

# GATES GAZETTE



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## NEWMAN'S NOTES

Welcome back! Many thanks to all of our families for the many generous gifts, treats, and warm holiday wishes, it was greatly appreciated. I hope everyone had a restful vacation and are ready for all of the exciting upcoming events that are posted on the Gates School 2012 calendar.

January 23rd marks the halfway point of the school year and is the switch day for morning and afternoon kindergarten. Additionally, the kindergarten tours for upcoming kindergartners are scheduled for Jan. 18, Jan. 27, Jan. 31, and Feb. 6. The tours at Gates will be at 9:30-10:45 and 11:00-12:15. The general kindergarten meeting for all parents is Jan. 10 at 7:00 pm at the Junior High. Information regarding before and after-school programs at each school will follow the general meeting at 8:15. The Gates information night is planned for Jan 31 at 7:00 pm. For more kindergarten information check out the APS/AB

website @ <http://ab.mec.edu/sturegister.shtml>

March marks the beginning of the 2012 MCAS testing for students in grades 3-6.

- The ELA reading comprehension test is scheduled for March 20 – March 21 for students in grades 3, 5, & 6.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> graders will be taking the ELA long composition test on March 20.
- The long composition make up is scheduled for March 29.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> graders take the ELA reading comprehension test on March 26 – March 27.
- In May grades 3-6 will be taking the mathematic MCAS on May 8 & 9.
- The 5<sup>th</sup> graders also take the science & technology test on May 14 & 15.

It is very important that students are in school when the MCAS tests are given.

Finally, I would like to remind



parents that students go out to recess everyday. The weather has been mild, but New England winters are generally cold & snowy. I would be thrilled to see everyone with their warm gear on, rather than shorts, but please know that everyone will be going out to recess.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year!

**Lynne Newman**

**Principal**

### Monthly Happenings

**January 10th: PTO Mtg,**  
Gates Library, 7:30pm

**January 10th: Kindergarten Information Night,**  
Jr High, 7:00 pm

**January 16th: Martin Luther King Day — NO SCHOOL**

**Jan 18, 27, & 31: Kindergarten Tours at Gates**

**January 23rd: Kindergarten Change-over**

To submit items to the *Gates Gazette*, please contact Salomé Juethner at [gates.gazette@yahoo.com](mailto:gates.gazette@yahoo.com)



## FROM THE CHAIRS



Janice Martineau (right)  
Sr Co-Chair

Maureen Flynn (left)  
Jr Co-Chair

### Numbers to Know

**\$57,000** Amount of money the PTO needs to raise this year to continue to maintain current levels of teacher assistant hours and programs.

**485** Number of students at Gates School.

**\$118** The amount of money that the PTO currently spends *per student*.

**\$35,900** The amount of money raised at last year's auction

**80%** of PTO funds spent on staffing (Classroom Assistants, Library Staff, and Computer Lab)

**We have currently raised over \$24,604 and have had 30% family participation...please help reach our goal of 100% family participation to raise \$38,000!**

We would like to wish you all a Happy New Year and hope you all had a wonderful holiday break!

Thank you to everyone who has already donated to our Direct Appeal Campaign. We have currently raised over \$24,604 and have had 30% family participation. Donations have ranged from \$10 to \$1000. No donation is too big or too small; every bit (even \$1) helps to reach our goal of 100% family participation to raise \$38,000.

We hope to see the entire Gates community support this campaign as each and every child benefits from the money raised by the PTO. Over 80% of the PTO budget goes to pay for classroom assistants, math and reading assistants, library and computer lab hours, and cafeteria and recess monitors. Classroom assistants benefit all students by lowering the teacher-student ratio and allowing for small group instruction; which provides the opportunity to support students who may need extra help; to provide students with enrichment opportunities; or allow

students to receive more 1:1 time with the classroom teacher.

The December 31st deadline was for participation in the free gifts and prize drawings. Donations will continue to be accepted until we reach our goal of \$38,000. Donation forms can be found online at: [www.gatesschoolpto.org/donate](http://www.gatesschoolpto.org/donate) or at the end of this newsletter.

At our December PTO meeting we were fortunate to be joined by Mrs. Knight and Mrs. Ward, and the topic of the Music and Art space at Gates was discussed. Many parents were saddened to learn that the Music and Art curriculums at Gates have to be modified, and some units are eliminated entirely due to the lack of necessary and appropriate space. We have written a letter to our Superintendent, Dr. Mills, and to the members of the School Commit-

tee expressing our concerns. Any parents who are interested in more information on this topic are welcome to contact either one of us. The topic of Bullying was also discussed. Lynne Newman shared that she along with the School Council are currently working on a bullying survey to help understand the environment at Gates and where efforts can be put to ensure bullying is not tolerated.

