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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Families,

Greetings! As Diana Rigby, Superintendent of Concord Public Schools, and I visited classrooms this Wednesday, we saw many extraordinary learning opportunities happening throughout all the grade levels. Please take a moment to ask your child(ren) about all that is going on in their classrooms in reading, math, and writing and other subject areas. Also, ask them how they interact with technology. We saw students creating their own blogs, creating their own computer programs using Scratch, using Voki to create characters, iMovies on The Solstice, video podcasts and much more! I am continuously impressed with the ease and creativity of our students as they use our technology within their writing and other subject areas such as science, social studies and more. I am equally in awe of how our staff confidently embeds the technology throughout the core curriculum.

We are still looking for one more parent to be a member of the School Advisory Council. The first SAC meeting will be the first week back after vacation. If you are interested in being a part of this committee, please let me know or contact Donna Macone at 978-318-1300. We will be discussing our school improvement plan and taking a look at other important topics.

Best wishes for a healthy and happy holiday! See you next year!

Sincerely,
Kelly Clough

FROM THE PTG CO-PRESIDENTS

Well, 2010 is quickly coming to a close, and we hope everyone is having a joyous season with friends and family. We would like to take this opportunity to wish our Thoreau family a healthy, safe and happy holiday, and thank our amazing teachers and staff for a great first half of the school year. We hope everyone enjoys the winter break and gets plenty of rest as there are lots of fun events coming up just around the corner – Geography Quest, Hobby Fair, Bingo Night, and the Spelling Bee, to name just a few. Don't forget that we have our next PTG Meeting coming up pretty quickly after we return from break – **Wednesday, January 12 at 7pm** in the library. Please mark your calendar and plan on joining us!

See you next year!
Karen & Melanie

SPED DIRECTOR COFFEE

Come meet Jessica Murphy, SPED Director for Concord and Concord-Carlisle Public Schools, on Thursday, **January 13, 9:30am-11:00am** in the conference room at the Ripley building, 120 Meriam Road, Concord. Feel free to bring general questions about special education services in our schools. Any questions, contact Liz Hopkinson (lhopkinson@verizon.net) or Stefanie Cloutier (stefanieac@comcast.net).

2011 ANNUAL THOREAU SCHOOL SPELLING BEE

All 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders are invited to participate in our Annual Thoreau Spelling Bee, **Saturday, February 12**. This is always a fun and low-pressure Bee, so be sure to give it a whirl! Third and fourth graders may participate in teams of three; fifth graders compete individually. Bee start times are: Grade 3 - 3:30; Grade 4 - 5:00; Grade 5 - 6:30. So form your teams and look for the registration form in your child's backpack (and on www.thoreauptg.org) soon! Please return one registration form per team **no later than Friday, January 14**.

Suzy Symons

Spelling Bee Chair

BSO FAMILY CONCERT

Yes! We are planning a trip to Symphony Hall for the wonderful BSO Family Concert this year! This season, the family concert is Saturday, **February 19, 2011** at 10 am. Adults are \$20 (plus \$2 service fee and postage) and kids are FREE. This year's theme is Community Pride: A Musical Look at Cooperation, Communication, and Conviction with music of Tchaikovsky, Dvorak and more. Pre-concert activities including the Instrument Playground, instrument demonstrations, and much more, and are available for all ticket holders from 9-10am.

If you would like to attend, please send a check payable to Jennifer Montbach for \$22 per adult and specify the total number of seats you need (i.e. 2 adults, 1 kid, \$44 enclosed). Mail to 45 Pine St., Concord 01742. I must **receive** your check by January 1. Because the concert is early this year (in years past it was in April), I must be strict about the deadline; you may still be able attend if you are late, but won't be able to sit with the group. Email me at jennifer@montbach.net with any questions.

COATS FOR KIDS

Concord Middle School's annual charity drive is underway. This year we are participating in the Coats for Kids program. Families and children are in need of warm, winter coats, especially now that wintry weather has set in. Please donate gently used, good quality winter coats or ski jackets to help a good cause this holiday season. Coats may be dropped off at the middle school, and a drop-off bin has been placed in Thoreau School for your convenience. Coats will be collected until **January 6**. Thanks for your support and generosity.

