling and meaning of these words (typically on Fridays).

Math Curriculum

6th Grade

This year scholars will be focusing on many units of study in mathematics. We started the year learning place value, expanded form, place value and exponents, comparing and ordering decimals, rounding whole numbers and decimals and will proceed to learn about multiplication patterns and estimating products, how to multiply whole numbers, multiply with decimals, scientific notation, short division; estimate quotients, expressions and equations, integers, number theory and fractions, addition and subtraction of fractions, multiplication, division, and probability of fractions, data and statistics, geometry, ratio, proportion, percentage, measurement, and more concepts in algebra.

7th Grade

This year scholars will be focusing on many units of study in mathematics. We started the year learning Integers and will proceed to learn expressions and equations, inequalities, rational numbers, decimals, rational numbers, fractions, ration and proportion, percent and consumer applications, data analysis and statistics, two-dimensional geometry, two-dimensional geometry and measurement applications, three-dimensional geometry, probability, patterns, relations, and functions, and polynomials, equations, and inequalities.

8th Grade

This year scholars will be focusing on many units of study in mathematics. We started the year learning rational numbers and will proceed to learn real numbers, expressions and equations, inequalities, polynomials and factoring, linear functions and inequalities; ration and proportion, percent applications, two-dimensional geometry, geometric measures and coordinate geometry, patterns and nonlinear functions, three-dimensional geometry, data analysis and statistics, and probability and logic.

Science Curriculum

6th Grade

This year scholars will be focusing on units of Earth and Space Science, Physical Science, and Life Science. We started the year learning mapping the earth and will proceed to learn earth's structure, earth's history, properties of matter, classification of organisms, structure and function of cells, and energy and living things.

7th Grade

This year scholars will be focusing on units of Earth and Space Science, Physical Science, and Life Science. We started the year learning heat transfer in the earth's system and will proceed to learn the earth in the solar system, properties of matter, motion of objects, forms of energy, heat energy, living things and their environment, energy and living things, and changes in ecosystems over time.

8th Grade

This year scholars will be focusing on units of Life Science and Physical Science. We started the year learning systems in living things and will proceed to learn reproduction and heredity, evolution and biodiversity, energy and living things, changes in ecosystems over time, properties of matter, and elements, compounds, and mixtures.

Social Studies Curriculum

6th Grade – World Geography

Sixth Grade scholars will study the world outside the United States and North America. Scholars will systematically learn geography around the world continent by continent. Scholars will also learn about each continent in an order that reflects, first, the early development of the river valley civilizations in the Mediterranean area to set the stage for the study of early civilizations in 7th Grade. Throughout the year the curriculum will emphasize physical and political geography of the world and use the 5 themes of geography (location, place, region, movement, and interaction) as a structural foundation to support understanding. Map skills, interpreting geographic information from graphs & charts, identifying absolute and relative locations and understanding and using atlases will be integrated into curriculum throughout the year.

7th Grade – Ancient & Classical Civilizations in the Mediterranean

Seventh Grade scholars study the origins of human beings in Africa and the early civilizations that flourished in the Mediterranean. Scholars examine the religions, governments, trade, philosophies and art of these civilizations as well as significant ideas that arose in the ancient world and shaped world history (monotheism, democracy, rule of law, individual worth, personal responsibility, the alphabetic principle for a writing system and scientific reasoning). Analyzing and developing timelines, historical maps, and interpreting primary and secondary sources as well as archaeological evidence are skills that will be integrated into the curriculum throughout the year.

8th Grade – United States History II

Eighth grade scholars will study the United States from the end of the Civil War and Reconstruction (1877) to the present day. Scholars will be able to identify key events, figures, dates, and places pertaining to the history of the United States as outlined in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks: Reconstruction to the Present Day including: the Industrial Revolution, the Harlem Renaissance, World War I and II, the Vietnam War, the Cold War and the War on Terrorism. Scholars will use primary sources to better understand how history is told to us, and will also be exploring authentic essential questions they developed in the first weeks of the school year. Scholars will make connections between U.S. History and current events.

Specials

We are also privileged to have many specials this year including the following:
Art, Gym, Computer Lab, & Peace Games

Assessment

Scholars will be graded on a point system. They will be assessed through daily class work, homework, group work, tests, and projects. Quizzes and tests will be given at the end of most units of study. Scholars will also have weekly spelling and vocabulary tests (typically on Fridays) related to word study units beginning shortly. We will also be tracking scholars' growth and progress related to literacy through reading assessments, spelling assessments, and writing assessments. Scholars will receive report cards four times a year; we will do our best to keep in constant communication with you and your scholar about their grades throughout the quarter prior to the report card.

Responsive Classroom Overview

Responsive Classroom

Responsive Classroom is an approach to teaching that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. The goal is to enable optimal student learning. Created by classroom teachers and backed by evidence from independent **research**, the *Responsive Classroom* approach is based on the premise that children learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills. The approach therefore consists of **classroom** and **schoolwide practices** for deliberately helping children build academic and social-emotional competencies.

