



# Douglas Digest

News of the C.T. Douglas School

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Douglas Digest

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## The World Needs Your Kid

Gandhi once said that if there is to be peace in the world, it must begin with children. And so we embark on our journey to create a more peaceful world by beginning with the children of Douglas School. This year we have collected information about hurtful behavior from parents, students, and teachers. We will share what we learned at a workshop in February. The teachers and I are studying how we will meet a new goal—teach children that there are problems in the world *and* that they can affect change in those problems today—not when they grow up, but today, as a community of many children and adults. My hope is that by focusing on teaching, we can help to create a generation who pay attention to world problems and address them in ways that current and past generations have been unable to do.

Lady Bird Johnson, a former First Lady, said, “Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them.” I believe that our children can be caring, compassionate, and courageous members of the world community. I also believe that we need to start at school as well as at home.

Now back to Gandhi and the famous story of the boy and sugar. One version of the story goes that a mother and her son walked a great distance to see the great spiritual leader. “I ask for your help and guidance,” said the woman. “Please tell my son to stop eating sugar. He will listen to you.”

Gandhi told the woman and her son to return in a month and he would have his answer.

After walking the long distance home, one month later the mother and son walked the long distance once again. “Mahatma, please talk to him, he will listen to you,” the mother pleaded.

“Young man, listen to your mother,” Gandhi said. “I want you to stop eating sugar.”

“Couldn’t you have told him that a month ago?” she asked. “We would have not had to make this long journey a second time.”

Gandhi replied, “Madam, last month I, too, was eating sugar.”

He explained that he’d had to cut sugar from his diet before he could ask the same of the boy. “We must be the change that we wish to see in the world,” he said.

If we want to end hurtful behaviors at Douglas, if we want to raise a generation of caring, compassionate and courageous young adults who affect great change in the world, then we must be that change ourselves. Are we now, and how can we become more compassionate, courageous, and caring adults? How do we model these traits for our children? These are questions that we must ask ourselves, and behaviors that we must model before we expect them of our own kids. Because now, more than ever, the world needs you and your kid.

*C. Whitbeck*

## **December PTO News**

As Thanksgiving was just on our minds, we would like to express our gratitude for the special community we have at Douglas.

Thank you to all of the Douglas parents for their generous participation in our Direct Solicitation Campaign. We feel very fortunate in these difficult times that our families continue to show their support for Douglas School and the PTO. As of the writing of this article, we have raised roughly \$11,000 of the \$14,500, which is about 76% of what we budgeted. We will continue to accept donations towards this campaign to help fund our Classroom Assistants, Library Assistants, and Technology Assistants. Remember that your donation is tax-deductible and that many companies offer a gift matching program.

Thank you to the parents and teachers who attended our PTO General Meeting on November 16. Thank you also to the parents who continue to supply baked goods for these meetings, organized by Lori Fassman, and to Ellen Hurley and Cheryl Witty, our hospitality volunteers, for setting up for the meetings. Thanks to Maria Albarran and Sue Cudmore for presenting the Recycling Committee's green plastic partyware pilot program. We also appreciated hearing more about the Free the Children organization from the parent and student representative, Kim Plewes. **Our next PTO General Meeting will be a morning meeting at Douglas on Thursday, January 20, 10am. Dr. Stephen Mills, Superintendent of the Acton-Boxborough schools, will be our guest at the meeting** and will provide an update on the school budgets and how they will affect our school, staff, and children. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet the Superintendent and ask questions in a smaller setting.

In November, we enjoyed Purposeful Change, the Veterans Day Program, and the much anticipated Ice Cream Social. Thank you to the following volunteers for their help on these events.

