

DOUGLAS DIGEST

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Douglas Digest

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The Douglas School PTO publishes the Digest seven times each school year. **Next issue: November 28.**

We welcome article ideas and feedback. Please email Jill at jillhmaxwell@gmail.com.

From the PTO

Congratulations! You've survived September! Hopefully, you've settled into the swing now—which means you've got time to think about all the amazing things happening at Douglas. A few of our favorite and most important programs are already under way, and we want to make sure you have a chance to participate. Check out www.DouglasSchoolPTO.org for more detail on these events and everything the PTO does.

◆ Annual Giving Campaign:

The PTO spends approximately \$140 (and more than four volunteer hours) per child each year. Every fall, we give families the opportunity to offset that with direct giving—donations straight to the PTO that support your child's educational journey without interrupting your life with tedious fundraisers. No amount is too small (or too large!), and every donor gets entered into our remaining drawings for super-fantastic

Batteries

Why do smoke alarm detectors, high on the ceiling, die at 3am? I get up—*eeenk... eeenk... eeenk...* Irritating noise. Need a ladder and a flashlight.

The ladder is outside under the deck. The big flashlight doesn't work. Dead batteries. *Eeenk... eeenk...* I find that there are no new batteries for the smoke alarm or flashlight. *eeenk... eeenk... eeenk.* Finally, perched dangerously high on the ladder, I rip the battery out of the innards of the smoke detector. One last *eeenk* and then silence, blessed silence. YES!

I am left to consider the place of batteries in my life—in my phone, computer, watch, flashlight, smoke detectors, backup power units, clocks, car, toys, remote controls, car-door opener, and even toothbrush. Amazing. Mystery abounds in these common objects. Without batteries my life would come to a stumbling standstill.

One more thing—something just like this happens inside the human body to trigger the energy that makes our hearts beat and our brains work. We are the product of an electrochemical process. While you read this, your brain's ability to understand is energized by ions. We are, in a way, a battery. A living example of a Great Mystery.

And just as we've learned to explain the complex chemistry of the battery, we are starting to understand the human brain and what happens when we learn. We are at an elementary level—trying to use a battery and wires to light a flashlight light bulb. We are trying to find the right way to teach so that the learning centers of the brain light up! When they do, it is a brilliant light that makes all of the irritating noise disappear.

I see this light every day. Fresh batteries, circuits connecting, brilliant light shining from every corner of the school. *Eeenk... eeenk... eeenk...* Sometimes the alarm sounds. Learning is not always pretty or pleasant. The battery may be drained, a circuit interrupted, the brain is struggling. But this irritating noise is also part of learning—an integral part of the process, new circuits being built. Time to get out the ladder, flashlight, teaching toolbox, try again, reset. Keep trying different things until the light shines, thankful that the batteries that drive our learning are always rechargeable.



Douglas prizes. Click the giving hand at www.DouglasSchoolPTO.org for details. (Already donated? Thank you!)

- ◆ **Ice Cream Social:** Save the date for Friday, October 27, when the Douglas hallways ring with laughter and fun, the cafeteria overflows with ice cream and pizza, and the gym and stage transform into old-fashioned cake walks. It's one of our favorite nights of the year! 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!
- ◆ **Book Fair:** Our annual book fair is fast approaching! This year the fair will take place November 27–December 1 in a NEW location—the library mod! There will be many volunteer opportunities, including someone who is willing to coordinate the All for Books program. Check out the Spotlight article for more information and start your shopping list now!

Everything we do happens because of parents like you, who step up and volunteer. Whether you want to scoop ice cream, organize a spreadsheet, see the kids at school, or take advantage of another amazing talent you have, please get in touch! There are many opportunities to help. Otherwise, please come to our next PTO general meeting on Tuesday, November 14, at 7:30pm in the Douglas cafeteria to hear more about our programs. In addition to PTO business, we'll hear Dr. Whitbeck give an update about the building project. We'd love to see you there!

Parent Communication Map

Have a question about something at Douglas or in the district? Not sure who to ask? Check out the Parent Communication Map at <http://www.abschools.org/departments/curriculum/parent-communication-map>. This helpful tool for parents and guardians identifies key points of contact within the school system.

