

# Deep River Elementary School

DECEMBER / JANUARY NEWSLETTER  
DECEMBER 1, 2011



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## Principal's Corner by John F. Pietrick, Ph.D.

### WINTER WEATHER PROCEDURES



As we enter the winter months it is important to review our inclement weather procedures. First, I wish to remind all parents that we will have recess each day unless the wind chill is under 32 degrees. This means that all students will need to wear winter coats, hats, and gloves to school each day. If the students like to walk or play in the snow, appropriate foot ware is essential. Please note that we will remain inside if the black top is covered with snow and the temperature is below freezing. However, we will make every attempt to get the students outside for some fresh air. Following snow storms, the town has been very helpful plowing our blacktop areas. Although there may be snow on the ground—the chances are that we will go outside if the blacktop has been cleared of snow.

The Region 4 schools are again participating in the Alert Now system. Each parent should already be entered in the system. If you have not already been entered into the system—please contact Mrs. Maikowski in our school office and she will be happy to add you to the list. The Alert Now system automatically telephones parents in the event of an emergency or special announcements. The system also allows for a message to be sent to parents via e-mail. In the event of severe or unusual weather conditions, the Superintendent of Schools may decide to delay the opening of school, close school early, or cancel school. **School announcements are listed as Regional School District #4.** The following radio and television stations will be contacted: Radio / WCNX (1150 AM), WLIS (1420 AM), WDRC (1360 AM & 1029 FM), WTIC (1080 AM & 96.5 FM), Television / WSFB (Channel 3), WTNH (Channel 8), WVIT (Channel 30).

If the decision is made to have a 2 hour delayed opening, AM kindergarten will NOT be cancelled. AM kindergarten students will now report to school, arriving at the delayed opening start time of 10:25 a.m. with the Grade 1-6 students. Rather than leaving at the regular dismissal time of 11:12 a.m., the AM kindergarteners will continue to be instructed for an additional hour. **They will be released for dismissal at 12:12 p.m.** Students who take the bus home will board the busses once the PM kindergarten students have been dropped off for their afternoon session. Therefore, your child's arrival time home from AM kindergarten will be approximately one hour later than on a normal day. During a delayed opening, AM kindergarten specials (Art, Music, PE, Library) will not be held. This will result in a continuous instructional block.

Kindergarten times for a delayed 2 hour opening:

AM Kindergarten: 10:25—12:12 / PM Kindergarten: 12:12—3:00

Inside this issue:	
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	2
<i>Consultant's Corner</i>	3
<i>Calendar Reminders</i>	4
<i>Assistant Superintendent—Math Update</i>	5
<i>Mitten Tree Update</i>	6
<i>Health Room Update</i>	7
<i>Youth Services Update Healthy Youth</i>	8
<i>Holiday Book Ideas</i>	10
<i>Haiti Social Development Project</i>	11
<i>Holiday Stroll Reminder</i>	12
<i>"Chorus Cares" Concert</i>	13

# “Chorus Cares” Concert

## Tuesday, December 13

### 7:00 p.m.

## DRES Gymnasium

Please join us for an evening of song and donate one new unwrapped toy for less fortunate families on the shoreline. Donations are not required to attend the concert.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

December 8.....	Annual Region 4 Administrator Walk— Through at DRES
December 9.....	Early Closing—Staff Development
December 13-16.....	PTO Holiday Faire
December 13.....	Chorus Cares—Annual Winter Concert 7:00 p.m. DRES Gym
December 23.....	Early Closing—Christmas Vacation
December 24—January 2.....	No School, Vacation
January 3.....	School Begins
January 10.....	DRES PTO 7:00 p.m. School Library
January 12.....	Annual Winter Band Concert 7:00 p.m. Gym
January 16.....	Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday—No School
January 17.....	Full Day Professional Development - No School
January 19.....	DR Board of Education 7:00 p.m.



## Consultant's Corner

By Cathy Miller and Jackie Courtmanche



There's nothing better than a good book! Especially on a cold winter day! As adults, we naturally talk about what we are currently reading, what our favorite genres are, and which author's we love! We are trying to create opportunities here at DRES for our students to get in the habit of talking about books. Here are the different activities we've started at DRES so far this year!

### Theme Wall/Thinking About Theme



A theme of a book is the Big Idea—a message about life or human nature that the writer shares with the reader and is not stated but must be inferred. It helps readers understand the deeper meaning and make higher-level connections. Students in Grades 3-6 have been sharing book titles in which they have found the theme. For example, in the book *The Three Little Pigs*, the theme could be responsibility or perseverance. Grades 1 and 2 will be introduced to this topic in the next few weeks. Next time your child completes a book, ask him/her what the theme was!

