

# DOUGLAS DIGEST

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## Douglas Digest

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The Douglas School PTO publishes the Digest four times each school year.

We welcome ideas and feedback! Email [jillhmaxwell@gmail.com](mailto:jillhmaxwell@gmail.com)

## From the PTO

Our next general meeting will be held on Thursday, January 30, at 9:00am in the Cafetorium. We hope to continue our book discussion of "The Parents We Mean to Be" with Dr. Whitbeck.

Two of our most fun events of the year are coming up in the spring!

The **Festival of Cultures** will be held at Douglas School on **Saturday, March 28**, 2-4pm. The festival was founded by Akiko Sensei, our late Douglas Japanese teacher, in 1998. See the Spotlight section on page 2 for more information on this fun event!

One month later, we will kick off the third annual **Douglas Fun Run** with a school-wide pep rally on Tuesday, April 28, followed by the event itself on **Thursday, May 7**. Though only two years old, this event has become not just a student favorite, but also our biggest fundraiser of the year!

*Kaarin Jeanson and Ashley Cook  
2019-20 PTO Co-chairs*

## Snack Cart Donation Schedule

See snack details on the PTO website

January 23: 6, 5  
January 30: 5, 2  
February 6: 1  
February 13: K, 3  
February 20: No School  
February 27: 4, 6  
March 5: 2  
March 12: 5, 1  
March 19: 3  
March 26: K, 6  
April 2: 4  
April 9: 1, 5  
April 16: 2

## Let's Party

Last New Year's Eve one member of our circle had just bought a completely winterized beach house and was throwing a grand party. The only shortcoming was... I was not invited. For a while I felt pretty bad, but these things happen. We can't all be invited everywhere, can we? Take it like a grown-up, I thought to myself.

But being left out is not an inherently grown-up phenomenon. It is a grade-school agony that recurs throughout life. Being left out is an emotional drama that unfolds in three acts: discovery, distress, and, if you can get there, detachment. These psychological rhythms prevail whether you are reeling from the whispers of a group of peers at recess or excluded from a bridge game in your assisted-living home. Being left out is the dark side of friendship, and most of us have been both victims and perpetrators.

This is serious stuff and it has many consequences. Research at the University of Buffalo suggests that social exclusion evokes various physical and psychological consequences such as reduced complex cognitive thought. Once you're rejected, it's easy to stay mad at the person who hurt you and that takes up a lot of mental energy. If you're a student, it is hard to care about math class or ancient civilizations when you're seething about last weekend's sleepover that you missed.

Before the age of Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, we could stumble along the popularity learning curve through adolescence before eventually figuring out that meaningful relationships are more fulfilling than popularity. But now, it seems that social media has prolonged this learning curve so that our popularity-seeking tendencies aren't just a phase, but a lifestyle. In other words, life never really stops feeling like high school. So what are we to do to help our children and ourselves navigate this new landscape so that life doesn't become a prolonged, real-life version of *Mean Girls*?

First of all, do not participate in what the bloggers at GIRLilla Warfare call "Suburban Social Engineering." This is when adults decide who is IN and who is OUT. They orchestrate parties or help their child plan get-togethers that knowingly exclude specific children. Instead, start from a position of inclusion. It is one decision to take two of your children's friends to a movie; it is a completely different decision to take five friends to a corn maze when you could have invited seven. But of course, there is always that kid that is annoying, who always tags along, or who your child thinks is a loser. In elementary school, more than any other time in a child's life, adults are models. When you model exclusion, your child will grow to be exclusive. If you are a model who is thoughtful and says, *Have you considered who you are not inviting, let's look at your class list, let's think of something fun to do where we can invite everyone, I want you to know that being kind is always our first decision*, your child will be someone who considers those things.

We all want our children to be liked. A child is liked because of who they are and how they treat others, and not because of what they have, how lavish a party their parents throw, or how many people "follow" them (in both the literal and virtual sense). And speaking of the virtual world, if your child does host or go to a party, or attends the sold-out Acton Music Project concert with 10 of the 12 boys from their class, for heaven's sake, stop posting it on Facebook. Yes, it was fun; yes, it's a cool picture; yes, the kids and parents who were not invited will see it and feel badly. Yes, you're being mean—even if you don't intend to be.

If your child is left out, acknowledge the icky way it feels but don't linger on it for too long. Being left out doesn't feel good. Maybe your child needs to say something, ask for what they want, or even find some new friends if the same people don't make them feel valued more than once.

The painful parts of our lives can become gorgeous detours in a new direction—if we let them. As for my beach-house-owning friend, I haven't seen him since that party. I don't miss him, but there's no harm or hate here. It's all good! And in a busy world, that just means more time for the people that matter most to me.

*C. Whitbeck*

## **Dates to Remember**

**January 21 & 27**

Kindergarten Tours

**January 21-28**

Online Camp Auction

**Thursday, January 23 & 30**

Profit share at Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza

**Saturday, January 25**

District's Budget Saturday, RJ Grey,  
8:30am-2:30pm

**Tuesday, January 28**

Douglas Kindergarten Night, 7pm

**Wednesday, January 29**

All-School Pajama Day

**Thursday, January 30**

PTO General Meeting, 9:00am

**Thursday, February 6**

AB School Committee Meeting & Budget  
Hearing, RJ Grey, 7pm

**Friday, February 7**

Spirit Day: Wear Plaid or Flannel

**Thursday, February 13**

Spirit Day: Favorite Historical Figure  
AB School Committee, RJ Grey, 7pm

**Mon., February 17-Fri., February 21**

NO SCHOOL-February Break

**Thursday, March 5**

Spirit Day: Favorite Book Character  
Profit Share at Bamboo  
AB School Committee, RJ Grey, 7pm

