

## Mary Rowlandson Elementary School

### Update

November 3, 2017

<http://rowlandson.nrsd.net/> (Mary Rowlandson website)

Twitter [@MREschool](#)

### Parent/Teacher Conference

Next week is a shortened school week for the children with Parent/Teacher conferences being held on Monday and Thursday. There is no school for children on Monday but teachers will be in the building for scheduled conferences. Thursday afternoon is a half day for the same reason.

Fall conferences provide a time for teachers to share their observations and goals for the year for each student. Conferences allow for parents to hear how their child is performing in regards to the grade level standards and what skills will be an area of focus for the next term. It is also a time for parents to express their wishes and hopes for their child. In December, reports cards will go home early in the month. The report card will provide more details about progress towards each grade level standard. These two events will provide a snapshot of how each student is progressing as well as what areas of growth will be focused on throughout the year.

### MCAS Changes

This past year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education made a significant change to the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. The changes reflect a change to the curriculum and State Frameworks. These are significant instructional changes that focus on the application and synthesis of skills particularly in the area of literacy and mathematics. The science standards are also being revised which will be reflected in an updated MCAS test next year.

The changes in the MCAS testing are not just curriculum based. The way in which students will be tested is changing too. All students will take the MCAS test on the computer by the 2019 school year. This year our fourth and fifth-grade students will be assessed on the computer while the third-grade students will use a paper-based test.

Scoring for the MCAS tests has also changed. Students will receive a standardized score ranging from 440 to 560 with 500 denoting a score of proficiency. With the changes to the way students are scored and the change to the content of the test, student and school scores across the state are significantly different than in past years. The scores from last spring are being used baseline data to determine progress in the coming years. As a result of the re-norming process by the state, approximately 50% of the students in the state fell on both sides of the proficient range in each content area. Mary Rowlandson and Nashoba students continue to demonstrate strong performance on the MCAS and we are working hard to shift the curriculum and teaching to fully align with the new standards and state expectations.

An example of the changes in MCAS and our teaching can be found in the literacy expectations. In the past, fourth-grade students were prepared to write the "Long Comp" or a narrative story for the MCAS. This is no longer a part of the test. Instead, all students in grades three and up are expected to write sustained essays about specific readings.

In third grade students, last year were asked the following, “Based on the passage, write an essay that explains how Benjamin Franklin helped people.” The level of complexity quickly bumps up for the grade four students. “Based on the passage, write an essay to explain how Alex changed as he spent more time with Irene. Be sure to use information from the passage to develop your essay.” As you can see these questions require students to analyze, synthesize, infer and apply multiple literacy skills.

The teachers are working diligently to lead the students toward being successful with these new standards and testing requirements. The district implemented enVisions mathematics last year to address mathematical fluency and thinking. The work teachers are doing this year to implement the Baseline Assessment System and the workshop model in literacy will help push our students towards more success.

The following link will provide more information about the MCAS tests and how Mary Rowlandson students scored this past year.

[http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement\\_level.aspx?linkid=32&orgcode=07250010&orgtypecode=6&](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?linkid=32&orgcode=07250010&orgtypecode=6&)

#### Frequently Asked Questions

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/parents/results-faq.html>

#### Parent Guide to the MCAS

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/odl/e-learning/mcas-parentguide/content/index.html#/? k=c5lkzy>

#### **Important Dates**

November 6<sup>th</sup> – Conferences, No School for students

November 9<sup>th</sup> – 12:15 dismissal, Afternoon and Evening Conferences

November 10<sup>th</sup> – Veteran’s Day, No School

November 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, Thanksgiving Day Break, No School

#### Community Announcements

[http://rowlandson.nrsd.net/news/what\\_s\\_new/community\\_news](http://rowlandson.nrsd.net/news/what_s_new/community_news)

# **1<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL Yard Sale**

**IN SUPPORT OF LUTHER BURBANK  
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE WASHINGTON DC TRIP**

**This year's 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class is proud to announce the 1<sup>st</sup> annual  
Yard Sale in support of the upcoming Washington DC Trip**

**EVENTS INCLUDE:**

- .Yard Sale**
- .Bake Sale**

**Raffle**

**WHEN: NOVEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>, 9:00AM – 2:00PM**

**WHERE: LUTHER BURBANK MIDDLE SCHOOL,**

**LANCASTER MA**

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Nashoba Regional Dollars for Scholars has teamed up with Wilson Farms of Lexington to offer our annual Giving Thanks Pie Sale. Wilson Farms will provide high-quality Thanksgiving pies for the sale. Pies are for sale

through Saturday, November 11th. Each pie costs \$15 and will be available for pick up on Monday, November 20th at the high school from 2:30 - 7:00 PM.

Clean out unwanted clutter before the holidays!

The RoboChiefs are holding their 2nd annual Savers FUNDrive to raise money for their build season and to benefit the community.

Some examples of what we are collecting: clothing, bedding, shoes, towels, jewelry, scarves, small appliances, toys, games... Please see the attached flyer for what else can be donated.

When? On Saturday, November 18th from 8 AM to 2 PM in front of Nashoba Regional High School. It would be greatly appreciated if items were bagged or boxed. Please, "fill it forward" for Nashoba Robotics!

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