Our next PTO meeting will be on Tuesday, January 10th at 7:30 in the Gates Library. Our discussion topic will be **Gates Homework Policy**. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

**Janice Martineau,**  
Sr. Co-Chair  
jjmartineau@verizon.net

**Maureen Flynn**  
Jr Co-Chair  
gatesschoolpto@yahoo.com

## MEET THE PTO BOARD



Left to Right: **Philip Tsang** (Assistant Treasurer), **Raji Srinivasan** (Recording Secretary), **Dan Zou** (Treasurer), **Maureen Flynn** (Junior Co-Chair), **Janice Martineau** (Senior Co-Chair), **Michelle Baytarian** (Corresponding Secretary)

## FOOD SERVICES NEWS



**Lunch Prices:** Acton Public \$2.35 (\$.10 increase)

**A la Carte Milk:** \$.50 (remains the same price)

**Acton-Boxborough:** \$2.10-\$3.00 (Tiered pricing based on menu offerings)

We are pleased to offer Gluten Free Lunches at all schools. Please see menu for details. We do require advance notice for these lunches.

Here is the link to our menus: Please note the daily alternates were not listed on your menu. The alternates are available...please click on the link for the menus below to see what is additionally offered each day in the cafeterias. <http://ab.mec.edu/departments/food/foodmenus.shtml>

Your family may qualify for free or reduced price lunch. The following link will bring you to the free and reduced lunch application: <http://ab.mec.edu/departments/food/foodmenus.shtml>

### A Message from the Food Service Department

Please Note:

If you have an account set up in Parent on line please be sure to set a low balance reminder for your account.

The Food Service Department is sending out a call to all families that have \$5.00 or less in their account each Sunday afternoon. If you receive a call and you have a balance due, please keep in mind the payment on line can take 24-48 hours to reflect on your child's account. We do accept cash or checks at the school in addition to on line payments.

As always, if you have any questions please feel free to contact either the Cafeteria Manager at the school or the Food Service Department Office.

It is our pleasure to serve your children every day!

Happy New Year!

**Kirsten Nelson**



# VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

### 6th Grade Yearbook Chairperson Needed!

Although we have had a number of sixth grade parent volunteers to work on the 6th grade yearbook, we are in need of a Chairperson to lead the team. Anyone available to take on this role can contact Janice Martineau at [jjmartineau@verizon.net](mailto:jjmartineau@verizon.net).

## ART NEWS

Mrs. Knight

Gates students have been hard at work this fall practicing artistic techniques and using their creative minds. Here is a snapshot of what is happening in art class at each grade level...

- Kindergarten students are learning about the way color works and are practicing tempera painting techniques like mixing colors and using different brushstrokes. They can now identify primary colors and use them to mix secondary colors.
- First grade students are building on their tempera painting knowledge of color mixing & brushwork techniques as well as learning about adding detail with overpainting to their artwork.
- Second grade students are learning how artists sometimes make paintings over longer periods of time. They are learning about artist, Henri Rousseau (left), and are creating multi-step paintings of animals living in habitats.
- Third grade students are learning about how artists can show mood in their painting using invented colors for the worlds they create. They are learning about and discussing the artwork of Franz Marc (right) and Eric Carle.
- Fourth grade students are beginning a unit on clay vessel sculpture. They are learning about the artistic traditions of southwestern Native American potters—coil and pinch pottery—and creating their own clay animal vessel.
- Fifth grade students are beginning a painting unit based on finding inspiration from other artists. They will be researching an artist in library class and creating a painting inspired by that artist's work in art class. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade also hosted an amazing sculpture show on Dec 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> in the Gates lobby. Pictures and video of the event will be up on the Gates website soon!
- Sixth grade students are learning about muralist, Diego Rivera (below), and how artists can send a social message with their artwork. They are working as a team to create six giant murals based on the Gates Core Values to be installed in the cafeteria next month.



## BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION

Please send in any Boxtops you've been saving over the summer. It's a terrific program, and easy to participate. **Each Boxtop is worth 10 cents for our school. Simply clip Boxtops from hundreds of your favorite products and send them to school with your child.** You may also drop them in the collection box in the lobby, next to the office.

Some products included in this promotion are: *Betty Crocker mixes, Nestle Juicy Juices, General Mills Cereals, Green Giant Frozen Vegetables, Pillsbury cookies, breads, and rolls, Land O Lakes butter, Welch's jellies, Avery labels and school supplies, Ziploc bags, Cottonelle, Hanes products, and more.* For the **complete list of participating products**, go to [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com).

Please ask grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends to clip them for you too – get everyone involved and **EARN CASH FOR GATES SCHOOL.** Last year, during the 2010-2011 school year, we earned \$560.00. Gates School has earned a total of \$8,047 since we started submitting Boxtops in 2002. Remember, we receive 10 cents for every Boxtop we submit to General Mills.

**Also, go to [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com) to see opportunities to earn electronic Boxtops (called eBoxtops), with online purchases from many popular stores.**

**Please contact Susan Bartow at 978-264-2014 or [sbkajbartow@comcast.net](mailto:sbkajbartow@comcast.net) if you have any questions**

## Upcoming Events

### Curious about Gates PTO Meetings?

- ◆ A great opportunity to find out more about programs at Gates!
- ◆ Meet and connect with other Gates Parents!
- ◆ Discuss current and future events & activities and share your ideas!
- ◆ Get your questions answered!

