



# Douglas Digest

News of the C.T. Douglas School  
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## Douglas Digest

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## Table of Contents

PTO News	Pg 2
Kindergarten	
Registration	Pg 2
PIP Family Night	Pg 3
Spring Auction	Pg 3
Cultural	
Enrichment	Pg 4
Festival of Culture	Pg 4
Health Office	Pg 5
Snack Cart	Pg 6
Douglas Dates	Pg 6

### AWAKE AMAZED AMUSED

“DAD!!!! IT SNOWED!!!!!!WHERE’RE MY SNOW PANTS?????!!!” 5:35 a.m. It’s dark...

“Huh? I dunno know...it’s 5:30 in the morning...go back to bed.”

“Come on, come on Dad. I wanna sled. Can I sled?”

“No.”

“Awwww...”

“OK, sure. No yelling outside. It’s 5:30 in the morning. Consider this an early Hanukah gift.”

“OOOOKAY!”

“NO YELLING!”

I’m awake.

The dog jumps off the bed. She wants to be fed and taken out. It’s still snowing. 5:30 in the morning and I shuffle downstairs, feed the dog, start the coffee, wipe my sleepy eyes, look outside to see a freshly covered yard and five children hauling sleds across my driveway. All the neighbor’s lights are on, their door slightly ajar, as is ours, all of our children amazed by the first snow of winter.

I pull on my boots, jacket, hat and gloves. Put the leash on Maggie and head outside. Brrr, it’s cold. There’s lots of yelling. It’s just after 5:30 in the morning. The kids are sledding down our front yard hill into the street.

“Hey!” I yell (softly) in my best principal voice. “That’s not how you sled.”

Ice-covered children stop midslide and stare at me. They look like frozen carolers.

“Follow me, I have a gift for you.” I grab a saucer from one of the kids.

We march into the backyard. One big guy followed by five waddling, snow-suited children. I pick up the pace, throw my body down on the saucer just as it hits the snow and whip down the hill screaming all the way. I dump off just in time to avoid meeting a tree head on. Covered in snow, laughing, I trudge up the hill to laughing children.

“That’s how you sled.” I say confidently as I walk toward the house. “But no yelling!”

5:30 in the morning and I didn’t have to go very far to be amused. And, if you read this far, and if what I’ve written made you smile, then you have my gift to you: The laughter that comes from simple-minded foolish joy only found early in the morning.

**Happy New Year!**

## PTO NEWS



As we begin 2009, we want to welcome you all back to Douglas School!  
We hope you enjoyed your vacation week and had a wonderful time with family and friends.

Winter time at school is a special season to enjoy its many opportunities but enduring its challenges can make life a little hectic. We want to thank our teachers, school staff and volunteers who help make each day happen and move smoothly. On those snowy, icy and slushy days, our custodians, John Pacelli and Dave Bouchard are hard at work early and late to make sure the walkways are safe outdoors as well as indoors. Without them, life would be much harder and we want to recognize them for all that they do.

During the winter, the students have a lot of indoor recess. Last year, the Douglas students designated some of their Purposeful Change to purchase Board Games for their classrooms during indoor recess. This year, the PTO plans to continue to build this needed supply of Board Games. If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Sara Junghans ([junghans2@verizon.net](mailto:junghans2@verizon.net) , 978-264-4769).

Speaking of Purposeful Change, this year's collection took place in December and raised money to purchase blankets for the HGRM (Household Goods Recycling Ministries). It was wonderful to see so many children come drop off their collected change. One student, a 6<sup>th</sup> grader had been collecting her extremely large and heavy pile of change since Kindergarten and another student, a 1<sup>st</sup> grader gave all the extra money he had that day, 6 cents. Both children, as did all the children, had great purpose in their action no matter how big or small their donation. Thank you to Julia Kline and her volunteers for organizing this effort, collecting and counting the change.

The Douglas PTO is looking forward to some great events in 2009. The Spring Social and Auction is the PTO's largest parent social and fundraiser. If you are interested in helping on this committee, please contact Sarah Clabault ([s.clabault@comcast.net](mailto:s.clabault@comcast.net), 978-635-9487) or Maryanne Chase ([maryanne.chase@verizon.net](mailto:maryanne.chase@verizon.net), 978-266-2759).

Another fun event that will happen in the near future is our annual Lowell Devils Hockey Family Outing. Join other Douglas Families, take a break from your usual routine, and enjoy a semi-professional hockey game at the same time! Watch for more information coming home soon.

**Please join us for our morning PTO General Meeting on Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup> in the Douglas cafetorium. At 8:45 am, we will have an opportunity to socialize and enjoy some light breakfast foods. The meeting will begin at 9:00 am.** Superintendent Bill Ryan will provide an update on the FY '10 Acton Public Schools Budget and any proposed cuts. Your participation and feedback is greatly appreciated. We look forward to seeing you there!

As always, please let us know if you have any comments or questions!

