

DOUGLAS DIGEST

office: 978.266.2560
principal: Dr. Christopher Whitbeck
school: <http://douglas.ab.mec.edu>
PTO: <http://www.DouglasSchoolPTO.org>

December 2, 2013

Douglas Digest

Editors:
Sharon Metzger
Lori Fassman
Distributors:
Jill Maxwell
Michele Walsh

The Douglas School PTO publishes the Digest every six weeks during the school year.
Next issue: January 6.

We welcome article ideas and feedback. Please email Lori at lori@fassman.com.

DouglasSchoolPTO.org and push that purple button today! We are at 36% today! Help us go higher! (And remember, gifts of \$200 or more earn Spiritwear rewards coupons; gifts of \$400 or more earn a pair of Auction tickets. Everyone wins!)

Matching Gifts: Did you forget to tell us if you work for a company that matches charitable donations? It's not too late! We are happy to coordinate the matching gift on your behalf. Contact Jennifer Aufiero, jennifer_aufiero@hotmail.com.

Book Fair: We are looking for volunteers to work at the fair, which will take place December 11–13. (Find the sign-up link under "Volunteers Needed" on the PTO web site.) By now you have received a Shopping Guide along with your child's classroom shopping timeslot. Get great prices on terrific books and other gift items! And, if you are feeling generous, the teachers and specialists always have Wish Bags for books they would love to add to their classroom/office libraries. What a fun way to support our school!

Spring Social & Auction: Planning is kicking into high-gear! We need help in all areas including gift solicitation, business sponsorships, class gift coordination, and on-site event support! We gladly welcome all adults—men, don't be shy!

Scrip Gift Cards: These make great stocking stuffers, teachers' gifts, etc. See page 2 for news of the next Scrip drive.

Boxtops, Labels for Education, Crosby's/Donelan's: As you are shopping for holiday meals and baking sweet treats, remember to save and turn in your labels and receipts. They translate to cash for our school!

Target REDcard Holders: Register your card so that Douglas receives 1% of each purchase—that's in addition to the 5% off your purchase that you already receive. Tell your grandparents, aunts, uncles and neighbors. Register your card and Douglas benefits!

Stop & Shop A+ Schools Rewards: This program helps you shop with a purpose! Go online and register your card. (You need to re-register each school year.) To date we've earned \$60...with the click of a button we can bump that up for sure!

Pledge to volunteer an hour or two each month. It truly takes a village to make things happen at Douglas, and our volunteers are worth their weight in gold. We simply couldn't plan all the marvelous events we do without your time, energy, effort, and dedication; our gratitude is deep. If you have spare time to help in the building, at an event, or from home after the kids go to bed, we've got opportunities that fit every comfort level. Click on the "Volunteer Roles" tab at DouglasSchoolPTO.org to search for the job that suits you. We need volunteers all year, not just in the fall. Thank you for considering, and we welcome you. May your season be bright and your heart be filled with generosity!

Eileen Matarese and Karen Jarsky, PTO Co-Chairs

From the PTO

We survived the frenetic fall and can now direct our energies towards the more important things in life, including celebrating holidays with family and friends, turning over a new leaf to welcome the New Year, and giving thanks to our wonderful school community. In the coming weeks, simple acts of generosity can really make a difference at Douglas. Here's how you can help:

Tax Time: Get your final tax-deductible donation to the PTO in under the wire and help us reach our goal of 100% participation. The Annual Giving Campaign wraps up at the end of 2013, and every donation counts! Please support our assistants—it's hard to imagine our classrooms without them! Just go to

Creativity and Elevators

Creativity—having new ideas of value—requires the ability to play. The willingness to suspend initial judgment and let loose, if even just for a moment. Young children are very creative and as they move to adulthood, often suppress this. Let me share an example.

Early one evening I sat in the lobby of a hotel in Toronto during our trip with students for We Day. A man my age sat next to me.

"Waiting for your students?"

"As always," said he, with a sigh.

"Want to play a game while we're killing time?" I asked.

"What kind of game?"

"See those three elevators? We wait until all three doors are closed and then each picks a door. We'll bet a dollar on having picked the next door that opens. The winner gets the money. If the door opens that neither one of us picked, the money stays in the pot for another round. The winner takes all the money on the table."

The man stared at me for a long time. He raised his eyebrows higher than I had thought humanly possible. And then launched himself up and out of his seat, "You must be out of your mind," he said.

He marched off straight across the lobby into the first elevator door that opened.

Just as well for him. If he had bet me, I would have won—I had a dollar on that door.

Coming out of the door were two of my students. More were still coming.

"Want to play a game while we're killing time?" I asked.

"What kind of game?"

Soon we've each picked an elevator and the students added other odds—does a man or woman walk out first? Extra points if it opens empty. Extra, extra points if you predict how many people are inside. These kids know how to play—and we're not even playing for money!

Laughter ensues, and as the rest of our group exits my elevator and I've correctly predicted a woman exiting first, full out whooping celebration!

Creativity lives on at Douglas hopefully whether you're 10 or a little older!

C. Whitbeck

Dates to Remember

December 11–13

Book Fair

Thursday, December 19

APS School Committee, 7 PM at RJ Grey

December 23–January 1

Winter recess: NO SCHOOL

Friday, January 10

Movie Night, Grades K–3

Monday, January 20

Martin Luther King Day: NO SCHOOL

Snack Cart Donations

See snack details on the PTO website.

