

DOUGLAS DIGEST

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Douglas Digest

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The Douglas School PTO publishes the Digest three times each school year. **Next issue: September—have a great summer!**

We welcome ideas and feedback; email Jill at jillmaxwell@gmail.com.

From the PTO

This is certainly not what any of us were expecting when we took First Day of School photos and eagerly sent our kids off to start the school year in August!

Last year, the PTO Board set a goal for this school year to focus on community-building events. How could we involve local businesses, encourage more casual gatherings of Douglas families, foster school spirit, *and* raise funds to support our school? We kicked off the year with the help of a new school mascot, Doug the Eagle. We organized several successful profit-sharing events with local eateries in the fall and winter, and partnered with the Silver Unicorn bookstore for our annual Book Fair at the end of the fall. We changed the format of our annual auction to feature a wider variety of engaging “Douglas Experiences” and were planning an evening social event for parents at the Red Raven in the early spring. We were excited for the arrival of warmer weather and the fun annual spring events like the Talent Shows, Fun Run, and Douglas Day.

Needless to say, “life is what happens when you’re busy making other plans!” None of us were prepared for our last day at Douglas School for this school year to be March 12.

Some spring events needed to be canceled and some, optimistically postponed. Despite being physically distanced, the Douglas community remained strong. Students still logged their minutes of reading to finish the March Reading Challenge, and this year’s theme of “What Do You Treasure?” became all the more relevant as our everyday lives came to a halt and we had to adapt to a new normal. Daily photos and videos of our students’ creativity shared on Radio Douglas replaced Spring Exhibition night. Our students wowed us with their versatility in a virtual Talent Show, proving that they

You Will Be Found

It is my Saturday evening walk and I see the neighborhood children playing. There are children in the street and in yards, safely far apart from one another, but they are playing all over. Tonight it is hide-and-seek. I have not played hide-and-seek since my boys were young, and we played in the house, so I had a fair chance of finding them. But it’s been a long time because adults generally don’t get together and play hide-and-seek.

I remember being at camp, when I was 12, and hiding so well that nobody could find me. At some point, the seeking and calling ended, I came out of hiding, and everyone was angry because I didn’t play the game the way it was supposed to be played. I argued that the game was hide-and seek, not hide-and-give-up! We all yelled about who made the rules and how we wouldn’t play anymore no matter what—until the next day at least. All of that game playing and rulemaking was an important part of growing up. I was never able to hide that well again, which is fine, because in my adult life, effective hiding has never been a required employment skill.

As I write this, the neighborhood game goes on, and I see a kid buried in a mulch pile! I wonder how long it will take for his friends to find him. All you can really see are his eyes. He will probably only be found when he wants to be found. All around him children play. There are girls giggling as they fall over on their bikes in the driveway. “The ghost pushed me over,” one girl calls to her friend. There’s a parade of kids taking up the whole street. Some are walking with chickens in their arms, cradling them like babies. Roller bladers speed around the curves; kids work in front yard gardens, hoping their cucumbers will sprout. There are other families on walks in the woods on the trails, or on the side-walks, or riding bikes. I see families walking or playing with their new puppies, or just letting their hair down (literally, because the salons are still closed).

This is a new game. It is better than hide-and-seek. Everybody is looking for someone and wants to do things together. Parents might have to work, but there seems to be a little more time. No organized sports, no lessons to run off to, no homework, no visiting friends from out of town. So what have we found? Imagination, play time, and creativity. Boredom is the father of ingenuity. We are playing a new game of hide-and-seek. While we hide from a dangerous virus, we seek some sort of safe interaction, turning to our innermost circle. We have the time to play. Pretty soon, somebody giggles, and somebody laughs, and everybody gets found.

C. Whitbeck

don’t need a stage and live audience to showcase their ballet or piano recital and they don’t need to be in the same room to sing a quartet. We participated in birthday parades for friends and neighbors and sent letters, cards, and video messages to teachers. Our students, faculty, and parents have shown resilience and inventiveness during this unusual and unprecedented time. But we’d expect nothing less from our amazing school community!

As of now, nothing is certain except our dedication to making the best school experience for our students that we can. While we’re unsure of what’s in store for the 2020-2021 school year, we know that we’re all in it together.