- ◆ Lori Fassman and Sharon Kautz for their work on the Veterans Day Program and to Peter Broggi, Brendan Ferrari, and the fifth grade students for the beautiful music and original poems.
- ◆ Jill Buonomo, Paulette Stout, Eileen Matarese, Todd and Julie Marvin, and Naomi Martin for heading up another successful Ice Cream Social. Dawn Gomez, a past Ice Cream Social chair, even made an appearance, generously coming back to show us the ropes! Special thanks to Julie and Todd Marvin who headed up the games portion of this event for the last time as their youngest child will graduate from Douglas this spring. We appreciate all of your efforts to make the Ice Cream Social so much fun! We had a great group of volunteers this year who went with the flow and made the event extra special for kids and adults (including the Coleman family running home to get hand stamps)!
- ◆ Paula Conquest for organizing Purposeful Change. Money raised this year will go toward building a school in Kenya with the organization Free the Children.
- ◆ Lori Fassman for coordinating the Staff Appreciation Thanksgiving treats for the Douglas teachers and staff, and to the many parents who provided delicious baked goods.
- ◆ Sheryl Fox for coordinating our successful November and December Scrip Fundraisers and all those who participated!
- ◆ Stacey Smith, our Playground Committee Chair, for replenishing our playground supplies, such as several different types of balls, dump trucks, and shovels.

We hope you have a wonderful winter vacation connecting with family and friends.

As always, we welcome your questions or comments and look forward to working with you in 2011!

*Kristan Smith-Park, ksmith068@gmail.com and Deanne O'Sullivan, deannewos@gmail.com*  
2010-2011 PTO Co-Chairs

## **Lost and Found**

Please have your children check Lost and Found for any items they may have misplaced since school started in September. The Lost and Found for K-2 is downstairs in front of Room 5 in two blue containers. The Lost and Found for grades 3-6 is in the cafeteria to the right of the entrance into the gym in two white cabinets. Any articles still unclaimed **by the end of December** will be donated to Big Brothers Big Sisters Organization. Thank you and good luck!

*Jen Smyers, thesmyers@verizon.net*

## **Fun for All at the Ice Cream Social!**

What a treat it was to see so many smiling faces at the ice cream social! It was an evening of playing, socializing, and enjoying yummy food! Thank you all for coming together to celebrate this Douglas tradition and support our school.



Some of you may have peeked into the cake room to see the amazing display of donated cakes. Thank you to our very talented and generous cake donors! Some of our other delicious treats were donated by Christine Phillips (sorbet), and by Donelan's, Friendly's, Roche Brothers, Stop & Stop, Shaw's of Stow, DiCapri's, and The Acton House of Pizza. We are grateful for their support.

A special thank you to the many Douglas students and alumni who helped out the night of the social; it was great to see you continuing to take an active role in your school and having so much fun doing it.

Thanks again to my fellow Ice Cream Social Chairs: Naomi Martin, Eileen Matarese, Paulette Stout, and Todd and Julie Marvin (who have been masters of the games for several years running!). A huge thank you goes out to Dawn Gomez, who returned to Douglas to lend her expertise to the ice cream and kitchen operations.

Big thanks to Cheryl Witty for coordinating the cake room, and to Kristan Smith-Park for helping out with last-minute preparations, greeting everyone with a smile, and helping out in the lobby. Thank you to Corinne Hogseth and Jen Aufiero for handling the finances. Also, kudos to Dr. Whitbeck for his patience and troubleshooting abilities!

Thank you to the amazing kitchen staff: Carolyn Murphy, Dave Maffei, Darren Mathis, Frank Matarese, Tanaz Hashemi, Susan Mathisen, Ruhan Inanoglu, Scott Maylander, Ghada Bitar, Sonal Keswani, Casey Eaton, Erica Cahill, Kara Letourneau, and Lynne Kondracki.

Our games volunteers were as fabulous as ever! Thanks so much to Judy Kaplan, Nancy Vaccaro, Maryanne Chase, Clair Howe, Linda Roberge, Liz Schaller, Scott Anderson, Sharon Kautz, Melanie Wong, Judy White, Rheta Roeber, Ramona Taylor, Lauren Gilman, Janardhan Sonthi, Nicole Harting, and Kara LeTourneau.

