Level Four Rap Around with One Bead

by Johnny Johnson, Rap Around & Rock Band teacher

This fall, Level 4 is collaborating with local non-profit One Bead on a semester-long service project during their Rap Around block. Rap Around is a class that each level in the school takes, named after a local Boston TV show that aired in the late 1980s, which hosted teens discussing topics relevant to their lives. Rap Around at NS is a class where kids explore how to express their feelings, grow friendships, and develop social skills and a strong, positive sense of identity. In Levels 3 and 4, students are introduced to bigger picture topics that help them understand themselves within the context of community, and they work on allyship, leadership, and finding their voices as citizens.

One Bead seemed like a good fit for the beginning of the Level 4 school year, as their focus is on student activism and empowerment. The greeting on their website is "Welcome, change-makers, go-getters, and dream-chasers." Sounds like our students!

The One Bead Youth Leadership Program is a 10-week course that starts with helping students identify issues in their community that they feel passionate about, and provides a $1,000 grant to support a service project that addresses the issue. Students choose an issue as individuals or in small groups, create an action plan for how they would use $1,000 to work towards their goal of raising awareness, making change, or creating impact. Their action plan includes defining concrete steps, identifying the target audience, and creating a budget. They will pitch their ideas to their classmates, and the class will choose one project to move forward on as a team of 17. Practicing public speaking, product and graphic design, and other entrepreneurial skills are all part of the One Bead process. NS teachers have added the element of discussing "stake": asking the students to think about their stake in a particular issue, and investigate who else in the community might have a stake.

Level 4 has been working with the organization since the second week of school, with support from One Bead mentor Abby Wocher, in collaboration with their usual Rap Around teachers, Johnny and Lisa. The students are in the action-plan-building phase, and will pitch to their classmates soon. Stay tuned to hear what community issue they choose and what impact they make!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

December Concert
Wed., Dec. 19, 2018
6:30 PM, Forest Hills Covenant Church
455 Arborway, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Learning Fair
Tues., April 9 & Wed., April 10, 2019
6:30 PM, Forest Hills Covenant Church

Neighborhood School

34 Peter Parley Road
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
(617) 522-0880

neighborhoodschooljp.org

Find us on Facebook:
Neighborhood School, JP

Signs of Fall at NS

Pumphandle! Our annual handshake of welcome is a tradition with Midwestern roots that speaks of connection. Eye to eye, hand to hand, students and teachers greet one another at our first Assembly. Popsicles at the end of a lengthy meet-and-greet are always welcomed!

Farm School is the sweetest place on earth. Kindness and Respect rule.

Family Fun! Franklin Park is the perfect place for Capture the Flag! Kids vs. Grown-Ups has become a lively tradition!

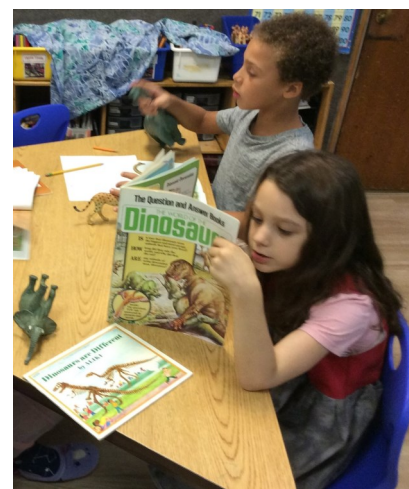**Playground Makeover** "And the wall came tumbling down" by plan, not accident! Come and see!

Learning Across the Levels

Level One Becoming Friends and Studying Birds!

Level Two Active Choices and Dinosaur Research!

Level Three "Orange-you-glad" you are studying cartography?

Alumni Keep in Touch!

Nyasha Mooney-McCoy (NS '06, Meridian Academy '12) made her way back to Peter Parley Road in August and swapped teaching stories with Tricia and Joyce about her two years as a first grade teacher in Baltimore Public Schools. Two other alums from our very first class in 1986 met up with us in September. **Shawnita Agnew** introduced us to some of her BPS students (and inquired about early admission for her son) and credited Joyce and Donna for teaching her things she uses everyday. **Aba Taylor** met Tricia for coffee and reflected on being a social justice facilitator, a parent to a preschooler, and an NS alum. A reunion of our "early years" crew must be planned this year! Contact us if you are willing to help organize.

Nyasha (center) with Joyce Mallory & Tricia Morrow

Common Cents

Tis the season to launch our **Annual Fund** and to ask loving supporters to think about big picture giving when considering their pledge to Neighborhood School. We have been humbled this year by an alum parent who made a personal challenge to contribute the value of a complete tuition ($17,800) during the school year to benefit the scholarship fund. Two other friends committed $10/month through Network for Good as steady support throughout the year. Amazing grace! NS has deepened its giving to families via scholarship and we are grateful for friends who give all that they can to help children flourish here. Conversations with Tricia are available as you consider your "big picture" plan for annual giving.

World Changers Outreach Postcards Now Available

This year **Tracy Pimentel** (Level One teacher) is taking a school leadership role in Outreach and Admissions. Tracy is collaborating with NS parents to visit community health fairs and preschool events to share the good news of Neighborhood School. Tracy welcomes the involvement of current and former families to join her in this work, especially by sharing postcards and collecting referrals. Her zest for life and enthusiasm for Neighborhood School is infectious; be prepared to be energized!