Cassie Stewart and Cheryl Witty, PTO Co-Chairs  
([cassie\\_stewart@comcast.net](mailto:cassie_stewart@comcast.net), 978-635-1661) ([ckwitty@verizon.net](mailto:ckwitty@verizon.net), 978-266-0177)

### KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION INFORMATION

For Douglas families with a child entering Kindergarten in the fall, early registration will take place at R.J. Grey Junior High School on Tuesday, January 20th, 9:00-noon & 7:00pm-9:00 pm and Wednesday January 21st, 9:00-noon. In order to register your child, you must bring a copy of your child's birth certificate/passport along with their most recent physical examination & immunization records.

Regular registration for non priority students will take place on Tuesday, March 17th and Wednesday March 18th at the same times. Any family with a child already in a school is considered a priority candidate for that school and should be registered on the early registration dates.

More information about the Kindergarten registration, Kindergarten Tours and Parent Information evenings can be found at <http://www.ab.mec.edu/pdf/files/KMasterSchedule.pdf>.

## PIP Family Math Game Night

**\*\*New PIP Event and Location\*\*:**

**Wednesday, January 21, 2009, 5:00 to 8:00pm**  
Boxborough Sargent Memorial Library (on 111 near Blanchard School ).



Turn off the electronics and come play! AB PIP (Parent Involvement Project) will hold a fun family math game night – free and all ages welcome. Come play “domino math”, learn how “Math Circles” work, discover Kenken and share your favorite family math games. See how games can be a fun engaging way to sharpen kids' math and computational skills.

PIP is a volunteer organization of parents, students, educators and community partners promoting science and math educational activities for families in the Acton-Boxborough (AB) community. To learn more about PIP, math game night or upcoming 2009 activities such as 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Market Math, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Star Parties, earth friendly educational activities and more, contact Sue Cudmore, new Douglas PIP rep at [susan.cudmore@gmail.com](mailto:susan.cudmore@gmail.com) or visit the PIP website at [www.actonpip.org](http://www.actonpip.org)



## SPRING SOCIAL AND AUCTION UPDATE

*The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Douglas Spring Social and Auction is planned for Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup> at the Wedgewood Pines Country Club from 6:30 p.m.– 11:00 p.m. Be sure to join us for this important fundraiser and fun social event for Douglas staff and parents!*

The Spring Social and Auction will be here before you know it! You will be receiving an invitation in your child’s backpack within the next few weeks inviting you to the Spring Social and Auction. You will also receive a flyer with information on how you can purchase tickets as well as donate items or services to the auction. You can log onto [douglas.ab.mec.edu](http://douglas.ab.mec.edu) to print out copies of the RSVP and donation forms. Hard copy tickets will not be sent out this year. You will receive a confirmation via email within 7 days of your purchase. If you have any questions regarding tickets, please contact Cheryl Witty ([ckwitty@verizon.net](mailto:ckwitty@verizon.net), 978-266-0177).

***WE NEED YOUR HELP AND YOUR CREATIVE DONATIONS!***

We still need volunteers in many areas to help make this event a success. This year we will continue with our very successful silent auction. The mini-live auction (Quickie Boards) as well as multiple raffles will also take place again this year. *We are also looking for fresh ideas!!* This is going to be an interesting year for the auction. We need some unique ideas and donations to make this auction a huge success. Remember, no donation is ever too small. Consider pooling your resources with other Douglas parents to make a combined donation. Also, consider sending in any gift-cards that you are not going to be using. We will put them to good use. Contact Erin Boisvert ([eboisvert@mcwalterlaw.com](mailto:eboisvert@mcwalterlaw.com), 978-263-5113) or Kim Davis at ([kndavis5@msn.com](mailto:kndavis5@msn.com), 978-264-1984) for more information regarding donations.

Please support Douglas by sending in your RSVP and donation forms! If you have any question regarding the auction, please contact Maryanne Chase ([Maryanne.chase@verizon.net](mailto:Maryanne.chase@verizon.net)) or Sarah Clabault ([S.clabault@comcast.net](mailto:S.clabault@comcast.net)).



## NEWS FROM CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

We had some great Cultural Enrichment programs in the fall. For our first all-school presentation, we had Casey Carle performing his “BubbleMania Science Program.” Casey combined the fun of bubbles with practical, age appropriate science. He explained how bubbles form, why they’re spherical, how to make a cube bubble and the science of bubble bursting – each topic related to the physical laws of the natural world. Older grades (4-6) saw demonstrations of molecular bonding and surface tension. In addition to the science aspects, the program was full of visual comedy, quick wit, swing music and amazing soap bubble manipulations. You can read more about Casey Carle and even get some of his bubble solution recipes at [www.bubblemania.com](http://www.bubblemania.com).

Grade 3 had a visit from Ralph Masiello (the “Ickybugman”). Mr. Masiello, an author and illustrator, demonstrated the illustration process, discussed reading and research skills and showed examples of his original artwork. He also discussed the printing process and finished with a drawing demonstration. For more information about Mr. Masiello, you can visit his website at [www.ickybugman.com](http://www.ickybugman.com).