Dates to Remember

Tuesday, October 24

Unity Day—wear orange!
School Council Meeting, 3:45-4:45,
Staff Room

Wednesday, October 25

School Building Project Public Forum,
12pm, Acton Memorial Library

Thursday, October 26

School Building Project Public Forum, 7p,
Sargent Memorial Library

Friday, October 27

Ice Cream Social, 6pm

Saturday, October 28

Douglas Event at the Concord Bookshop,
9:30am-5pm
AB School Building Project Community
Forum, 10am, Douglas Cafeteria

Tuesday, October 31

Halloween Parade, 2:15pm

Monday, November 6

AB School Building Project Forum,
12:30pm, Acton Senior Center

Tuesday, November 7

Professional Day - NO SCHOOL
Family Learning Series with Dr. Robert
Layne, 7pm, High School Auditorium

Thursday, November 9

Veterans Day Program, 9:30am,
Douglas Cafeteria
AB School Committee meeting, 7pm,
RJ Grey Library

Friday, November 10

Veterans Day: NO SCHOOL

Monday, November 13

School Building Project Public Forum,
7pm,
Gates Cafeteria

Tuesday, November 14

PTO General Meeting, 7:30pm,
Douglas Cafeteria

Monday, November 13-Wednesday, November 15

Sixth Grade: Nature's Classroom

Thursday, November 16

Douglas Spirit Day—wear Douglas logo
or colors!
AB School Committee Meeting, 7pm
RJ Grey Library

Monday, November 20

Family Learning Series with Chris Herren,
7pm, High School Auditorium

Wednesday, November 22

EARLY DISMISSAL
Faculty/Staff Thanksgiving Appreciation

November 23-26

Thanksgiving Break: NO SCHOOL



Spotlight: Book Fair 101

It's mid-October, so that means that the annual Scholastic Book Fair is only a few weeks away! This year the fair will be held November 27–December 1. This year there's so much going on; read all about it!

Kickoff Celebration Featuring Guest Readers: We hope you will join us for a celebratory kickoff event, Tuesday, November 28. Many familiar Douglas faces will read selections from their favorite children's books.

Bring the whole family (and your shopping list!) for a fun evening you won't want to miss. The guest readings will begin at 6:30pm; the fair will remain open until 8pm! More details coming soon.

Teacher Wish Bags: All teachers get a special sneak preview of the fair along with the opportunity to fill a wish bag with books they'd like for their classrooms. Families are welcome to peruse the bags throughout the fair and may purchase a book(s) to give directly to the teacher. For families who might wish to give anonymously, the Book Fair Committee will ensure any book purchased from a Wish Bag makes its way to the teacher's classroom.

All For Books: Help build the Douglas Library and bring books to families in need. Every dollar donated through the All for Books program is a dollar Ms. Opel can use to purchase books from the book fair for the Douglas Library. Scholastic will match monetary donations to bring books to nonprofit organizations dedicated to helping kids and families in need. It's a win-win!

After Hours: The Book Fair is open even after the school day ends! Families are invited to check out the selection every day after school, until 6pm, throughout the duration of the fair. This event is one of the biggest of the year and we look forward to seeing you and your family there!

Extra! Extra! Concord Bookshop Event

The Concord Bookshop (65 Main St., Concord) is helping raise funds for our PTO! The event takes place Saturday, October 28 from 9:30am–5pm. Douglas PTO will receive 10% of sales ALL day from anyone shopping! Come by to shop, check out reading suggestions, or try your luck at our raffles. We can't wait!



Thanks from the PTO

The start of the year is an overwhelmingly busy time, and the PTO (and school!) could never accomplish so much without the dedicated, friendly, helpful, awesome volunteers. Since the last issue of the Digest, here are some of the folks who have given their time and effort to ensure that our wonderful programs and events continue to run smoothly:

Healthy Kiddos: Michelle Shoemaker delivered piles of Purell and wipes to every classroom in the building. Make sure to thank her for organizing the delivery and distribution of so many supplies.

Back-to-School Nights: Thanks to our wonderful teachers for welcoming us into their classrooms last month.

Nature Walks: The fall walks are kicking off, thanks to Karen Pierce and Nancy Stillman, who coordinate dozens of volunteers and lesson plans.

School Safety

All elementary schools lock front doors while the regular school day is in session. This decision is based on recommendations from the MA School Safety & Security Task Force Report (2014). To enter the school while students are in the building, please press the intercom to the right of the main door and listen for the buzzer that releases the lock. Then sign in at the office and pick up a visitor sticker.