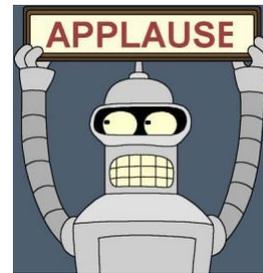
Kaarin Jeanson & Ashley Cook
2019-2020 PTO Co-Chairs

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

To all our amazing volunteers who offer so much of your time and energy to enhancing the school experience of our students, THANK YOU! Without your willingness and dedication, we would not have the vibrant and active community we have today. At this time of year, we like to extend a special thank you to those who have made some events and programs at Douglas run smoothly fall through spring. A BIG thank you to:

- **Caitlin Ryan, Patrice Randolph, Rachel Meehan, Katherine Lee, Wendy Curtis, and Melissa Coffey** for coordinating and running the school store and helping this year's fourth-graders have a fun, hands-on learning experience.
- **Pei-Chen Lai** for the beautiful monthly Birthday Board, **Stephanie Krantz** for keeping the lobby calendar updated, and **Annie Hamill** for maintaining the lobby video monitor.
- **Julie Zeller and Cristina Sousa** for their weekly efforts in pulling together the Eagle Eye Weekly, keeping Douglas families informed and on our toes!
- **Holly Fitzgerald and Sandy Wellinghoff** for keeping the Douglas PTO website up to date for all our families to rely on.
- **Susan Giuliatti** for organizing multiple profit-sharing events that allowed us to support local businesses while earning money for our school.
- **Emily Richmond, Jana Cataldo and Kim Beaulieu** for the entertaining and inspiring events they coordinated this year for our Cultural Enrichment program.
- **Claire Draper** and the many volunteer bakers for always making sure we had a variety of delicious treats for school events and meetings.
- The Eagle Rewards Team of **Caitlin Ryan and Katherine Lee** for their continued time and effort in collecting and managing box top submissions, receipts, and Amazon Smile donations to help fund some of our favorite things.
- **Cydney Cotter** and her large group of volunteers who do Safe Arrival every day of the year to ensure that our students are all accounted for.
- **Tina Leonard and Megan Kivela** and all the weekly volunteers who kept the popcorn poppin' and the Snack Cart program running smoothly every Thursday.
- **Nancy Stillman and Judith Andrade** for running the Nature Walk Program and encouraging our students to appreciate the outdoor space we are lucky to have.
- **Jill Maxwell, Abigail Vargus, and Stephanie Krantz** for pulling together the Douglas Digest for distribution throughout the year.
- **Julie Schwartz and Cristina Sousa** for adding some fun and flair (including our new mascot Doug the Eagle!) to our Douglas Spirit program.
- **Susan Giuliatti and Sandy Wellinghoff** for transitioning our annual auction to a successful online event this year, and to all the families who offered to host community experiences to include in the auction.
- **Kaarin Jeanson** for coordinating parent volunteers for the Kindergarten Tours to welcome potential Douglas families to our school.
- **Ms. Opel, Mary Georgilas, and the team of volunteers** for encouraging students to read and reflect on what they treasure during the March Reading Challenge. And thank you to **Dr. Whitbeck** for the virtual celebration of our reading accomplishments!

- **Laura Schmidt and Susan Giuliatti** for putting together a touching video to show appreciation to our beloved teachers and staff.
- **Mary Georgilas, Jennifer Martin, and Mr. Broggi** for coordinating the Talent Shows and allowing our students to still showcase their special gifts virtually this year!
- **Stephanie Krantz, Judith Andrade, Melissa Gaudette, Claire Draper, Jenny Yan, Olyan Rosal, Karyn Parker, Julie Schwartz, and Christina West** for coordinating and creating the sixth-grade yearbook to preserve Douglas memories for our graduating students.
- **Heather Lammey** for driving all over town to distribute class T-shirts to our sixth-graders.
- **Dawn Cronin, Caitlin Ryan, Stacey Funk, Abigail Vargus, Hayley Reynolds, and Kathleen Ammendolia** for volunteering to coordinate the celebration of our sixth-grade Class of 2020.
- **Carol DeSchepper** and her team for planning our second annual Douglas Festival of Cultures. While the event had to be cancelled this year, we look forward to celebrating our community's rich cultural diversity next year!
- **Annie Hamill, Melissa Callaghan, and Michelle Kenney** for their hard work in planning for our annual Fun Run, even though the event had to be postponed. We look forward to next year's event!

