

DOUGLAS DIGEST

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Douglas Digest

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The Douglas School PTO publishes the Digest every six weeks during the school year.
Next issue: December 2.

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

From the PTO

Phew! We made it through the first month of school! If you're new to Douglas—and if even if you're not—it can be difficult to get used to the amount of information that comes home, especially in these early autumn weeks. We hope you're receiving our weekly emails and taking advantage of the PTO website (www.DouglasSchoolPTO.org) to stay informed. A few of our larger initiatives and events are already in motion:

- ◆ **Annual Giving Campaign**—This is Douglas' second largest fundraiser, and our hope is that every family will participate. Whether you contribute \$10 or \$500, 100% of your donation goes toward valuable programs and resources (like teaching assistants) that enhance students' learning experience. Thanks to everyone who has donated so far! (Donate by October 25 to be eligible to win Ice Cream Social tickets and sundaes, Spiritwear, and auction tickets! Click the purple button at www.DouglasSchoolPTO.org for details.)
- ◆ **Ice Cream Social**—On October 25, Douglas will be transformed into a carnival-like ice cream party. Enjoy pizza and a sundae, watch kids win cakes at the cake walk, and play games for prizes throughout the Douglas hallways. Order food tickets and game wristbands in advance to avoid lines. Bring extra quarters for the cake walk, and don't forget to donate a cake or two!
- ◆ **Purposeful Change**—Each year our students learn how spare change can add up and change the lives of people in need. This program kicks off at the Ice Cream Social this year, and donations will again go to Free the Children.



A Great Cup of Coffee

I walk into The Second Cup coffee shop in Toronto on a crisp September afternoon with students and teachers from Douglas. We are in Canada for We Day, an international youth conference sponsored by Free The Children.

"Hi, I'd like a large black decaf." "That'll take about five minutes," the young lady says. She has a very friendly smile. "It'll be a great cup of coffee." I say OK and talk to the kids about the yummy cakes on display. Then I notice my wife chatting up the young woman.

"This is my husband, he's the school principal," I hear my wife say. "Sorry for the noise, we're excited about We Day," I say, expecting a blank look. "I know!" says the young woman. "I'm going as an honored guest!" The 25-year-old woman is Fatamire Feka. I was speaking with one of the most positive role models for young women I have ever met.

On April 20, 1999, Feka was on the run. Serbian paramilitary units were rounding up Albanian Muslims for execution. She ran out of her home and hid in a forest. Through the night, 11-year-old Feka lost her brother and her sister. Both are still missing.

When she turned 12, Feka's family was in a homeless shelter in Kosovo with other Muslim families. While she was there, with the help of the teachers at the shelter, she

founded "Kids Clubs for Peace." The club used meetings, skits, and songs to bring together youth from differing ethnicities. "When I started to work for peace, everyone perceived me as deviant," she told us. "Fighting was normal. Hating each other was normal." Her mother even slapped her for being a public advocate for peace.

Even Feka herself still felt hatred toward Serbians. But when she was 16, a Serbian teenager asked Feka to share her story. The Serbian teenager cried. "That was such a powerful thing," Feka said. "That not only changed my life, but all the children in the room. I realized that not all Serbians are bad." Instead of living with hate, she could forgive and tell her story; she could change others and her actions could bring peace.

At the age of 17, Feka was selected as one of the "1,000 Women of Peace across the Globe." The women were subsequently nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize.

We returned to Second Cup daily. We had coffee with Fatamire and met her younger sister. We talked of peace and changing the world. It was a great cup of coffee.

C. Whitbeck

In November we'll pay tribute to service members past and present at our **Veterans Day program**. Our annual **Book Fair** will be held in December. It's a great opportunity to purchase books for the holidays!

Our programs are possible because parents are willing to step up and volunteer. There is always a need for more help. Please go to the "Get Involved" section of the PTO website for information.

Join us at the next PTO General Meeting on **Tuesday, November 12, at 7:30 PM**. This meeting will feature a Spring Social and Auction "Kick-off" session, where the event leaders will fill you in on plans for our biggest annual fundraiser.

Eileen Matarese and Karen Jarsky
PTO Co-Chairs

News from the Douglas Free the Children Leadership Team

In September, 21 members of the Leadership Team represented Douglas at We Day in Toronto. They were front row for speeches about changing the world with Martin Luther King III and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (President of Liberia).

Watch for two campaigns in October: the "We Scare Hunger" food drive and Purposeful Change.

Dates to Remember

Thursday, October 17

APS School Committee, RJ Grey, 7 PM

Friday, October 25

Ice Cream Social, 6 PM

Purposeful Change collection begins

Tuesday, October 29

EARLY DISMISSAL (elementary only)

All early dismissal days follow Thursday schedule; all classes—including AMK—are dismissed at 1 PM.

