



MAY 2019



**Putnam Avenue
Upper School**
100 Putnam Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139
617.349.7780
Fax: 617.349.3358
putnamavenue.cpsd.us

Mirko Chardin
Head of School
617.349.7780
mchardin@cpsd.us

Pamela Chu-Sheriff
Assistant Principal
617.349.7780
pchu-sheriff@cpsd.us

Christina Farese
Instructional Coach
617.349.7780
cfarese@cpsd.us

Dayshonda Jones
School Clerk
617.349.7780
dajones@cpsd.us



Putnam Ave. Newsletter

Passion. Pride. Ownership. Balance. Perseverance.

"Know Your Story, Own Your Story, Your Story is Your Power"

Message from the Principal

Welcoming our rising Fifth Grade Families,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your fifth grader to the Putnam Avenue Upper School. We are excited to get to know all of you and all that you have to offer our diverse community, as well as for you to learn more about who we are and what we are all about. The transition from fifth to sixth grade is both exciting and challenging, so we have organized a number of activities in order to help you and your child prepare for this milestone. These activities began on January 17th, 2019, when we hosted the rising fifth grade students for a special screening of this year's Putnam Ave. musical, Peter Pan.

During the first week of May, the Putnam Ave. team will visit all of the students at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Kennedy-Longfellow, and Morse schools. At this time your student will meet the Head of School (Mirko Chardin), the 6th Grade Teacher Leader (Christopher Godfrey), and members of our Counseling Team (Matt Perry, Joanne Edouard). This visit provides the opportunity for us to introduce ourselves, review our core values and vision, share about our outside of school opportunities, and provide students with an overview of what they can expect next year -- the schedule, lockers, courses, etc. The highlight of this time, though, is our current students who hail from each of the elementary schools and who answer questions and share about their experience at Putnam Ave. Overall, this experience ensures that when your student arrives at Putnam Ave. there will already be a few familiar faces in the crowd!

Next, on May 29th, 2019, all of the fifth grade students will visit with our sixth grade team and current sixth grade students during the school day at Putnam Ave. We have an exciting day planned for the students so that they can get a feel for what it is like to be a sixth grader at Putnam Ave., as well as to start to build a community of students coming from different schools. That same day (May 29th) we will also host an evening event for all of the parents and guardians of our incoming sixth graders, from 6:00-7:00PM at Putnam Ave. During this time, we will share an overview of and a short presentation about the rigorous, district-aligned curriculum that we offer our students. There will be plenty of time for questions and answers, as well as for parents and guardians to get to know one another.

We truly look forward to working with you, your children, and their current schools to ensure a smooth and thoughtful transition. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our front office at 617.349.7780.

Sincerely,

Mirko Chardin
Founding Head of School
mchardin@cpsd.us

Mathieu Perry
School Adjustment Counselor
mperry@cpsd.us

Chris Godfrey
Sixth Grade Team Leader
cgodfrey@cpsd.us

Joanne Edouard
Guidance Counselor
jedouard@cpsd.us

Upcoming Events

King/PAUS Open Market

May 3 | 3-5PM

King School Cafeteria

PAFA Meeting

May 7 | 6-7:30PM

School Council Meeting

May 9 | 6-7:30PM

Early Release Day

May 15

Memorial Day: No School

May 27

Counseling Team Update

As the summer approaches, we're beginning to think about transitioning to the next academic school year.

As with almost any period of uncertainty, this time of the school year can elicit feelings of stress, anxiety, frustration, or confusion for some students. For others, the view of summer on the horizon can make it difficult to focus on current classes, projects, and activities in school. The counseling team is here to support Putnam Ave. students and their families during this time.

There are also ways you may be able to support your student at home. These might include:

Acknowledging the difficulty of transition periods and remaining perseverant and focused, even when the end of the school year approaches.

Reiterating the importance of putting best effort into schoolwork so that the end of the school year brings a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.

Reminding students of the supports that are in place to assist them should they may feel concerned, overwhelmed, anxious, or worn out (e.g. school counselors, advisors, and teachers).

Summer Starts in 8 Weeks - What are your plans?

Take a look at a few of the many options for summer programs with fast approaching deadlines:

10-day overnight performing arts camp for young people ages 12-17 years old. Camp is open to students interested in acting, blues performance, dance, musical theater and choral singing, set design, juggling, drumming and much more! Experience not necessary. Apply below. Deadline: April 30. *Learn more*>><https://www.summerstars.org/come-to-camp>

Summer Ink

Transform the writing skills of students in 5th through 8th grade through adventure, sports, and arts activities. The camp is based at Simmons College in Boston, runs in July and August. - Deadline: April 30. *Learn more*>><http://summerink.org/>

City Sprouts

Six-week paid internship for those interested in gardening, cooking, learning about the environment and doing STEM activities. Interns earn a \$150 stipend for the summer. *Apply below. Deadline: May 3.* <https://www.citysprouts.org/cps-summer-application>

Summer employment opportunities for young people who turn 14 by July 1st. Young people work part time for 20 hours a week and earn \$12 per hour. Deadline: May 3. *Learn more*>><https://drive.google.com/open?id=1b2ropP26Lw-zoNDUZwjM3tRIFAC66a74>