The success of the event was due to the coordinated efforts of so many generous and talented parents. Others who helped with the cake walk and cake distribution, setup, pizza, water, and ticket sales were: Michelle Fox, Deanne O'Sullivan, Alyssa Bozian, Anya Fillion, Seth Trotz, Darlene Crowley, Laurie Maylander, Linda Skolnik, Sagarika Kesanapalli, Elizabeth Ellis, Sandra Wolf, Terri Carotenuto, Martha Papalia, Heather Harer, Judy Rowland, Sharon Kautz, Kennett Coleman, Margaret Kohin, Sarah Clabault, Angela Ryan, Angie Tso, Vidya Kumar, Susan Haverstock, and Susan Paradiso.

Thank you to our evening custodian, Tuey Guarnieri, for all her help during the event.

Thank you all for creating a wonderful evening for the entire Douglas Community!

*Jill Buonomo*

## **Walker/Bus Pass Changes**

If a change needs to be made to a child's dismissal plan for that day (walker or bus pass), please note that **a parent must call the office** to make the change. This applies to **all** changes, including playdates, religious education classes, scout meetings, etc.

*Thank you,  
Sharon Armistead and Sharen Crooks*

## **Scrip—Perfect Holiday Gifts!**

Thank you to everyone who has purchased gift cards through this easy, "no extra cost to the buyer" fundraiser. We had an order during November, and there will be one more Scrip order placed before the winter break—coming home on December 6.

Note that American Express is no longer offering their popular gift cards through this program. The percentage received by Douglas School was never very big from AmEx and there are far more generous retailers, so please review the extensive and varied list for your holiday gift-giving needs.

Even if you don't need cards to give as gifts, they can be convenient to have for personal use as well. Please remember this important school fund-raiser and order your gift cards through Scrip. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

*Sheryl Fox, 978.631.4157  
nyoxnyox@yahoo.com*

## **Attention Donelan's Shoppers!**

Next time you shop at Donelan's Supermarket, please keep your receipt; every dollar you spend allows us to buy new educational equipment for the school. In the past, we have purchased a wide variety of items such as digital video cameras, music stands, and bulletin board materials. All you have to do is give us your Donelan's receipts dated now through March 31, 2011. For your convenience, you can even leave your receipt in the Douglas Box Tops Collection Box right in the supermarket! (Imagine, no more receipts cluttering up your car or home!) Receipts may also be left in the collection basket in the Douglas Lobby.

*Phoebe Conant, pconant@bluelink.andover.edu*

## **Boxtops for Education/Campbell's Labels**

I would like to thank all the Douglas community families and friends who handed in Boxtops for Education. I especially want to thank the volunteers who sort, clip and count each Boxtop. Together we raised \$600 for Douglas School! Please keep clipping and sending in your Boxtops for the second submission in the spring. Let's try to top that number! Also, we are always collecting the Campbell's Labels for Education. With the Campbell's program, we need to have the UPC symbol intact. Thanks again for the great help on the successful fall Boxtops submission.

*Michele Walsh, michele\_walsh@yahoo.com*

**Purposeful Change...A Success!**

We'd like to extend our thanks to every student and family who gathered up their change and made a donation to this year's Purposeful Change fundraiser. We are proud to announce that together, we were able to raise **\$1,200!** I am truly proud and inspired by all the young faces that came up to make a donation. Each and every one of them seemed to have an understanding of the contribution that they were making in changing the lives of kids like them in Kenya. We continue to chip away at our ultimate goal of raising \$8,500 needed to build a school in Kenya through the Free the Children organization.



We would like to take a moment to recognize students that made the top donations this year. Many thanks to: Sam Modur, Annika, Mia and Alex Fillion, Julia and Sara Conquest, Nuala Fraser, Lucy Krinsky, Raghav Jayakrishna, Abhiroop Deb, and Kyle Gower. Your donations were extraordinary!