There are lots of ways to get involved with activities and events at Gates. If you are interested in learning more about the Parent Teacher Organization or just want to connect with other families, everyone is welcome. Drop in for one meeting or attend regularly throughout the year... we'd love to see you!

#### January:

10th  
10th

**PTO Meeting** 7:30pm, Gates Library

**General Kindergarten Parent Meeting**, 7:00PM, at the Jr High

18th  
27th  
31st

**Kindergarten Tour at Gates** 9:30-10:45 & 11:00-12:15

**Kindergarten Tour at Gates** 9:30-10:45 & 11:00-12:15

**Kindergarten Tour at Gates** 9:30-10:45 & 11:00-12:15

**Gates Information Night** 7pm

#### February:

6th  
8th

**Kindergarten Tour at Gates** 9:30-10:45 & 11:00-12:15

**PTO Meeting** 7:30pm, Gates Library

#### March:

20th

**Joint PTO Meeting & Speaker Series with Douglas**

7:00pm, Gates

#### April:

24th

**PTO Meeting** 7:30pm, Gates Library

#### May:

4th  
14th – 18th  
23rd

**Spring Family Social** 7:00pm

**Staff Appreciation Week**

**PTO Meeting** 7:30pm, Gates Library

#### June:

8th  
TBD

Activity Day (rain date, June 12th)

Spinners Game

Questions? Contact your PTO Co-Chairs –

Janice Martineau: [jjmartineau@verizon.net](mailto:jjmartineau@verizon.net)

Maureen Flynn: [gatescochair@yahoo.com](mailto:gatescochair@yahoo.com)

## Gates Email Distribution List

Are you receiving Gates email notices?

The Gates email distribution list is used by Principal Newman and the PTO to update the Gates community about upcoming events, meetings, and other school related information. All PTO flyers and sign-up sheets – even the *Gazette* – go out via the Gates email list.

The Gates email list is moderated - only messages sent by the Principal or approved by the PTO chairpersons can be posted to the list. Only the List Administrators can add or remove members from the list. This is done for privacy and security reasons. This information is used solely for Gates School purposes and will not be shared with other organizations. Families may unsubscribe at any time.

**To subscribe or unsubscribe to the list, use the "Sign up for Email" section of the Gates PTO website ([www.gatesschoolpto.org](http://www.gatesschoolpto.org)).**

To update/change your email address, you need to unsubscribe the old email address and subscribe the new email address.

If you completed the School/PTO Permissions portion of the on-line emergency form, your email address has already been added to the Gates email distribution list. In this case, there is no need to re-submit your email address via the Gates PTO website.

Please contact one of the List Administrators with any questions: Lisa Benati at (978) 264-9145 or [mhenati@yahoo.com](mailto:mhenati@yahoo.com), or Kirstin Lynch at 978-263-0186 or [kirslynch@comcast.net](mailto:kirslynch@comcast.net)



## 2011-2012 Direct Appeal Campaign

Thank you to all the families who have already donated to the Direct Appeal Campaign. This campaign will replace both our annual auction and the spring appeal. We are hopeful a successful campaign will mean this is our last fundraiser of the year. The focus of our volunteers can be on all of our community, social, and cultural activities and events throughout the year and not on how to meet our budgetary obligations.

### ***Our Goal for this Campaign is \$38,000 and 100% Family Participation***

**Current PTO expenditures equal \$118 per student**

**Please consider a family donation of \$200 or more**

**Donate as much as you feel comfortable from \$1 to \$1000<sup>+</sup>**

**All donations are 100% tax deductible and confidential**

### **Every child benefits from the assistant staff at Gates**

The responsibility of supporting students at Gates falls on each and every one of us as parents of the Gates community and every child benefits from the programs and Para-Professionals paid for by PTO funds, including;

- In-classroom Assistants
- Reading Assistants
- Math Assistants
- Small Group Instruction
- Individual Instruction
- Technology Assistants
- Library Hours
- Lunch/Recess Supervision

Currently Gates has a total of 5.3 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Para-Professionals supporting our students every day. Our Principal, Staff and Parents believe 7 FTEs would be optimal staffing to support our school. Even if we reach our goal of \$38,000, we will still be below this optimal level. **If we don't reach our goal we will be facing cuts.** Please help us keep these valuable assistants in our children's classrooms, library, computer lab and on the playground.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the PTO through volunteering, participation in our programs and donations. **Every dollar we raise goes directly to benefit our children and support our school.**

Sincerely,  
The Gates School PTO Board

Please send completed donation form to the Gates School office in an envelope marked "Direct Appeal Campaign"



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please accept my single payment donation of:**

\$1.00 to \$149: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$150 to \$249: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$250 to \$499: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\$500 or more: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Many Companies offer Donation Matching Programs, consider asking your company to match your donation*

Name and Address of Company, if matching donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your cash or check donations (payable to Gates School PTO) to the Gates office in an envelope marked "Direct Appeal Campaign"

All donations are tax deductible and will receive a receipt for filing.