Thursday, October 31

Halloween Parade, 11:45 AM

Tuesday, November 5

Professional Day: NO SCHOOL

Wednesday, November 6

PE Night, 6 PM

Thursday, November 7

Veterans Day Program, 10 AM

Thursday, November 7

AB School Committee, RJ Grey, 7:30 PM

Monday, November 11

Veterans Day: NO SCHOOL

Tuesday, November 12

General PTO Meeting, 7:30 PM

Wednesday, November 13

EARLY DISMISSAL (elementary only)

Thursday, November 14

Douglas Spirit Day

Thursday, November 14

APS School Committee, 7 PM at RJ Grey

Thursday, November 21

Apple Pie Making (fundraiser)

Thursday, November 21

APS School Committee, RJ Grey, 7 PM

Wednesday, November 27

EARLY DISMISSAL

Faculty/Staff Thanksgiving Appreciation

November 28–29

Thanksgiving break: NO SCHOOL

Snack Cart Donations

See snack details on the PTO website.

October 17	Grade 1, Mrs. Smith
October 24	Grade 2, Dr. Fitzpatrick
October 31	Grades 5 and 6
November 7	Pretzel Day
November 14	Popcorn Day, Grade 3
November 21	Grade 4, Mrs. Smith, Dr. Fitzpatrick
November 28	Thanksgiving
December 5	Pretzel Day, Grade 2



Improving Douglas

This summer, AB administrators and teachers worked with Dr. Yong Zhao, a professor of education at the University of Oregon. He helped us think about how we can build students' skills so that they're ready for the future. He helped us realize that population growth, technology, and globalization have brought about massive changes that create opportunities. We have to

help students become globally minded, creative, and even entrepreneurial. Entrepreneurship is no longer limited to starting or owning a business; it includes social entrepreneurship, policy entrepreneurship, and creative thinking within organizations (what is sometimes referred to as "intrapreneurship").

Unfortunately, traditional schooling can stifle students' creativity and their entrepreneurial spirit. We need a paradigm shift—from prescribing children's education to supporting their learning, and from reducing human diversity to a few employable skills to enhancing individual talents.

The first step in our process at Douglas will be to identify our core values and priorities. Why do we do what we do at Douglas School? Are we doing the best to prepare our students for junior high, high school, and beyond? What should our priorities be over the next five, ten, and even twenty years? What do we do at Douglas, how do we do it, and why? Our school improvement goal this year requires us to answer these questions. The changes that Dr. Zhao highlighted underscore their urgency.

To this end, we will be asking staff and parents to complete a survey that helps us identify what is important at Douglas. At this stage we are focused on big ideas rather than specific program suggestions. We want to know what you think Douglas does and does not do well, and where we should focus our energies in the future. This is a very exciting opportunity and one in which I invite everyone to participate. Please look for an email with the link to the survey and take a few moments to have your voice be heard.

Christopher Whitbeck

Thanks from the PTO

We are lucky to have a close-knit community that cares so much about our kids. The PTO website allows us to thank everyone who contributes (from the home page at www.DouglasSchoolPTO.org, click on "Get Involved" to find "Many Thanks"). Below are the events that occurred since the last Digest, along with names of folks who ran them. Thanks to all who participated!

Photo Day: Kathy McCullen, Deanne O'Sullivan, and crew.

Kindergarten Screenings: The PTO greets kids and parents, helping them feel comfortable throughout—Tiffany Petranto.

Nature Walks: Dozens of volunteers, coordinated and trained by Laura Fay and Darlene Crowley.

Snack Cart: This weekly project funds our Cultural Enrichment program—Janice Yee, Liz Schaller, and Heather Chase.

Post Office: The third graders deliver mail from friends and family to students throughout the school—Betsy Mercier, Bill Hickey, and Christine Perraud.

ABSchools for Students

Students in grades 4–12 now have access to ABSchools, which provides students with the tools to communicate and collaborate with each other and their teachers through Gmail, Drive, and more. This program, which is hosted by Google and managed by the district, allows students to take their first steps toward mastering the digital tools they will rely on throughout their educational journeys in Acton and beyond. For more information, visit <http://edtechab.abschools.org/home/abschools/frequently-asked-questions>.

Eagle's Nest School Store: A great fourth grade educational opportunity—Jennifer Patenaude, Bridget Steinkrauss, Deb Cox, Michele Walsh, and Sara Junghans.

Douglas Directory: An information-rich resource—Sharon Metzger, Amy Austin, Lori Fassman, and Adriano Sabatelli.

Lobby Calendar: A visually appealing way to keep up with the school schedule—Cydney Cotter.

Spiritwear: Thanks to Sheri Palazzo and Paulette Stout for great pieces to buy and options to do so!

Back-to-School Nights: Thanks to our wonderful teachers for welcoming us into their classrooms and explaining their goals for the year!

Walk for Peace: Thanks to Dr. Whitbeck and Mr. Broggi for putting together a moving ceremony, and to the students who raised money for Free the Children.

*Eileen Matarese and Karen Jarsky
PTO Co-Chairs*