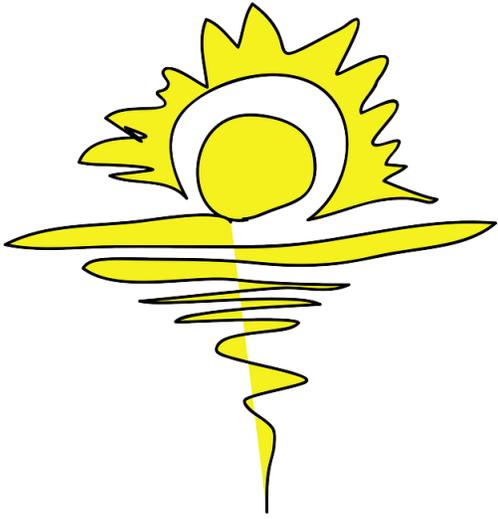


A Round of Applause to the School Staff

Our gratitude at the end of this school year is perhaps even greater than usual due to our experience with the school closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you to all the Douglas teachers, assistants, specialists, special education teachers, and support staff for your tireless dedication to our students and the support you give to the PTO. A very big thank you to **Sharen Crooks, Laurie Maylander, and Stephanie Krantz** for keeping everything running smoothly day in and day out for students and parents, and for effortlessly and efficiently handling all of the PTO's many questions and needs!

Thank you to **Aaron Foley and Stylianous Kounalakis** for keeping Douglas sparkling clean through the entire school year, even when faced with months of slushy and muddy boots! We also want to thank **Kathie Clifford** and the entire kitchen staff for making sure our students have healthy lunches, served with smiles all year long. A special thank you to **Diann Oster and Tori Reiersen** for your continuous care, soothing and mending our students every day and keeping parents informed all year long. And thank you to **Sasha Opel** for managing the library and inspiring our children to discover and locate their interests in books each week. Your read-aloud stories, guidance, and reading suggestions are helping to create a community of booklovers!

Last, but not least, thank you to **Dr. Whitbeck and Mrs. Larrenaga** for all of the ways that you nurture, encourage and inspire our community, whether physically in school or apart. With Radio Douglas, nightly e-mails, and regular check-ins, you truly went above and beyond to buoy the Douglas community spirit and keep us all connected during an unprecedented time of distance learning this spring.



Summertime!

Fall may seem far off, but the Douglas Office is already getting ready for our next school year! Here are a few things to remember between now and then:

- **Moving Within Town?** New email address or phone number? Update emergency contact info in PowerSchool! (<https://powerschool.abschools.org/public>)
- **Moving out of Acton/Boxborough?** If you are moving out of the district, please notify the Douglas School office staff.
- **Lend a Hand!** Complete the online Volunteer Survey when it opens in August to let us know how you can help for the 2020-2021 school year. The link will be available via email and PowerSchool as well as on the PTO site.
- **Mark Your Calendar!** On August 17, your child's class placement will be available via PowerSchool. Note: You will need to create an account if you haven't already. After you complete the emergency contact information and PTO survey, you'll be able to see your child's placement.
- **Keep In Touch** through our weekly Eagle Eye Weekly. If you aren't receiving weekly announcements or need to change your contact information, please email Technology.Secretary@DouglasSchoolPTO.org.
- **Get Social!** Join our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CTDouglasActonMA>) for up-to-the-minute info on events, activities, volunteer opportunities, and stories from fellow Douglas Eagles.

We Couldn't Have Done It Without You

We would like to extend a special thank you to long-standing board and committee members who are moving on from Douglas. Thank you for the time and dedication you have put into attending board and general meetings, chairing committees, and for generally always lending a hand when the PTO needed volunteers!