**Thursday, March 19**

AB School Committee, RJ Grey, 7pm

**Friday, March 20**

Progress Reports Available on Portal

**Thursday, March 26**

Talent Show, Grades 4-6

**Saturday, March 28**

Festival of Cultures, 2-4pm

**Thursday, April 2**

AB School Committee, RJ Grey, 7pm

**April 6, 7, & 8**

MCAS Grades 3, 4, 5, & 6

**Friday, April 10**

NO SCHOOL-Good Friday

**Thursday, April 16**

Spirit Day: Douglas Colors  
AB School Committee, RJ Grey, 7pm

**Monday, April 20 - Friday, April 24**

NO SCHOOL-April Break

**Tuesday, April 28**

Fun Run Kick-off Pep Rally

**Thursday, April 30**

General PTO Meeting, 7:30pm

**May 4, 5, & 6**

MCAS Grades 3, 4, 5, & 6

**Thursday, May 7**

Fun Run  
AB School Committee, RJ Grey, 7pm

**May 11-12**

MCAS Grade 5

**Thursday, May 14**

Talent Show, Grades K-3

**Thursday, May 14, 21 & 28**

Profit Share at Moe's Southwest Grill

## **Festival of Cultures!**

Mark your calendars: the annual Douglas Festival of Cultures takes place **Saturday, March 28** from 2-4:00 pm. Entrance fee will be \$5 per family. The Akiko Sensei Festival of Cultures celebrates our rich diversity. There will be dance, martial arts, and music from around the world on the stage. Visitors can wear attire representing their own cultures if they like. Event ambassadors and visitors are also welcome to bring a small plate of finger food or dessert to share at the festival. Read on to find out how can you be a part of this wonderful event!

**Ambassadors:** Would you like to share your knowledge about a country, culture or a tradition (including from the USA!)? Whether it is your own or your family's home country, or just a country or tradition you learned about (from school, scouts, vacation, etc.), families or kids (with adult supervision) can host a table, small or large. You could show things you created at school, or something you have saved or collected, or you could teach other kids a dance or a game. Let your creativity guide you!

**Performers:** Do you have a dance, music or other performance from any culture that you would like to share together with your friends or dance/music group (from Douglas or not) on stage? Are you a parent who would like to choreograph a dance for a group of kids?

**Emcees/Announcers:** Douglas sixth-graders may sign up by Saturday, February 1 to be an emcee—introducing all the performances on the Douglas stage!

**Volunteers:** We will need lots of volunteers on the day itself and a few the day before. A link to sign-up genius will be provided closer to the event.

For more information or to volunteer, please email the event coordinator at [festivalofcultures@douglasschoolpto.org](mailto:festivalofcultures@douglasschoolpto.org). See you there!

## **Gracias! Danke schoen! ありがとう! Merci! תודה! Grazie! Thank you!**

It's hard to believe we're almost halfway through the school year! Douglas has been bustling with activity since day one, and there's no end in sight. We have so many people to thank!

**Annual Giving:** Please accept our heartfelt thanks for your contributions to our Annual Giving Campaign in October. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we met our goal of \$10,000. Those funds will go a long way in supporting so many incredible programs and services!

**Photo Day:** Thank you to **Megan Kivela** and her team of parent volunteers who helped our kids look their best and smile their brightest on Photo Day!

**Directory:** Thank you to **Ashley Cook** for putting together the directory and helping keep us all in touch!

**Ice Cream Social:** Thank you to the Ice Cream Social team of **Claire Draper**, **Karen Murray**, and **Tiffany Prunesti** and to all of the parent volunteers who scooped ice cream, served pizza, helped with the cake room and games, and helped make the event a success in so many ways!

**Veteran's Day:** Thank you to **Jill Maxwell** for organizing another heartfelt Veteran's Day program!

**Staff Appreciation:** Thank you to **Kaarin Jeanson** for coordinating the staff appreciation event before Thanksgiving and to all of the members of the community who baked or purchased treats to share in gratitude with our faculty and staff!

**Book Fair:** Thank you to **Amber Harvey** and **Annie Hamill** for organizing this year's Book Fair with the Silver Unicorn Bookstore. We appreciate all your hard work in coordinating the event and effortlessly handling the snow days that Mother Nature threw our way!

**Eagle Shopping Rewards:** Thank you to **Caitlin Ryan** and **Katherine Lee** for keeping us earning money for our school with Amazon Smile and a revised Box Tops for Education program!

**Tech Team:** From the Eagle Eye Weekly to Facebook to the PTO website, our technology team has things solidly under control. Thank you, **Julie Zeller**, **Cristina Sousa**, **Holly Fitzgerald**, and **Sandy Wellinghoff** for keeping cyber-Douglas zipping along!

**Nature Walks:** Thank you to **Nancy Stillman** for organizing and leading our students on their fall forays into scientific observation!

**Dining for Dollars:** Thank you to **Susan Giulietti** for organizing and promoting Douglas profit-sharing events with Westside Creamery, Not Your Average Joe's, and Anthony's Coal-fired Pizza!

We also would like to thank the many parent volunteers whose help enriches our students' school experience in so many ways. Whether you re-shelve books in the library, guide students through nature walks, spend time at safe arrival, donate time to the book fair, shop through AmazonSmile, dine out at a profit-sharing event, or give time and energy in any other way, we thank you! 2019 couldn't have happened without you, and 2020 will be better because of you.

Haven't yet found just the right way to volunteer at Douglas? Contact the co-chairs ([cochairs@douglasschoolpto.org](mailto:cochairs@douglasschoolpto.org)) for more information and ideas for how you can help.