THE GEOGRAPHY QUEST IS COMING SOON

Get ready to take a journey around the world collecting the ingredients to make an apple cake! The annual Geography Quest is a PTG-sponsored event designed to let families explore geography together while learning a bit about history and how to use reference tools. The 2011 Geography Quest will be distributed to students after the winter recess and should be returned to school by **February 8**.

Anne Mullaney and Carla Macy, Thoreau Geography Quest Co-chairs

MCAS SCHEDULE – SPRING 2011

March 22	Gr. 4 Long Composition
March 23	Gr. 3 and Gr. 5 ELA
March 24	Gr. 4 ELA
March 25	Gr. 3 and Gr. 5 ELA
March 28	Gr. 4 ELA
May 9	Gr. 3 and Gr. 5 Math
May 11	Gr. 3 and Gr. 5 Math
May 12	Gr. 4 Math
May 13	Gr. 4 Math
May 18	Gr. 5 Science
May 19	Gr. 5 Science

Please be mindful of these dates, and make every effort to have your child(ren) in school on time. Thank you for your cooperation in this effort.

AROUND TOWN

Toddler Programs

Looking for something fun to do with your toddler? Try these programs at the Ripley School in Concord:

Parent Toddler Program (ages 1-2) This class is for parents with children 1-2 years old. It is a weekly supportive parenting discussion group and a play group for toddlers that includes outdoor or gym play, adventures with all types of toys, and a fun, interactive singing time. Classes meet Tuesdays or Fridays, 9:30-11:00, starting the week of **January 3, 2011**.

Parent Preschool Program (ages 2-3) This program is really two-programs-in-one, facilitated by two devoted early childhood specialists. Children 2-3 years old play together in a nursery school classroom one morning a week. They learn what it's like to be part of a group and what "school" is like. Parents take turns helping in the classroom, assisting their child's teacher. When not parent-helping, moms (dads are welcome, too!) meet separately with their own facilitator for a parenting support group and refreshments. Non-mobile siblings welcome. Classes meet Wednesdays or Thursdays, 9:30-11:30, starting the week of **January 3, 2011**.

For more information and to sign up go to www.ace.colonial.net or call 978-318-1432.

Preschool Slots Available for the 2011-2012 School Year at Concord Public Schools Integrated Preschool

Are you searching for a reasonably-priced preschool program that includes highly qualified staff and engaging hands-on curriculum? As part of the Concord Public Schools, we pride ourselves for individualizing instruction to target children's specific learning styles in preparation for entering the kindergarten community.

You are invited to attend an Open House on **Tuesday, January 11, 2011, 9:30am-11:30am, 1:00pm-4:00pm and 6:00pm-8:30pm.** (Snow date: Tuesday, January 18). Children are welcome! Come see our facility, talk with our staff, and ask questions about the program. We are located at the Ripley Building, 120 Meriam Road in Concord. You can also check us out at www.concordpublicschools.net!

Applications are available January 3 - 21, 2011. Children who are 3 by September 1 and who are not yet 5 by August 31 are welcome to apply. Applications are available at the Open House, at each of the Concord elementary school offices, the Special Education office in the Ripley Building, and at www.concordpublicschools.net. Applications must be returned by January 21, 2011 to be eligible for the lottery. If you have further questions, please contact: teachers Jennifer DeFrancesco at 978-202-1148/jdefrancesco@colonial.net or Christine Brown at 978-202-1141/chrisbrown@colonial.net

A Fairy Tale Adventure

On Sunday, **January 9th at 2:00** The Middlesex School Theatre Department will present "A Fairy Tale Adventure" by Sophia Holder. The Wicked Witch has changed the endings to all the Fairy Tales so that evil will triumph. She's kidnapped the Fairy Queen to stop her from reversing the spell. Only Hansel, Gretel and Paddy the Gingerbread man can save the tales. This British comedy was written for kids of all ages and has jokes for the entire family. The suggested donation for tickets is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children. All proceeds will go to support the Linawo Children's Home

Linawo Children's Home cares for abandoned or neglected children in the Cape Town area of South Africa. It was started in 2002 by a woman who was asked to care for the child of a dying friend. Due to the high rate of HIV/AIDS and the continuing consequences of apartheid, there are many orphaned and neglected children in South Africa. Linawo Children's Home now has sixteen children in its care. Middlesex students volunteered at the home in June 2009 and another group will be going in June 2011. While the caregivers at the home are very committed to bringing these children up in a loving and nurturing way, they have extremely limited resources. The funds raised from this play will go toward clothing, food, school fees and other basic needs of the children.