Thank you, parents, for helping us teach the kids that there is greatness in giving and they have the ability to make a difference in the lives of others. Collectively, we have done just that!

*Paula Conquest, Purposeful Change Chair*

**Auction Committee Kick-off Meeting—Come and Get Involved!**

Each year, the Douglas Spring Social and Auction is by far our largest PTO fundraiser. Our 12th annual event will take place on April 2, 2011, at Wedgewood Pines Country Club in Stow.

Please consider joining the Auction Committee this year; we will need many volunteers to make the event a success. Our kick-off meeting will be held on Monday, December 6, 7:30 PM, at 16 Jefferson Drive. Come and see what the event is all about, and help us plan. Volunteers are needed for all types of jobs, large and small. If you have any questions, please contact auction co-chairs Naomi Martin or Anya Fillion.

*Naomi Martin, neasullivan@aol.com, Anya Fillion, anyawfillion@yahoo.com*

**Festival of Cultures**

At Douglas, we enjoy sharing about our cultures and our world. The Festival of Cultures celebrates our rich ethnic and cultural diversity. Douglas and Conant Schools sponsor this annual event, coming up on Saturday, May 14, 2011.

Families volunteer as ambassadors to represent their country of origin or their ethnic background by setting up a booth. These typically display items of clothing, books, music, photographs, artwork, and games from the countries being represented. Additionally, the evening includes a program featuring children performing music and dance from around the world. If your children would like to participate in the performance, please sign them up early as space is limited. In past years, we've had children representing many countries, including China, India, Ireland, Mexico, and of course the USA!

Please contact us as soon as possible if you are interested in being an ambassador, if you know of a group of children who would like to perform, or if you are willing to help during the event. We are always in need of lots of helpers! Please contact Maria Albarran (978.263.6807, rivero\_albarran@yahoo.com). Thanks to all who have already signed up to volunteer!

**Our December Book Fair is Almost Here!**

This is a fantastic fundraiser for the school and a great opportunity to purchase new books for your family & friends during this holiday season. You are invited to come and check out the great selection, either with your child's class or *any other time* the Book Fair is open.

No sales tax! Cash, checks, and credit cards accepted!

Dates:

- Wednesday (12/8) 8–10:30 AM; 1:45–6 PM
- Thursday (12/9) 8 AM–8:30 PM!
- Friday (12/10) 8 AM–6 PM
- Thursday Family Night (12/9) 6:30–8:30 PM

Remember to mark your calendars for our very popular Family Night.

*Laura Fay, 978.635.3766  
douglasbookfair@gmail.com*



### **Douglas at Dusk Enrichment Classes**

We are planning the Winter session of the Douglas at Dusk after school Enrichment Classes. If you think you might be interested in teaching a class let us know. Maybe you have a hidden talent for arts and crafts, woodworking, or origami? Wouldn't it be fun to play a variety of board games or teach magic tricks?

The winter session will begin on January 10 and most classes will run for 8 weeks. Classes take place after school from 3–4 PM, with the exception of Thursdays when classes run from 12:30–1:30 PM. Compensation is provided. Please respond by December 10.

If you are interested, please contact Sasha DeMello.

*Sasha DeMello,*  
*sdemello@mail.ab.mec.edu*

### **Boardwalk Buy-A-Board— Holiday Gift Giving!**

Have you had chance to visit the beautiful new West Acton Boardwalk between Gates and Douglas? Many boards on the new section are already engraved, but there is room for lots more! You have not missed your chance to buy a board.

The holiday season is here! Stuck for that special gift? How about an engraved board on the Boardwalk? Buy-a-board forms are on the web: [www.boardwalk.westacton.net](http://www.boardwalk.westacton.net)

In Phase II, currently being planned, we will include on-site signage for our significant sponsors. If you donate \$1,000 or more you will be included in this signage. Perhaps your local business is interested in being one of these significant donors? Contact Christine Phillips of the Boardwalk Committee at [hylandphillips@verizon.net](mailto:hylandphillips@verizon.net) for more information on Sponsorship.

