



# Clarke Newsletter

Principal: Anna Monaco • Assistant Principals: Jennifer Turner, Jonathan Wettstone

Jonas Clarke Middle School • 17 Stedman Road, Lexington, MA 02421 • 781.861.2450 • <http://lexingtonma.org/clarkems>

## September

- 1 - 1st day for 6th graders & new students - **1:00 Dismissal**
- 2 - 1st day of school (full day)
- 2 - Welcome Coffee (9-10am); Cafeteria
- 4 - **No school**
- 7 - **No school** (Labor Day)
- 10 - PTO Meeting (8:30am); 3rd Cafe
- 14 - **No school** (Rosh Hashanah)
- 16 - Team Parent Kick Off Meeting (7:30am); Cafeteria
- 17 - **11:45 Dismissal** (Prof. Learning)
- 23 - **No School** (Yom Kippur)

## October

- 1 - PTO Meeting (8:30am); 3rd Cafe
- 1 - Back to School Night
- 8 - Picture Day
- 9 - **No School** (Prof. Learning)
- 12 - **No School** (Columbus Day)
- 15 - 23 Magazine Drive
- 16 - 6th Grade Social (3-5pm)
- 16 - 7th Grade Social (6:30-8:30pm)
- 20 - Apollo Team sponsored breakfast

## November

- 6 - 8th Grade Social (6:30-8:30pm)
- 11 - **No School** (Veterans' Day)
- 12 - PTO Meeting (8:30am); 3rd Cafe



## From the Principal

Anna Monaco, [amonaco@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us](mailto:amonaco@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us),



Dear Jonas Clarke Community,

Year after year each summer seems to go by faster than the previous one. This year is no exception. How does that happen? I certainly enjoyed some time off on the beach and hope that you and your family found some time to relax and enjoy the fabulous summer weather whether it was locally or far away from home.

As usual, the work at Clarke never stops. We have had much going on over the summer from scheduling and staff professional learning opportunities, to construction projects that have given us more space for learning. After spending a great deal of time with architects over the past year, we were able to find some more space within our school for another new classroom and small group learning space. Our resource room area is getting remodeled to make more effective use of the large space by creating a teacher work area and shared instructional spaces. In addition, we were able to create another World Language classroom out of a computer lab. With a large incoming 6th grade class and the addition of another team in 6th grade, (Welcome back Team Columbia!) space is at a premium.

In addition to the construction to our space, we've done some construction to our middle school schedule. This year, we will be piloting three WIN (What I Need) blocks each week, which are additional intervention and enrichment blocks in our schedule. This is a time that students can get extra help, work with a teacher, or sign up for an enrichment class such as Lego Robotics, yoga, fitness, alternative art or music courses. Research supports the idea that some students benefit from a break during the day to maintain their focus. In addition, we are interested in helping students manage sources of unhealthy stress and our theory is that that creating opportunities for students and teachers to meet outside of class time, but during the school day, will help reduce stress and anxiety for students.

What else will this year bring? Check out the 2015-2016 School Improvement Plan on our website <http://lps.lexingtonma.org/clarkems>. Our focus for the upcoming school year is divided into three goals. The first goal focuses on academics and using data to improve student achievement and

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### ... *Principal, continued*

includes our work on developing effective assessments that drive instruction, the creation of our WIN block, and the implementation of a 1:1 iPad project for all 8th graders next year.

Our second goal focuses on increasing resiliency and reducing unhealthy sources of student stress for students. This goal also focuses on the WIN block as a time for students to explore other interests and complete their work. Our guidance department will also be working closely with the Clarke community on issues such as educating students and staff on managing stress and cultural proficiency. Finally, we will also be working on bringing the ideals of community service, student government and Rachel's Challenge together to continue to improve school climate for all.

Lastly, our School Improvement Plan focuses on how we will be addressing our future space needs. We will be working closely with school, district and town personnel as well as the DiNisco Design team to find solutions to our growing enrollment and space needs. It's shaping up to be a busy and exciting year!