Guiding Principles

Seven principles, informed by the work of educational theorists and the experiences of exemplary classroom teachers, guide the *Responsive Classroom* approach:

- The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
- How children learn is as important as what they learn: Process and content go hand in hand.
- The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
- To be successful academically and socially, children need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.
- Knowing the children we teach-individually, culturally, and developmentally-is as important as knowing the content we teach.
- Knowing the families of the children we teach and working with them as partners is essential to children's education.
- How the adults at school work together is as important as their individual competence: Lasting change begins with the adult community.

Since 1981, thousands of classroom teachers and hundreds of schools and school districts have used the *Responsive Classroom* approach to help create learning environments where children thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. In urban, rural, and suburban settings nationwide, educators using *Responsive Classroom* practices report increases in student learning, motivation, and

responsibility, and decreases in problem behaviors.

Classroom Practices

At the heart of the *Responsive Classroom* approach are ten classroom practices:

Morning Meeting/Circle of Power & Respect (C.P.R.) - gathering as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead

Rule Creation - helping students create classroom rules to ensure an environment that allows all class members to meet their learning goals

Interactive Modeling - teaching children to notice and internalize expected behaviors through a unique modeling technique

Positive Teacher Language - using words and tone as a tool to promote children's active learning, sense of community, and self-discipline

Logical Consequences - responding to misbehavior in a way that allows children to fix and learn from their mistakes while preserving their dignity

Guided Discovery - introducing classroom materials using a format that encourages independence, creativity, and responsibility

Academic Choice - increasing student learning by allowing students teacher-structured choices in their work

Classroom Organization - setting up the physical room in ways that encourage students' independence, cooperation, and productivity

Working with Families - creating avenues for hearing parents' insights and helping them understand the school's teaching approaches

Collaborative Problem Solving - using conferencing, role playing, and other strategies to resolve problems with students

Literacy Collaborative Overview

What is a Literacy Collaborative School?

1. Teachers in classrooms implement the range of research-based approaches that are included in a language and literacy framework, either at primary grades or at all grades of the elementary school. The framework includes instruction in reading, writing, language, and word study.

2. A high priority is placed on time for teaching and learning, with at least two-and-one-half hours designated for the language and literacy framework daily in all classrooms. One hour of uninterrupted time is available for reading and one hour for writing.
3. The school has a literacy coordinator who has successfully completed the initial training program at a Literacy Collaborative university or district-level training site.
4. The literacy coordinator is based in the school and provides professional development for teachers. The literacy coordinator also teaches children for part of the day.
5. There is a school-based leadership team that includes the principal, the literacy coordinator(s), teachers representing the grade levels involved, and other literacy professionals.
6. Teachers in the school participate in comprehensive training and are coached in their classrooms by the literacy coordinator.
7. After initial training, teachers participate in a variety of ongoing professional development opportunities, including but not limited to regular meetings, coaching, study groups, and action research.
8. Sufficient materials and supplies are provided to support literacy instruction, which may include a school book room that houses an extensive collection of leveled books for guided reading, as well as rich classroom collections of children's literature.
9. Reading Recovery is provided as a safety net for first-graders who need extra, intensive tutoring in addition to good classroom instruction; other services are provided at various grade levels.
10. There is a home-school connection that includes home support activities and books to promote home reading.
- 11.

Peace Games Overview

PEACE GAMES imagines a world where every child has the skills, knowledge, supportive relationships, and opportunities to prevent violence and build safer communities. A world where individuals and institutions believe in the power of young people and that violence – in all of its forms – can be prevented. Peace Games believes that this goal is best achieved by building the capacity of schools and community groups to implement holistic, peace and justice education programs.



Our Mission

Peace Games empowers students to create their own safe classrooms and communities by forming partnerships with elementary schools, families, and young adult volunteers.

Our Goals

- To empower children with the skills, knowledge, relationships and opportunities to be peacemakers.
- To engage all community members (students, families, teachers, volunteers, organizations and businesses) to support children as peacemakers.
- To inspire a new generation of educators and activists.
- To change how society thinks about violence and young people.

OUR CORE FOUNDATIONS

In order for young people to be effective peacemakers, they need to be supported in developing a solid foundation in four areas: knowledge, skills, relationships and opportunities. All Peace Games Partnership Outcomes are built on these foundations.

Knowledge Peacemaking requires that we understand, appreciate and value others and ourselves. All Peace Games partners need to understand that young people are problem-solvers, not problems; that they have the capacity to promote peace and create positive change in themselves, their school and their communities. Finally, Peace Games knowledge outcomes are clearly connected to state academic frameworks, especially in the areas of language arts, literacy, social studies, health and fine arts.

Skills Peacemaking requires more than knowledge; peacemakers know how to communicate, cooperate and resolve conflicts without using violence. The Peace Games program, including the classroom curriculum, is intended to introduce, expand and strengthen core peacemaking skills.