Many thanks for the continued support of the Boardwalk!

*Christine Phillips*

### **Veterans Day Program Was a Success!**

The 14th annual Veterans Day Program was held on Thursday, November 4. Our fifth grade classes presented a program of patriotic songs and original readings under the direction of music teacher Peter Broggi and his assistant Brendan Ferrari. We had 18 veterans in attendance as our guests, each of whom was introduced to the school community by their host students. Jack Shirley's grandfather Rev. Dr. Riley Shirley was our guest speaker for the second year in a row; his speech was lighthearted and interesting, and gave our students a sense of what it's like to serve our country in the military. After the program, many of our guests visited the classrooms of their host students; the students always ask really insightful questions during these sessions. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped put this program together, including Phoebe Conant, Laurel Bailey Ghose, Torri Horovitz, Jamie Norton, Sarah O'Callaghan, and Kathleen Shirley.

*Lori Fassman and Sharon Kautz*  
*Veterans Appreciation Program co-chairs*

### **Eagle's Nest School Store Has Awesome New Stuff!**

Come check out light-up holiday pens, donut-scented erasers, cell phone pencil sharpeners, and much more. Most of our merchandise costs less than \$1.50. See you on Tuesday and Friday mornings at 8:15 AM at the store!

We have had lots of wonderful customers visit us so far this year. If your students haven't had a chance to visit the store, we hope to see them soon. Our staff of 4th graders and their parents are working very hard to meet your shopping expectations. A portion of the proceeds from the store help to defray the cost of an exciting 4th grade field trip. The remainder of the funds is given to Douglas and/or a local charity.

Special thanks to our 2010–2011 school store team: Cheryl Witty (Purchaser), Shana Brown (Treasurer), Ann-Marie Hanley (Scheduler) and our entire crew of parent supervisors who have gotten our school store off the ground and running at great speed!

*Debbie Cox*  
*Fourth Grade School Store Manager*

### **Thanks to our Bakers!**

Huge thanks to the many, many Douglas parents who contributed tasty, heavenly smelling baked goods for Staff Appreciation Day, which is held on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving every year. Our generous bakers contributed about 77 baked goods so that each teacher and staff member at Douglas could pick something out to take home for his or her Thanksgiving holiday. The teachers and staff really appreciate this wonderful tradition every year. Also thanks to the many parents who contribute baked goods for our PTO general meetings every other month. Those heavenly treats make the meetings even more fun to attend!

*Lori Fassman, PTO Baking Coordinator*

## News from the Douglas Health Office

We are hoping that the Thanksgiving recess will isolate some of the viruses floating about and give children and families a little extra rest.

Speaking of rest, we are seeing more children with fatigue. Children, too, juggle life's responsibilities: they balance school, homework, activities, leisure, and family obligations. Often, they can rest a short while in the health office and carry on with their day but are not at their best. Following is an article with some good reminders on why we should "schedule" in a good sleep. It could be a discussion for a family dinner.

*Diane Oster, RN and Joanne Chadwick, RN*

### The Importance of Sleep

Why is sleep important to overall wellness?

- ◆ **Health:** Not getting enough sleep increases the risk of having high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. During sleep your body produces hormones which fuel growth in children, help build muscle mass, and repair cells and tissues.
- ◆ **Mood:** Not getting enough sleep can make you irritable and contributes to bad behavior and difficulty with relationships. People who chronically lack sleep are more likely to be depressed.
- ◆ **Learning:** We need sleep to think clearly, react quickly, and create memories. The pathways in the brain that aid with learning and creative problem solving are very active during sleep.
- ◆ **Athletic performance:** According to the National Sleep Foundation, sleep deprivation can affect athletic performance by reducing cardiovascular performance, decreasing mental functioning, reducing endurance, impairing motor function, and delaying visual and auditory reaction time.

How much sleep do you really need?