## Upcoming School Schedule

On Friday August 28, the school will be open from 9 AM to 11 AM for incoming 6th graders and other new students attending Clarke for the first time **to locate their lockers and homerooms**. Please note that an adult must accompany new students who choose to come in during this time.

The **first day of school for 6th graders** will be Tuesday, September 1. The 6th grade students will have an opportunity to meet their teachers, locate their classrooms and have lunch in the cafeteria. The school day will end at 1:00 PM. All **new 7th and 8th grade students** will have a special orientation on Tuesday, September 1, 2015 at 8:30 AM and should plan on being picked up at 10 AM. The **first full day for all students** is Wednesday, September 2. There will be no

school on Friday September 4, and Monday, September 7, for the Labor Day holiday.

## From the Health Office



**Ms. Towle**, [jtowle@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us](mailto:jtowle@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us)  
**Ms. Motherway**,  
[dmotherway@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us](mailto:dmotherway@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us)  
<http://lps.lexingtonma.org/Page/1481>

Welcome back everyone! We are excited to begin a new school year and want to share a few important items with parents to get off to a smooth start!

- All 6th graders must have a current physical on file. A current physical is good for 365 days plus a 30 day grace period. All 6th grade students must have a physical exam on file dated 8/1/14 or later.
- All 7th graders must have received a Tdap booster and 2 doses of Varicella (chickenpox) Vaccine. Please send in their latest immunization record.
- If your child has a life-threatening allergy requiring an Epipen, an Anaphylaxis Emergency Action Plan needs to be filled out by your child's physician and signed by you.
- If your child has asthma and uses an inhaler, an Asthma Health Care Plan needs to be filled out by your child's physician and signed by you.
- Please contact us if your child has diabetes, seizures, or any other concerns you want us to be aware of.
- If you would like your child to be able to take any medications, even acetaminophen or ibuprofen, please note a medication permission form with parent and physician signature is required.
- Students who plan to participate in sports or intramurals must have a current physical, dated within 1 year of the starting date of the sport. No exceptions, per the MIAA.

All forms can be found at the following website: <http://lps.lexingtonma.org/clarkems>. Go to Faculty/Staff School Nurse Health Forms. They are good for one school year.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions. We look forward to seeing the students in September!



## From the PTO Co-Presidents

Alison Arshad, [alibeebs@yahoo.com](mailto:alibeebs@yahoo.com)  
Jennifer Velis, [jennifervelis@mac.com](mailto:jennifervelis@mac.com)

On behalf of the Clarke PTO, it is our pleasure to welcome you to the 2015-2016 school year. The PTO is a Parent Teacher Organization that brings together parents, teachers, and staff to support a variety of curriculum enhancements and activities for over 800 students. Our funds come from membership dues and only two fundraisers—a magazine drive in October, and a Clarke Night Out for parents and staff later in the school year. The money we raise is used to fund small grants for teachers and staff, purchase library materials and student planners, create the school directory, and support ACT shows and activities for all grade levels. The PTO also coordinates Team Parents, library volunteers, METCO family hosts, and chaperones for class socials/dances. We organize staff appreciation luncheons and assist with planning for the 8th grade Moving On Ceremony. To do all of this—and more—we need your help.

Without the support of parents, there would be no Clarke PTO. If you are not yet a member, join today! We use the online membership and directory program, My School Anywhere. You can sign up at <http://bit.ly/clarkejcsa> By joining the PTO you will get access to our on-line Clarke directory (you also have the option of purchasing a printed directory for a \$5.00 fee).

Joining the PTO is just the first step. Please consider volunteering at Clarke. It is an excellent way to become an active part of the Clarke community and to meet other Clarke families. Our volunteer opportunities come in all shapes and sizes. There is a job right for everyone, whether you can only volunteer for a single activity or can commit to a year-long position. If your schedule is too busy to volunteer, please come out to support Clarke's athletic teams. Let's cheer for those Clarke Bulldogs!

There are a number of ways to keep informed about what is happening at Clarke:

- **Clarke website:** <http://clarke.lexingtonma.org> for school information and PTO sign up forms.