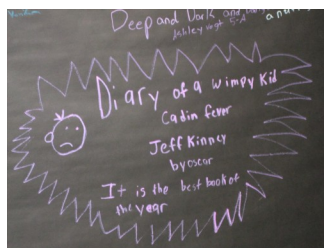
### Nutty for Nutmegs!



Each year in the State of Connecticut, ten books are nominated for the Nutmeg Award. In January, students in Grades 4-6 all over the state can vote for their favorite book as the winner. This year, our school will be participating in the reading of and voting for the 2012 Nutmeg winner. The Nutmeg challenge at DRES will be to read from the Nutmeg list and be ready to vote in January (a Nutmeg book makes a great Holiday gift!). Your child has been given a list of Nutmeg books.

### The Writing is on the Wall!

Here at DRES, we are asking kids to write graffiti all over the walls of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor landing! That's "write", this isn't a typo! A graffiti wall has been established on the landing to provide a forum for sharing favorite quotes, book titles or character sketches from any books the students or teachers have enjoyed. Stop by and check out the writing on the wall!



**D.R.E.S.  
PTO  
Tuesday, January 10  
7:00 p.m.  
Please plan to attend**

**Reminder:  
Annual CHORUS CARES Concert  
Tuesday, December 13  
7:00 p.m.**



**We are on the web:  
[www.dres.k12.ct.us](http://www.dres.k12.ct.us)**

**DRES  
Annual  
PTO  
Holiday Faire**

**December 13-16**

**Please mark your  
calendars!**



**Merry  
Christmas**



**Happy  
Hanukkah**

**Next DR Board of Education Meeting:  
Thursday, January 19, 2012  
7:00 p.m.**

**DRES Annual Band Concert  
Thursday, January 12, 2012  
7:00 p.m. School Gymnasium**



# Math, it all adds up!

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In contemporary society it is not considered acceptable to be illiterate. Sadly, this same standard is not applied to mathematics. Never would someone admit, “I don’t know how to read” yet far too often people have little reluctance admitting to “not being good at math.” This dichotomy has been a part of the American culture for far too long. The impending implementation of new Connecticut and national standards that require higher levels of mathematical fluency at earlier grades will further exacerbate this problem. The Region #4 Schools are taking a proactive approach to these new expectations. With the intent of making math an equal partner to literacy in the education of our students, we are realigning our curriculum to meet the new standards, reviewing time on task for mathematics, adjusting instructional practices, and establishing new expectations for nightly mathematical skill development.

It has long been considered best practice for elementary school children to be given a nightly reading assignment ranging in time and difficulty based on their age and grade level. In our schools, this has been in place for many years supported by the notion that regular practice will result in better readers and ultimately in higher academic achievement. While a majority of our teachers mimic this model in mathematics, we are moving to ensure a guaranteed level of consistency in math such as that in reading.

Research has shown that math fact fluency, and computational fluency at the upper elementary grades, are paramount to success in higher level mathematics courses. Therefore, beginning this week, your student will be expected to complete math fact fluency assignments, or math computational fluency assignments, dependent on their grade and proficiency levels, on a nightly basis. This may be in addition to any regularly assigned mathematics homework. We expect that the few minutes of time required to complete this assignment will have a significant impact on our students’ mathematical abilities.

Individual teachers may utilize different resources to achieve the same goal of regular practice of foundational math skills. You can add your support by ensuring the completion of this assignment on a nightly basis in the method that the teacher has indicated. If you have any questions regarding this initiative, please contact your student’s teacher or the school principal.

-Ian Neviaser, Assistant Superintendent, Region #4 Schools



Dear Parents of D.R.E.S.

Over the past six years, our “Mitten Tree” has been a HUGE success thanks to all of the wonderful and giving families of D.R.E.S.!!! As a school, we collected over 200 pairs of mittens/gloves last year, and donated them to the Deep River Youth and Family Services and The Visiting Nurses. The “Mitten Tree” has been so successful that it has become an annual charity project here at D.R.E.S.

For those of you who are new to D.R.E.S., here is a little history about the project. About seven years ago, my third grade class was thinking about ways to help others during the holiday season. I read to them a story called, **The Mitten Tree** by Candace Christiansen. In the story, a woman sees that a boy does not have mittens, and so she knits him a pair and hangs them, anonymously, on a tree outside his house. The next morning, the boy finds the mittens and is very grateful to have warm hands. As a class, we decided that we could start our own “Mitten Tree” to help others.

### **HERE’S HOW YOU CAN HELP...**

If you can, please send in a new pair of mittens or gloves (hats and scarves are needed, too!) for a boy, girl, or an adult, and hang them on our “Mitten Tree” which will be located outside the library.