We understand that so many of our graduating families have helped at Douglas in many ways throughout the years, from helping in the classroom and library, to running school-wide events. Please pardon us if we have unintentionally failed to mention you in our shout-outs!

THANK YOU to...

Arch Handel for helping on the Ice Cream Social committee!

Kelly Klimarchuk for helping coordinate Talent Shows and Staff Appreciation events!

Haiyun Liu and Jingdong Cao for helping with the Festival of Cultures!

Heather Lammey for her many years of help with the annual auction and for handling the mountains of Lost & Found making sure items were returned to their owners for many years!

Amy Lowe for her service as Assistant Treasurer of the PTO and helping run the School Store!

Karyn Parker for chairing the Cultural Enrichment programs and helping to bring so many wonderful events to school!

Sunanda Pepalla for helping with the Festival of Cultures and Staff Appreciation events!

Bridget Steinkrauss for acting as PTO Volunteer Liaison, helping run the School Store, and organizing Movie Nights and Staff Appreciation events!

Nancy Stillman for many years of going above and beyond with your wagon, sharing your knowledge of the outdoors and leading our Nature Walks!

Abigail Vargus for years of help being PTO co-chair, running the Book Fair and keeping the Douglas Digest both punctual and properly punctuated!

Christina West for being such a willing volunteer, helping run the School Store and Snack Cart, organizing the Newcomer Orientation, and keeping us geared up in Spirit Wear!

Meiyi Yin for helping to run the Staff Appreciation Luncheon!



Dates to Remember

Dates are subject to change based on guidelines for COVID-19

Wednesday, June 17

Last Day of Distance Learning

Monday, August 17

Power School opens to view teacher assignments

Wednesday, August 26

Newcomers' Orientation, 2:00pm

Thursday, August 27

Kindergarten Orientation, 1:30pm

Monday, August 31

First Day of School

Friday, September 4

No School

Monday, September 7

No School, LaborDay

Tuesday, September 15

Back-to-School Night, Gr 3-6

Wednesday, September 16

Photo Day

Tuesday, September 22

Back-to-School Night, Gr K-2

Monday, September 28

No School, Yom Kippur



Tune in to **Radio Douglas** every day through June 17 at 8:30am on YouTube! Dr. Whitbeck and Mrs. Larrenaga will start your morning right with hearty happy birthday wishes, trivia questions, Douglas teachers' joke of the day, and awesome pictures and videos of creative Douglas kids! Your hosts are joined by Mrs. Ammendolia for Movement Monday; Mr. Broggi for Tuneful Tuesday; Mrs. Schmidt and family for Science Wednesday; and Mrs. Maciel with her Douglas Puzzler on Thursday. Each Friday there is a special guest with a weather report from afar! Check it out:

youtube.com/c/CTDouglasSchool

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Hayley Reynolds

Stephanie Krantz

Claire Draper

Sandy Wellinghoff

Tina Leonard, Megan Kivela

Open

Caps Off To Our Graduating Families

We bid a fond farewell to all the families who are graduating and leaving us this spring. On behalf of the PTO, thank you for all your support and participation at Douglas, whether this was your family's first year or seventh year here. The entire Douglas family will miss you, and we hope to see you at school events in the future!

Gardena and Kristopher Abramowitz

Sunanda Pepalla and Vishal Bhatia

Haiyun Liu and Jingdong Cao

Yasmin Correa

Kai and Todd Dickerson

Ellen and David Forte

Arch and Gabriel Handel

Nicole and Joshua Harting

Meredith and Kent Hibbard

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Abigail Vargus and David Korka

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Heather and Robert Lammey

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Aruna Thyagarajan and Ramakrishna Nistala

Miran Jung and Jinhyoun Park

Karyn and Christian Parker

Laura Vanderhoof and John Paul

Tracy and Daniel Pearce

Susan and Brian Phenix

Charu and Bharat Sharma

Jenny Yan and Michael Shih

Seunghyun Lee and Youngchul Song

Bridget and Peter Steinkrauss

Nancy Stillman

Yan Huang and Dongjun Sun

Christina and Matthew West

Zhiqing Lu and Nianwen Xue

Meiyi Yin and Anlu Yan

Olyan Rosal and Nelson Zambrano

Eva Zhen