Relationships Peacemaking requires allies and networks of supports. Violence is a learned behavior that unchecked, can lead to greater acts of violence. Student and adult peacemakers need positive, supportive relationships if they are to actually use the knowledge and skills promoted in the Peace Games program. Therefore, our school-wide efforts seek to promote positive, peaceful relationships. We build inter-personal relationships within the school as well as broader relations to the community through community service and social action.

Opportunities Finally, Peacemaking requires that students be able to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and relationships through resolving conflicts without violence. The Peace Games curriculum accomplishes this through Peacemaker Projects. These community service projects give students the opportunity to mentor each other, take on civic responsibility, and better their schools and communities.

Rules

Mission Grammar's non-negotiable school rules consist of:

- *Coming to school always dressed in uniform
- *Coming to school and each academic class on time
- Turning off all electronics (cell phones, iPods, cameras, etc.) and turning these into their homeroom teacher at the beginning of the day
- Keeping all language and actions positive and respectful
- Eating only during only appropriate times (lunch) and refraining from chewing gum

*Dress Code consists of a buttoned dress shirt, plaid skirt, knee highs or tights, and dress shoes for ladies. For young men, navy dress pants, a Mission Grammar polo/blue sweater (in the winter), and dress shoes must always be worn. Gym uniform may only be worn on Wednesdays unless specified otherwise (i.e. for a field trip or other special event).

*If a student is tardy because he/she has forgotten any materials for class they will be given one warning and on his/her second warning a detention will be given.

Failure to comply with these non-negotiable Mission Grammar rules will result in a detention after school. All detentions will be held after school on the day of the violation from 2:50-3:20 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays (the student may only serve the detention on a different day in extenuating circumstances and if it is discussed and agreed upon with the student and his/her parent/guardian). When a student is given a detention, the form below will be completed to keep on record at school, as well as to be shared with his/her parent/guardian.

Office referrals will be given for more serious behaviors and will be handled with the discretion of the administrator, Ms. Bradley.

*For more information on procedures and policies please see the middle school survival guide which was sent home with your child at the beginning of the school year; this is also posted on our website, www.missiongrammar.org, under our parent resources section.

Middle School Constitution

The constitution listed below is a document that was created by all middle school scholars as a social contract that they have committed themselves to living by each day. This is posted in the hallway of the middle school to serve as a daily remind of the expectations they set for themselves and their classmates.

*We, the middle school scholars of
Mission Grammar School,
in order to form a more perfect middle
school, agree to:*

Live by the C.A.R.E.S. motto

Be leaders and role models

*Listen, empathize, and accept everyone's ideas and
differences*

Express ourselves in a respectful way

Respect our class and school property

*and
Have fun!*

*We do ordain and establish this constitution
on this 18th day of September in the year
2009.*

Homework

Homework is a great way to practice the skills we have worked on in class. Homework will be assigned Monday-Thursday nights and some Friday nights. Homework grades will be based on completion and effort unless we tell the students that something will be graded for accuracy. Students will be expected to study for tests at home, as well as work on some projects at home.

If a scholar's homework is completed and turned in without a name, the student will only be given partial credit for the assignment. In addition, all Mission Grammar Middle School scholars will be expected to turn in their homework on time, but scholars will be given the opportunity to turn it no more than one day late for partial credit.

Middle School Scholars who have been absent due to illness, personal reasons, or a suspension will be given the number of days they were absent to make up the work (i.e. if a student was absent for three days they will be given three days from the date they return to school to turn in their work).

All Mission Grammar scholars will be expected to fill out their planners every day to help keep their tasks and assignments organized.

Reading logs

Reading for 30 minutes four times a week and filling out his/her reading log is an assignment due each Friday. **Please sign your scholar's reading log each night!** Scholars may read any type of appropriate material for this assignment (books, magazines, newspapers); the important thing is that he/she is reading!

Field Trips

We hope to take several field trips this year. Chaperones would be much appreciated and needed during these exciting learning experiences! We will keep you posted as to the dates of these opportunities in advance, so that hopefully you may join us.

Ways to Be Involved in the Classroom

If you would be interested in tutoring, helping with projects, or chaperoning field trips, please let us know and your presence would be greatly appreciated.

Best Way to Communicate with US

Best way to contact us: slosito@missiongrammar.org, trosien@missiongrammar.org, and ahayle@missiongrammar.org.

Please continually check our website, www.missiongrammar.org, for resources and newsletters. Refer to the section entitled, "Family Resources," for weekly newsletters from the middle school; newsletters will be posted every Friday. The academic calendar, school calendar, monthly school newsletters, lunch menu, and middle school survival guide are also posted here. Please refer to our website often for updates.

We welcome you to contact us at any time with questions, concerns, or comments. We look forward to working with you this year to ensure the best for your child's educational journey this year!