**On December 16th, we will donate these mittens to the Deep River Youth and Family Services and the Visiting Nurses.**

I hope you can help warm someone’s hands this Winter!

Thanks!!

Karen Liberatore - Grade 4 teacher

## Important Health Room Information



by

Mrs. Kathy Kalapos, R.N.

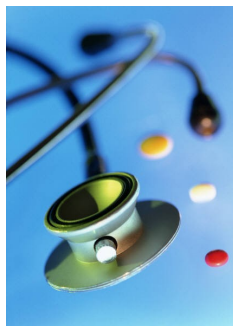
Now that the weather is getting colder, we are seeing an increase in children with cold/flu like symptoms. These symptoms may indicate something as simple as a minor virus, or sometimes it may be something more serious. If your child has run a fever for over 2-3 days, is coughing a lot, is lethargic and has lost their appetite, you should check with your physician.

Things parents can do to try to avoid these illnesses is to make sure your child is eating a well balanced diet, getting adequate amounts of sleep, and washing their hands frequently. They should be encouraged to wash before eating, after using the bathroom, after blowing their noses or coughing, and after handling pets or being in close contact with another ill person. Keeping their hands and fingers off of their face will prevent germs from entering their system through the mouth , nose and eyes. We also encourage coughing into the elbow, thereby decreasing germs being spread by hand contact.

Please remember to call the health room (860-526-5319) when your child is going to be absent from illness or any other reason.

The reason for this is two fold. We want to make sure your child is safe if they are not in school and it helps with surveillance of illnesses during the flu season.

I hope that everyone has a wonderful and healthy holiday season!





### **Being an Asset-Building Friend**

Friendships, like all relationships, never stay the same. Sometimes spending time with friends can be a lot of fun. Other times, they can make you mad or sad. To be an asset-building friend, consider these ideas:

- Do activities that you both enjoy when you're together. If you have different interests, either focus on what you agree on or take turns choosing what to do next.
- Become a better listener. When your friend has something to say, genuinely pay attention. Ask questions. Be sure your friend wants advice before you offer it.
- Identify what you admire most about your friends. How can you be more like that?
- Be a positive influence on your friends. Make good choices and encourage your friends to do the same.
- Refuse to call friends names or tease them in ways that are hurtful.
- Pay attention to how you feel when you're with a friend. You may start to feel uneasy when the friendship is changing. Or you might become agitated when a friend is pressuring you to do something you don't want to do. Talk with others about your feelings, especially if you're not sure what those feelings mean.
- Recognize that some friendships change. Some friends will be friends for life; others stick around for only a short while.
- Ask your parents what they think of your friends. Parents sometimes notice things that you may not. Ask them to mention strengths as well as things that might worry them.
- When your friend hurts your feelings or makes you mad, say so. (But do so in a way that isn't mean.) See if the two of you can work it out.
- Ask questions to learn more about your friends. Find out about their families and their interests away from school.
- Do something nice for a friend. If your friend forgot her or his lunch, give away part of yours. Or lend your friend money to buy a lunch.
- Congratulate your friends when they do something difficult or extraordinary. Get excited about their accomplishments.

PTO Reminder!

Remember to save your **Box Top for Education Coupons**

**Coupons will be collected throughout the school year.**

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*From the DRES teachers & staff*

# Holiday Gift Giving—Consider Giving a Book

## By Mrs. Schaedler, Librarian

### Picture Books

*Bear's First Christmas* by Robert Kinerk  
*I Spy with My Little Eye* by Edward Gibbs  
*Olivia the Princess* by Natalie Shaw  
*Smash! Crash!* By Jon Scieszka  
*Race You to Bed* by Bob Shea  
*Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site* by Sherri Duskey and Tom Lichtenheld  
*Pirates Go to School* by Corinne Dumas

### Poetry

*Do Rabbits Have Christmas?* Lucia Aileen Fisher  
*Every Thing On It* by Shel Silverstein  
*Gnash, Gnaw, Dinosaur!* By Tony Mitton and Lynne Chapman

### Chapter Books

*Bad Kitty Meets the Baby* by Nick Bruel  
*Ivy & Bean* by Annie Barrows and Sophie Blacktail  
*Big Nate on a Roll* by Lincoln Pierce  
*Judy Mood Girl Detective* by Megan McDonald  
*Dying to Meet You* by Kate Klise (Nutmeg Award Nominee Book)  
*The Gollywhopper Games* by Jody Feldman (Nutmeg Award Nominee Book)  
*Diary of a Wimpy Kid 6: Cabin Fever* by Jeff Kinney  
*The Warrior Series* by Erin Hunter