Sleep needs vary from person to person and change throughout the lifespan. According to the National Sleep Foundation: preschoolers (3–5 years) need 11–13 hours of sleep, school-aged children (5–12 years) need 10–11 hours of sleep, teens (13–17 years) need 8.5–9.25 hours of sleep, and adults need between 7–9 hours of sleep each night.

For more information on the importance of sleep visit:

- ◆ [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov) (National Institutes of Health)
- ◆ [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org) (National Sleep Foundation)



Have you received a call from the school nurse lately? Brief statistics for the past month:

- ◆ 151 visits for injuries and first aid
- ◆ 300 illness assessments and 15 children sent home due to findings
- ◆ 50 "other" including lost teeth, clothing changes, etc.
- ◆ 32 scheduled meds given and 45 scheduled medical procedures
- ◆ 95% return to class rate

### ***This month's recipe from Healthy Cooking with Your Kids: Banana in a Blanket***

Preparation time: 5 minutes.

- 1 (6 inch) whole wheat tortilla
- 1 tablespoon reduced-fat smooth peanut butter
- 1 medium banana
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup or honey
- 1 tablespoon crunchy, nutty nugget cereal

Lay tortilla on a plate. Spread peanut butter evenly on the tortilla. Sprinkle cereal over peanut butter. Peel and place banana on the tortilla and roll the tortilla. Drizzle maple syrup or honey on top.

*Optional: garnish with more cereal on top.*

Serves: 1; ½ cup of fruit per serving; fruit and/or veggie color(s): white

Nutrition Information per serving: calories: 303, total fat: 6.4g, saturated fat: 1.2g, % calories from fat: 17%, % calories from saturated fat: 3%, protein: 9g, carbohydrates: 63g, cholesterol: 0mg, dietary fiber: 7g, sodium: 306mg

Each serving provides: An excellent source of fiber, and a good source of vitamin C, folate, magnesium and potassium.

### ***A Note from Food Service***

This month we will feature a "Taste of Italy" day at Douglas on December 21.

**Dates to Remember**

December 8–10	Scholastic Book Fair
Friday, December 10	Scrip orders due
December 24–January 2	Winter recess: NO SCHOOL
Tuesday, January 11	General information meeting for entering kindergarteners, R.J. Grey auditorium
Monday, January 17	Martin Luther King Day: NO SCHOOL
Wednesday, January 19	Kindergarten tours start
Thursday, January 20	General PTO meeting with Dr. Mills, Superintendent of Acton-Boxborough Schools All are welcome! 10 AM in cafetorium
Monday, January 24	Kindergarten changeover
Saturday, January 29	Newcomers playdate

**Snack Cart Donations**

December 2	(Grades 3 and 6) Mr. Cail, Mrs. Ritter, Mrs. Simeone, Mrs. Hubbell
December 9	<b>Pretzel Day</b>
December 16	(Grades 2 and 6) Mrs. Kay, Mrs. Littlefield, Mrs. Savage, Mrs. Christensen
December 23	(Grades 1 and 6) Miss Hunt, Mrs. Ingraham, Mrs. Tajima, Mrs. Oxnard
December 30	No School/Vacation
January 6	(Grade 5 and AMK) Mrs. Cherkerzian, Mrs. Rand, Mrs. Sharp, Mrs. Smith (fall AMK)

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**MCAS Dates—2011**

Dear Parents of 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students:  
 Your children will be taking the MCAS tests on the following dates:

- Grade 3: March 21, 22, and 23  
           May 9, 10, and 11
- Grade 4: March 21, 22, 23, and 25  
           May 9, 10, and 11
- Grade 5: March 21, 22, and 23  
           May 9, 10, 11, 16, and 17
- Grade 6: March 21, 22, and 23  
           May 9, 10, and 11

Please make every effort to have your children attend school on these dates and arrive promptly by 8:30 AM; tests will begin shortly after the start of school.

Your support is appreciated.

Dr. Christopher Whitbeck