- **Clarke PTO website:** [www.clarkepto.org](http://www.clarkepto.org) where you can find up-to-date PTO information.
- **Teacher Web:** Located on the Clarke website, this is a list of homework assignments and projects updated weekly by each teacher.
- **Clarke PTO Announcements:** The PTO sends out a weekly newsletter to all parents with information about school and community events. New families can submit their contact information for inclusion in the directory/weekly newsletter at [www.bitly.com/clarkedirectory](http://www.bitly.com/clarkedirectory)
- **Parent Information Sessions:** There will be several Parent Information Sessions throughout the year, typically from 9-10am. The topics include parenting and/or school issues led by Clarke counselors, as well as other guest speakers. More information to follow.
- **PTO meetings:** This year's meetings are scheduled to be held on September 10, October 1, November 12, December 10, January 14, February 11, March 10, April 14, May 12 and June 9 from 8:30-9:30am. Everyone is welcome to join!
- **Daily Announcements:** Announcements are made during homeroom over the PA system and will have important information about after school activity signups. Parents can read these announcements on the Clarke and PTO websites.

We hope to meet you at one our September events. Most PTO meetings and Parent Information Sessions will be held in the 3rd cafeteria, and you must sign-in at the office upon entering the building.

- **Welcome Coffee for Parents** will be on Wednesday, September 2 from 9-10am.
- **PTO meeting** in September is Thursday, 10th from 8:30-9:30am.
- **Team Parent Kickoff Meeting** will be on September 16th from 7:30-8:30am for anyone interested in being a Team Parent.
- **"Back to School Night"** for middle-schoolers is on October 1.

## From the IMC Library

Ms. Kelly, [ckelly@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us](mailto:ckelly@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us)

I relish my summertime reading! Reading at the beach or under the shade of a tree is the best. But while these lazy days of summer pass by, I am also planning several newsworthy changes for next year.

Look for more digital access! Clarke has joined the **Commonwealth eBook Collections**. This collection provides access to best selling authors like Suzanne Collins and Veronica Roth as well as a variety of primary document collections to support the curriculum. Look for more information on accessing this resource in the Fall.

The new WIN block at Clarke is sure to be a busy time in the library between students wanting to check out books and use computers to work on assignments, but I'm hopeful we can also find a quiet spot for **grade level book groups** as well as carving out a space for a Clarke version of **Makerspaces**. We are focusing on offering low technology opportunities for kids to make things from plain placemats to papercraft bowties to simple catapults and more. The website Make it @your library is one source of inspiration but I've also been delving into some great books packed with ideas. It 's sure to be an exciting time packed with all kinds of learning.

**RUResearchReady? Workshop** I am in the midst of a workshop focusing on research skills with Diamond librarian Michelle Tanguay. We are excited to bring some of the great ideas we are learning back to Lexington and incorporate them Lex-style into our curriculum. We both want to see more emphasis of teaching students skills to access web sites as students rely so heavily upon using Google to find answers. Hopefully, before the workshop is over, Michelle and I will have a firm lesson plans to teach this fall! I hope everyone gets a chance to relax in the shade with a good book at least once this summer. If your kids are moping about with nothing to read have them check out my suggestions on the Clarke library pages. Below are a few quick reviews of books I enjoyed reading.

### Mark of a Thief by Jennifer Nielsen

The first in a new series by this popular author tells the story of a Roman slave boy who is forced to retrieve Caesar's bulla. But when Nic actually finds the piece, he discovers that it is full of magic, magic that has worked its way into him! But with this magic from the Gods, Nic is ancient Rome's number one enemy and the emperor wants him dead. Packed with action, this one will please Percy Jackson fans.

### Anastasia and Her Sisters by Carolyn Meyer

In this novel, Anastasia Romanova recalls her final years, as her royal family declines from governing Russia to living under armed guards at the mercy of revolutionaries. The story begin when Anastasia is 13 years old. On the cusp of World War I, her family lives an opulent lifestyle but are oblivious to warning signs that the tsar's reign is under siege. When Anastasia starts reading her oldest sister's diary in secret, she realizes that her world is in flux. Anastasia's story transports readers from a privileged lifestyle at the beginning of the 20th-century to her family being the victims of a brutal revolution.