### Fun Nonfiction

*National Geographic Kids Ultimate Weird But True*  
*TIME for Kids BIG Book of Why*  
*Guinness World Records 2012*  
*Ballpark — The Story of America's Baseball Fields* by Lynn Curlee  
*The Dangerous Book for Boys* by Conn Igguiden and Hal Igguiden  
*The Daring Book for Girls* by Andrea J. Buchanan and Miriam Peskowitz



November 22, 2011

Dear Families of Deep River Elementary School,

We are delighted to share with you that our students will participate in a service learning project we've titled, "**From Our Village to Theirs~ Be A Part of the Art~ Supplies for Haiti.**" As many of you know our Tri-Town community has been participating in Sister Cities Essex Haiti, a project that works to build cooperation between our community and that of a town in Haiti called Deschapelles. This is currently being done through projects related to music, library and teacher training. Deschapelles is a community north of the capital of Haiti, Port au Prince. Its population is slightly larger than that of our Tri Town community. You can learn more about this on the following web site: [sistercitiesessexhaiti.org](http://sistercitiesessexhaiti.org).

Here at Deep River Elementary School we decided to pursue a project that will allow our students to create a gift of art supplies with a personal message for children of Deschapelles. Students listened to the book It Takes A Village by Jane Cowen-Fletcher and had a Social Development lesson on how it takes all of us to care for one another. Together we looked at the web site and learned a little about Deschapelles. Students are excited to participate in this project as it allows for them to create an art supply container with supplies that will be used by a child in Haiti.

During the week of **November 28<sup>th</sup> through December 2<sup>nd</sup>** we are asking for families to please send in empty Pringles containers or any container that is in the shape of a cylinder with a lid. Our goal is to have three hundred and sixty containers, one for each child in the school. In Art class they will be decorating and personalizing them under the supervision of Mrs. Carfi. We are also asking for donations of art supplies(ex., colored pencils, markers, sharpeners, erasers, pencils) that will fit in these containers so that after they are decorated and "supply ready" we can fill them and send them to Deschapelles.

If you have any questions about our **From Our Village to Theirs~Be A Part of the Art~Supplies for Haiti** campaign, please feel free to contact Laura Kasprow or Diana Carfi at (860)526-5319. Our students are eagerly looking forward to this new venture.

Sincerely,

Laura Kasprow  
Social Development Program

Diana Carfi  
Student Council Advisor



**Deep River Parks and Recreation  
Announces the annual  
Holiday Stroll  
Friday, December 2nd**



**Horse & Carriage Rides 6-9 pm**

**Come take a ride around our lovely village  
and take in the holiday decorations**



**Model Train Display 5-9 pm**



**A return performance of the holiday train display by  
the Connecticut Shoreline Train Group in the Town Hall  
auditorium. The trains will be ready and running on  
Wednesday, Nov. 30 from 6:00-8:30pm and  
Thursday, Dec. 1 from 6:00-8:30 pm.**

**2nd Annual Gingerbread House Contest**

**Bring in your homemade creation and enter it in our con-  
test. Creations should be limited to a 15" x 18" footprint.  
They can be dropped off before 5:30 pm at the Town Hall.  
Judging will be ongoing throughout the evening.**



**Santa Arrives by Fire Truck**

**Come meet the jolly old elf! He will be  
arriving at approximately 6:30 pm**

**Come for the Tree Lighting Ceremony!**



**All events are free and take place at the Deep River Town Hall. Free cookies  
and hot chocolate while they last. Free children's entertainment TEA**



## **CHORUS CARES!**

**On Tuesday, December 13, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.** the Deep River Elementary School chorus students in grades three through six will perform their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual "Chorus Cares" Winter Concert. They will raise their voices in song in hopes that you will help them raise donations, in the form of gifts, for children in the Shoreline area who are less fortunate. As always, admission to our concert is free and participation in this fundraiser is optional. To further entice you to participate however, the children invite you to join them in song during the second half of the concert for a combined chorus winter/holiday sing-a-long. Over one hundred and sixty children's voices! What better way to bring cheer as we head into the holiday season? So please join us for an evening of song and donate **one new unwrapped toy** to make one local child's holiday season a little brighter.

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Gifts are needed for both boys and girls ages 2-15. Possible gift/toy suggestions are: crafts, board games, action figures, trucks, dolls, stuffed animals, sports items, art supplies, and any other idea you may have. Any donation will be greatly appreciated. Collection containers will be located at the evening's concert by the gym door's entrance.

Any questions please contact Miss Peggy Caffrey (Chorus Director) at (860) 526-5319