CCYBS Winter Baseball Clinic

In an effort to support off-season skills development for players of all ages, CCYBS wants help get out the word about the following skills clinic organized CCHS's Varsity Baseball Coach

John Kelly. John is the Concord Carlisle H.S. Varsity Coach, Worcester Tornado Pitching Coach, and has spent 17 years in professional baseball.

The clinics begin **January 8**. The 8-week pre-season training clinic spans a 10 week period. We will take two weekends off during February vacation.

2:00 – 3:00 T-Ball

3:00 – 4:00 1st and 2nd Grade

4:00 – 5:00 3rd and 4th Grade

5:00 – 6:00 5th and 6th Grade

Each week the clinic will cover pitching, fielding, and hitting. We will also try to implement a discussion each week on the mental approach, fear of failure, mechanical importance, baseball instincts, and the importance of having fun. Our goal is to teach baseball and to promote a fun and safe environment for everyone involved. We will get better while having fun.

Instructors include John Kelly, Dana D'Agostino (Everett High School Varsity Coach, 2 years playing in Italy. This will be Dana's 3rd year with the winter clinics.), various CCHS baseball players, and professional guest coaches. There may even be a random visit for the younger groups from Twister, the Worcester Tornado's Mascot.

The cost of the clinic is \$200.00 with a 20% discount for families with multiple players. All clinics will be held in the CCHS Lower Gym. Register at ccyb.org or contact John Kelly at JK@johnkellybaseball.com or 978-660-5454.

Christmas Tree Pick Up

The Youth in Service at Holy Family Parish and the Concord Boy Scouts will be picking up Christmas Trees on Saturday, **January 8**. To arrange to have your tree picked up please email treepickup2011@gmail.com or call 978-369-2911x4 with your name, address, and phone number. Then put your tree at the end of your driveway by 7:00am on the morning of the pickup with a \$15-\$25 donation attached to the tree in a plastic bag. Make checks payable to Holy Family Parish. All proceeds from the tree pickup will help support the Youth in Service Summer Service trip and many Boy Scouts activities throughout the year.

In order for this fundraiser to be successful many volunteers are needed. If you are an adult willing to drive, have access to a truck, or are an older youth, and would like to volunteer, please email or call Jaclyn Daniels at youthmin55church@aol.com or 978-369-7442 x 228. This is a great opportunity for high school students who need community service hours.

It's Time to Spring into Action!

Registration for Spring 2011 lacrosse is OPEN **through January 10**; after the 10th, interested players will be placed on a waitlist. Early registration ends January 3. Registrations received after January 3 will be charged a \$20 late fee. The CCYL Program offers lacrosse to girls in grades 3-8, and boys in grades 1-8. No experience is necessary. New players are always

welcome! Volunteers are needed and welcomed, no lacrosse experience necessary. Please visit www.ccyouthlacrosse.com to register.

The next issue of Thoreau Announcements will be edited by Laurie Garrison. To submit an item, email announcements@thoreauptg.org. You will receive an e-mail acknowledgment that your submission has been received. Submissions must be school or community related and not commercial in nature. Submissions should be brief, with minimal formatting – no bullet points or underlining, please! Deadline: 9 pm, Monday, January 3, 2011.

This message was sent to the Thoreau mailing list.

REPLIES GO TO THE LIST ADMINISTRATOR, NOT THE MESSAGE AUTHOR!

For support contact thoreau-owner@lists.ptg-concord.org.

Thoreau School: <http://thoreau.colonial.net/>

Thoreau School PTG: <http://www.thoreauptg.org/>