Cambridge Culinary

Week long culinary technique classes. Scholarships are available on a sliding scale. A few classes in July & Aug still open. Act fast! *Learn more*>><https://cambridgeculinary.rezclick.com/index.php?page=calendar&term=teen>

Upward Bound

Free six-week residential summer academic program at Wellesley College. Students take classes getting ready/ahead for high school. Program runs from June 23rd-August 2nd. Transportation is provided. Deadline: May 15th

CPS Morning Math and ELA

Free at Math and ELA classes in the morning PAUS with transportation. Mission Possible program available as an afternoon option. The ELA application is available at <https://goo.gl/forms/QBvf7113xniReqHA2>. The Math application is available at <https://goo.gl/forms/X4NxutYHBnhuzOEI2>. *Learn more*>>

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B-Mn333lo4wadVp1aHY5MHJyNDJQbHFId21nWjZyOXI2M2Jn>

Kids4Peace Boston

Interfaith Leadership Camp Program for Current 6th and 7th Graders (Muslim, Christian or Jewish young people interested in peace and faith). Scholarships available! *Learn more*>><http://kids4peaceboston.org/>

Want more info on summer opportunities check our Middle School Network (MSN) *Summer Resource Guide* (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qaSNI095CrYTnn0GPYDOWzGjvX7Xapb4/view>)

Need support with planning your summer?

Contact Medjine Lucien, PAUS MSN Youth Connector at lucienm@cpsd.us



Find It

Looking for things to do in Cambridge? Then take a peek at Find It Cambridge! finditcambridge.org

Stay Connected!

Did you know that you can find Putnam Avenue Upper School on Facebook? To keep up with all our news, just follow us on Facebook: facebook.com/putnamavenue



Grade 6 Update

Science

We finished up Earth's story by doing a gallery walk of Cambridge and the New England Geological Timeline. Some students made a geological timeline game, and some made a powerpoint presentation. Students shined by selecting the best geological timeline of Cambridge/New England. Students also persevered in their research of examining how Fresh Pond was created and researching metamorphic rocks in New England. Our students will then focus on "Systems" and the questions: What is a system? What does a system look like? The main phenomenon will focus on transportation systems.

ELA

We are working on making real-life connections to the texts we read! Currently, we are finding a theme to our texts. The purpose of identifying a theme is to help students make personal connections to characters and to stories before they start writing. We are also reminding each other about the differences between central idea and theme in texts. Central idea is the "center" or heart of the story. It answers the question, "What is the text about?" Theme carries a life lesson that the reader can identify with. It is important to make this distinction so that students are clear about what the author's intent of the text is.

Social Studies

Students have started to explore our unit 4 topic, ancient Egypt. Thus far, students have learned about the mummification process and virtually took part in mummifying a body. They have also begun to explore the environmental factors that affected human settlements and overall social structures that existed in ancient Egypt. Students will work on their final DBQ of the year during the unit by attempting to answer the question, "How did the Nile River shape the lives of the people in ancient Egypt?"

Math

Students are working on writing and solving algebraic equations that represent real world scenarios. Students are learning to use variables to represent unknown amounts and then to solve for those unknowns using inverse operations. This skill is the foundation for the work students will do in 7th and 8th grade math when they write, solve, and graph linear equations. In addition, core 4 earned their paperclip pizza party recently. We also have students shining by showing their work to the class on the document camera and shouting each other out for their courage. Students also participated in a statistics boot camp and had the opportunity to create dot plots and histograms to represent class data for spinning a spinner or rolling dice. What's more, we're focusing on ownership and passion for academic excellence this month. Students are encouraged and celebrated for revising work so that it reflects their full capabilities. Students are also using exit tickets to see if they understand the days' lesson, and then working in small groups with a teacher to fill any gaps.

Special Education

MCAS test-taking strategies have been a priority for all students this month. Math and ELA Bootcamps have us running on all cylinders. We are preparing for success every day and have the strategies to prove it! Many students are working on their academic skills before and/or after school. Academic help is offered before school at 8am every Tues., Wed., and Thurs. in Room 1205 with Mr O'Brien & Ms.Babatunde. In addition, students have done an outstanding job with their portfolio reflections and artifact collection. Portfolio exhibits our Putnam Ave. values and spotlights the great job our scholars are doing.

Chinese Immersion

Last month, we learned to identify how physical settings contributed to the development of city-states in Mesopotamia and the features of a Sumerian city. At present, we are taking further steps to analyze artifacts from ancient Sumer and explain how they are examples of the various characteristics of civilization. After this chapter, we will explore the idea of justice by analyzing and discussing Hammurabi's code.

Grade 7 Update

Curriculum Updates

In science, we are wrapping up our energy unit and quickly approaching our weather and climate unit. We will be focusing on how weather occurs and how we determine it. This unit will involve full participation and a hands on approach to learning about this aspect of the world around us.

In **ELA**, we are wrapping up our final essay, which is based on the themes presented in *Strange Fruit* by Abel Meeropol and *The Flowers* by Alice Walker. Additionally, when we return from April break, students will be taking the 7th grade ELA MCAS exam. The test dates are as follows; Tuesday, April 23 and Wednesday, April 24.