### Jackaby by William Ritter

When Abigail Rook abandons university, and her parents' hopes, she arrives at the fictional New England town of New Fiddleham. There, she promptly meets R. F. Jackaby, a paranormal detective, and is flung into the investigation of a serial killer suspected of being nonhuman. This fast-paced read is a mix of mystery, supernatural and folklore. If you like Dr. Who and Sherlock Holmes, pick this book up this summer.





## Stop & Shop A+ Rewards

Sheila Callahan,  
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Rewards Program Coordinator



## Box Tops for Clarke!

Sheila Callahan,  
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Box Tops Coordinator

Stop & Shop A+ Rewards Program is Back and We Need You! **It is free, and sign up is easier than ever!**

Simply complete our brief online form at [www.bitly.com/clarkestopandshop](http://www.bitly.com/clarkestopandshop) and we will take care of the rest.

Want to earn money for Clarke at no additional cost to you? Between October, 2014 and March, 2015, Stop & Shop is donating a total of \$2.5 million dollars to participating schools across the country. By merely registering your Stop & Shop card with A+ Rewards and using your Stop & Shop card every time you shop, you earn some of this money for our school. It is that simple. After you register your Stop & Shop number, each shopping trip using your Stop & Shop Card earns points. It even works with purchases made online with Peapod by Stop & Shop. At the end of each month these points determine our school's cash total which is automatically credited to its account. School totals are updated each month and may be viewed online anytime. At the close of the program Clarke will receive a check for the total amount earned during the program.

### REMEMBER:

- You must **register your card EVERY year**, even if you participated last year.
- You will receive all points for any other Stop & Shop rewards program, such as Gas Rewards, in addition to all A+ points earned every time you shop.
- You may **register for up to two schools**, but *you must register with those schools at the same time in order for both to get credit!*

Clipping Box Tops is an easy way for you to help Clarke earn cash. Simply look for pink Box Tops on products, clip them, and send them to school with your kids, who can drop them in the Box Top collection box located in the front lobby.

For more information on the Box Tops for Education program, including a list of participating products and our school's progress, visit [www.BTFE.com](http://www.BTFE.com). Be sure to become a member to receive exclusive coupon offers and recipes and learn about extra ways for our school to earn.

## FAQ

A sampling from the CLARKE INSIDER'S GUIDE\*

### **How do I learn where my child's bus stop will be?**

Bus routes are posted at <http://lps.lexingtonma.org/Page/3215>. Parents will receive an e-mail when the new routes are posted in late August. The transportation office only publishes the start times for routes; the exact timing of stops along the route can vary over the first two weeks as drivers learn their routes.

For more information, contact the Lexington Public Schools Transportation office at 781-861-2580 x68063 or [transportation@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us](mailto:transportation@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us). You can also follow @LPSBusUpdates on Twitter for up-to-the-minute updates about bus delays and other issues.

### **When is the school building open to children?**

The school building opens at 7:50 AM. On days when weather conditions are poor, students may enter the building earlier and will be supervised by administration on the 1st and 2nd floors in designated areas until 7:50 AM, when they will be allowed to proceed to their homerooms.

### **How can I find a good reading book at Clarke?**

The Library's website allows students to search for library books and have access to online encyclopedias, periodical databases, and curriculum-appropriate web sites. It also has book reviews, reading lists, instructional information and more! (<http://clarke.lexingtonma.org/library/index.htm>)

### **What is the school store?**

Students should look for the student-run store in the Third Cafeteria during lunch. Items such as pencils, erasers, and other small items are available to purchase.

### **How does my child register for Clarke athletics or clubs?**

Announcements about tryouts and meeting times are announced in school. Information is also posted in the Daily Announcements on

the the Clarke website. Anyone can join in, but please note that there is no late bus for transportation home.

\*For more information about Clarke Middle School, go to the website and click on the link to the Insider's Guide listed at the bottom of the Announcements column.



**Submission Deadline for  
November Newsletter:  
October 20, 2015**

**Please submit articles to:  
[clarke.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:clarke.newsletter@gmail.com)**