Grade 4 enjoyed a wonderful Native American presentation by Tchin, a Narragansett/Blackfeet Indian. Tchin is a nationally known artist and educator of Indian arts, music and culture. His performance featured traditional storytelling and Native American Courting flute. The 4th graders learned a lot about oral tradition, world creation, environmental awareness and cultural diversity from Tchin's special visit. You can read more about Tchin and hear one of his stories at [www.tchin.net](http://www.tchin.net).

These programs were sponsored by the PTO and were funded in part by your snack cart purchases. Thank you for your support.

Debbie Dormitzer, Terry Martins and Linda Skolnik, Cultural Enrichment Co-Chairs



### **SAVE THE DATE FOR THE FESTIVAL OF CULTURES!**

We have a date for this year’s Festival of Cultures! It will be Saturday, May 16, 2009.

This event celebrates our rich ethnic and cultural diversity. We hope to recruit families or “ambassadors” who are originally from all areas of the globe. Ambassadors set up booths, representing countries, where children can visit and learn. The booths typically have items of clothing, books, music, photographs, artwork, and games from the country being represented.

Additionally, the evening includes a program featuring children performing music and dance from around the world. The performance spots go early so please sign up as soon as possible by contacting me at the below phone number or email address.

Finally, if you are willing to help out before or during the event, please let me know. Thanks to all who have already signed up to volunteer!

Kristan Smith-Park ([ksmith068@aol.com](mailto:ksmith068@aol.com), 978-263-3514)

## NOTES FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE

### *Dressing for Winter*

The cold weather has finally arrived!!

We just wanted to remind you that the children will be going outside for recess unless it is extremely cold or raining. Recess is a very important part of their day and gives them a chance to exercise and get some fresh air.

Please make sure that the children are dressed appropriately for 25 minutes of outdoor activity. Coats, hats, mittens and boots are a must when the weather is cold. Dressing appropriately for the winter temperatures will keep the children not only warm, but healthy as well.

### *Illness*

Just a reminder: if your child has been diagnosed with strep throat, impetigo, conjunctivitis, or pneumonia inform the Health office either by note or message.



### *Diabetes – Recognize the Warning Signs*

Diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases in children. In the United States, 1 in every 400-600 children has Type I diabetes. (National Diabetes Education Program).

Type 1 (Insulin Dependent) diabetes is most common in youth.

Type 2 (Insulin Resistance) diabetes is most common in adults but is on the rise in youth.

“Diabetes is a chronic disease that impairs the body’s ability to use food properly. Insulin is a hormone produced in the pancreas that is necessary for the body to convert food into energy. In people with diabetes, either the pancreas doesn’t make insulin, the body cannot use the insulin properly, or both. Without insulin, glucose (sugar) builds up in the blood.” (American Diabetes Association)

***Early detection and knowledge of the warning signs is your greatest weapon against the disease and its complications***

Behaviors a child might exhibit in school that could indicate undiagnosed diabetes are:

- Excessive urination (frequent trips to the bathroom especially in close sequence, bedwetting)
- Excessive thirst (frequent trips to the water fountain)
- Irritability
- Lack of energy, fatigue, drowsiness
- Rubs eyes, complains of difficulty seeing the board
- Difficulty paying attention
- Other symptoms may include:
- Sudden vision changes
- Fruity/sweet odor to breath or urine
- Increased appetite
- Rapid or unexplained weight loss
- Nausea, vomiting or abdominal pain
- Tingling or numbness in the legs, feet or fingers

- Frequent infections of the skin, cuts that are slow to heal
- Darker patches of skin usually in neck folds
- Itching of skin and/or genitals

Note - Many of these symptoms can be related to illnesses that are not associated with diabetes. Only a healthcare professional can provide appropriate diagnostic tests and treatments.

#### References

- American Diabetes Association at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)
- National Diabetes Education Program at [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov).
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

(Summarized by the APS/ABRHS school nurses)



### **Douglas Dates**

- January 13** – 9 a.m. PTO General Meeting; 8:45 a.m. PTO Social before Meeting
- January 19** – Martin Luther King Jr. Day – NO SCHOOL
- January 21** – Kindergarten Tours: 8:45 - 10:15 a.m.; 12:30 - 2 p.m.
- January 26** – Kindergarten Switch Over
- February 3** – 7 p.m. Parent Information Meeting for Incoming Kindergarten Parents Seeking More Information about Douglas School
- February 3** – Kindergarten Tours: 8:45 - 10:15 a.m.; 12:30 - 2 p.m.
- February 16-20** – Winter Recess – NO SCHOOL

### **SNACK CART DONATIONS**

1/8/2009	Mrs. Hubbell	Mrs. Bethel	Ms. Savage	Mrs. Smith* AM Kindergarten (first half of year)
1/15/2009	<b>Pretzel Day</b>			
1/22/2009	Mrs. Rand	Mrs. Simeone	Ms. Hunt	Ms. Fitzpatrick
1/29/2009	Mrs. Bloom	Mrs. Breslin	Mrs. Littlefield	Mrs. Tajima
2/5/2009	<b>Pretzel Day</b>			
2/12/2009	Mrs. Sharp	Mr. Cail	Mrs. Oxnard	Mrs. Kay