In **Math**, students are continuing the process with expressions and equations. They have modified expressions using operational properties, created expressions given real-world situations, and developed scenarios according to expressions. We are currently applying similar techniques to equations. Furthermore, students will gain the ability to solve for unknown values given various equations and scenarios. Lastly, in correlation with learning the unit, the students will be reviewing and preparing for MCAS.

In **Social Studies**, we are starting the 4th quarter off with an introduction to Ancient China. Students will be looking at the Shang dynasty and Chinese philosophies of Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism. This will lead us into our final Document Based Questions (DBQ) essay of the year which looks at The Great Wall of China and considers did the benefits of the wall outweigh the costs?

Teacher Conferences

If you would like to schedule a conference with your child's teachers to discuss their progress so far, please contact your child's advisor or Mrs. Etesse (metesse@cpsd.us) to arrange a time. If coming to the school is difficult, we are also happy to schedule a phone conference with you or communicate through email. We encourage all families to arrange a meeting before the end of the school year to discuss your student's progress.

Grade 8 Update

Math

Students are beginning their work with radicals and integer exponents. During this unit they will develop and apply the properties of integer exponents to generate equivalent numerical expressions. In addition, students will recognize that there are numbers that are irrational and approximate them by using rational numbers. By the end of the unit, students will be able to use scientific notation for real-world situations.

Science

Students are studying genetic variation and mutations and investigating their causes. We also had the opportunity to visit Biogen Community Lab, where students participated in a lab activity that required them to diagnose a mock patient with sickle-cell anemia by running hemoglobin gel electrophoresis. This lab allows for a nice follow up to what we are learning in the classroom and helped students to better understand the relationship between DNA and proteins. Later on this month, we will debate the ethics of using animal models for research with our BROAD scientists.

ELA

Students are concluding the final unit in our study of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Students are either writing confessional narratives or creating video confessionals in small groups from the point of view of characters in the play. Later this month we will study short stories to practice test-taking skills before the start of MCAS at the end of the month and will also return to independent reading in the classroom as we begin to assess our progress towards meeting our goal of reading 20 books by the end of the school year.

Social Studies

Students are in the middle of our Prince Hall unit, which highlights how democratic citizens can respond when communities do not live up to our expectations. This unit will culminate in a project in which students create a modern petition that is directed towards a person or group that has not lived up to expectations and needs to be informed of its shortcomings.



Specialist Team Update

In physical education class we are finishing up the fitness test and ready to start on new unit on soccer. The soccer, Track and field, and orienteering teams have started practicing. The staff student basketball game will be this Friday.

The Spring Concert will be held on Wednesday May 22, 2019 at 6:30PM. The concert will feature those students performing in the Concert Band, Jazz Band, Chorus, String Orchestra, and Drum-line. Come and enjoy the musical talents of our student musicians.

The Specialist Team held their Awards Assembly for the third quarter to celebrate students for the school core value of balance.

Instruction Update

We are right in the middle of MCAS-season! Teachers have been busy preparing students and proctoring tests. We have also spent some time reflecting on how we have prepared students for this year's tests and identifying areas of success and improvement. Because we are still in the middle of MCAS, here is another reminder about some tips to help students prepare before the test, what they can do during the test, and how you can help.

How can families support students during MCAS?

- Review the MCAS tips with your child.
- Practice stress reduction tips.
- Talk with your child about MCAS and the importance of giving their best effort.
- Encourage your child to leave nothing blank! There is no penalty for guessing.
- Ensure that your child gets a good night's sleep and has a good breakfast the day of the testing.
- Remind your child how important it is to answer every part of a question and to explain their thinking.

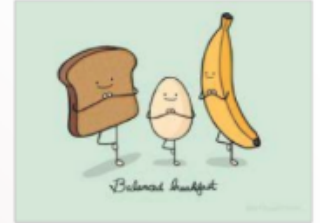


General Tips

Don't Forget!

What can you do **BEFORE** the test?

- Get a good night's sleep
- Have a good breakfast
- Dress comfortably
- Be prepared to work for the ENTIRE test session
- Think positively



Taken from: <http://quincypublicschools.com/sterling/files/2015/03/MCAS-Test-Taking-Tips.pdf>

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General Tips

Don't Forget!

What can you do **DURING** the test?

- Read and follow the directions carefully
- If you aren't sure, guess wisely. Leave **NOTHING** blank!
- Use all of the time you need to:
 - Read all of the options/choices
 - Check your work
 - Review difficult questions
 - Plan your answers
- If you have a reference sheet, use it!

An educated guess gives you a 75% chance of answering correctly!

Taken from: <http://quincypublicschools.com/sterling/files/2015/03/MCAS-Test-Taking-Tips.pdf>

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General Tips

Don't Forget!

What can you do if you feel **anxious or stressed?**



- **Breathe:** Close your eyes, take a deep breathe, and exhale slowly (repeat 3-4 times)
- **Positive Self Talk:** Repeat to yourself, "I can do this"
- **Move:** Stand and/or stretch. Smile!

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