December 5	Pretzel Day, Grade 2
December 12	Grade 5, ADK
December 19	Popcorn Day, Grade 6
January 2	Grades 3 and 4

Save These Dates

Week of March 17

MCAS testing, Grades 3–6

See MCAS date details per grade on the Douglas website.

Saturday, March 29

Douglas Spring Social and Auction

Saturday, April 12

Festival of Cultures

Week of May 5

MCAS testing, Grades 3–6

EDTech News

Innovative Learning Program

Congratulations to Martha Bethel for being the first teacher at Douglas to participate in the district's Innovative Learning Program (ILP)! This program provides teachers the opportunity to integrate meaningful technology into their classrooms and encourages its use in support of specific learning goals. Martha and her students now have access to a classroom set of Chromebooks, which will be used to enable active, independent learning and to provide creative ways for students to demonstrate their knowledge and receive timely feedback on their work. Students have already acknowledged these tools as being an integral part of their learning, but they are even more excited to be supporting the district's "Green Ribbon" program by working towards a paperless classroom and using fewer resources.

Amy Bisiewicz, Director of Educational Technology

Scrip Gift Cards

Thanks to all the parents that participated in the November Scrip drive and made it so successful! Scrip is a program in which major retailers donate a portion of the gift card you purchase to fund PTO programs for our students.

Douglas School certainly runs on Dunkin considering that it was our biggest selling gift card! LLBean, Gap, and iTunes were also some of our biggest sellers. Please keep coming back for more of those cards! Gift cards are great teachers' gifts, stocking stuffers, etc., and useful to have on hand for your own shopping.

Our next Scrip drive is December 4–11. Look for order forms coming home via backpack, or order on line at shopwithscrip.com. Those cards will be sent back to you the week of December 16. Please participate in this great program!

Want more details on how to order? Visit the Scrip page on the PTO website: DouglasSchoolPTO.org/drupal/node/373.

Debby Lee and Deb Cox

Thank You...Merci...Gracias! ಧನ್ಯವಾದಗಳು 谢谢

We are so fortunate to have such a committed, engaged, group of families at Douglas. In fact, sometimes we can't keep up with the notes of gratitude! With that in mind, in coming weeks you may notice some changes to the "Thanks from the PTO" column here in the Digest and the "Many Thanks" page of the PTO website. But however we express it—whether in a public space or more privately—we hope all Douglas volunteers know this: Our school would not be the same without you! Since the last Digest...

Ice Cream Social: **Tiffany Prunesti, Debby Lee, Karen Pierce, Jen Aufiero, and Laurel Ghose**, who recruited and oversaw more than 55+ volunteers who welcomed, scooped, caked, and gamed more than 550 guests for this beloved Douglas tradition.

Veterans Day: **Jennifer Aufiero and Valerie Bauer Gore** co-chaired another moving tribute to current and past members of the armed forces, and **Peter Broggi** produced a program of patriotic songs and readings that left many adults reaching for their tissues.

Thanksgiving Baking: Our baking coordinator, **Mira Greenland**, once again rallied a team of volunteers to provide delectable treats for 70+ Douglas staff to share with their families on Thanksgiving.



Spotlight: Free the Children Fundraising Goal

Education is the focus of this year's goal, and our community is super excited to be contributing to this year's efforts to build a second school in our

adopted village of Osenetoi, Kenya. We are trying to raise \$10,000 so that all of the children of Osenetoi can receive an education, clean water, and food. Once we reach our goal, the village will be self-sufficient and able to blossom into a strong, healthy, and happy community.

We are excited to report that we have already raised over \$3,000, but to help us raise even more, here are some upcoming Free the Children events to allow everyone to participate in our efforts for education in Osenetoi. One event is the Holiday Fair (December 7, 10 AM–1 PM at the Acton Memorial Library) where you can purchase different crafts that Free the Children will be selling. All proceeds go toward our cause to build the school. The second event is Holidays for Hope. In this event, we invite all Douglas families to donate money that would've been spent to buy one holiday gift. We've had several successful events, and we hope to keep our momentum alive and growing. Don't miss these chances to be part of something special this holiday season. The world won't change by itself! It needs people who can make a difference...people like you.

Dr. Chris Whitbeck

Spiritwear: Thanks to **Sandy Munger, Sheri Palazzo, and Paulette Stout**, it's never been easier to be decked out in fantastic and stylish Douglas clothing and accessories.

Box Tops, Labels, and Receipts: You know who makes an enormous amount of work look easy? **Maria Parodos, Soyung Chang, and Katherine Lee** and their team, who ensure our school receives every possible penny from these programs.

Snack Cart: **Heather Chase, Liz Schaller, and Janice Yee** and their bevy of volunteers do an amazing job coordinating Snack Cart each week, even when it means bagging up snacks and delivering them to classrooms because of other Thursday events.

Post Office: Thank you **Betsy Mercier and Bill Hickey** for ensuring that neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night keeps our third graders from delivering Douglas mail.

Directory: That gorgeous bright orange Douglas Directory would not be in your hands without the hours of hard work put in by **Sharon Metzger, Amy Austin, and Adriano Sabatelli**.

*Eileen Matarese and Karen Jarsky
PTO Co-Chairs*