

# Earl D. Taft Elementary School

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Paula A. Montesi, Principal  
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## Overview of Activities for December

Parent conferences, held on December 4 and 5, were well attended by parents.

One of the suggestions in the survey that Taft School Council handed out was that we offer more performances and plays. To that end, Mrs. D'Andrea found a way to offer this opportunity to our fourth grade chorus. Taft School chorus participants took part in the UHS production of Scrooge. Over 30 children sang along with high school students. It was a very exciting opportunity for them. Ironically, plans were in the works for another production. Under the direction of Carla Mason, one of our special education teachers, 101 Dalmatians will be performed in the spring. An informational meeting was held on Dec. 16. Enough commitment letters came back to warrant two separate casts of over 50 students. We are planning performances for March.

Mrs. Davis' and Mrs. Bandstra's classes visited the Senior Center to sing for the people gathered there. Mrs. Auciello's and Mrs. Lukowski's classes weaved holiday placemats and made glass ball ornaments for the seniors and the shut-ins. After Mrs. Schotanus donated two stuffed animals, we held a raffle and collected \$228.00 which was donated to the Toys for Tots and/or Adopt an Angle Program.

Mrs. Schotanus' class traveled to the Veterans' Hospital in Brockton along with Mr. Esposito and Ms. Fafard. The veteran's gathered there were treated to a concert filled with patriotic songs. Our students mingled with veterans for lunch. Everyone was enriched by the visit.

This past month the students in Mrs. Harcourt's science classes have continued using the science process skills that all scientists use. In order to study decomposition of "stuff" that ends up in landfills, the students made models of their own personal landfills

During the month of December the second grade classes traveled to eight countries, to learn what different people around the world do to celebrate the holiday season! Each classroom represented a country, from Australia to India to Russia. The children spent an hour in each location, got their passports stamped and located the county on the world map. They learned songs, enjoyed stories and did crafts from all these different cultures.

## **General School/Department Information**

The necessary repairs were made on the playground and it was reopened on Tuesday, December 16, 2008. We are looking for ways to prevent the vandalism from happening in the first place.

Due to the shutdown over Winter Vacation the scheduled rug replacement in 6 classrooms is on hold.

The principal received a donation of \$250.00 from Momentum Fitness to purchase physical education equipment. Mrs. Dimmick and Mrs. Seagrave will be selecting items to purchase with the donation. We give our thanks to Mrs. Rachel Howe for her generosity.

*More news from Taft is available on the Taft School website in our December newsletter, Tiger Tales as well as the UPS Community Newsletter.*

## **Professional Development Activities**

During the December Curriculum Half Day, all staff attended a training offered by Dr. Boyaj on Response to Intervention. In addition, our reading specialists presented a “refresher” workshop on examining children’s writing using the MCAS rubric.

December 1, 2008 – Nancy Bowditch and Linda Benoit, Christine Gallo, Melanie Ethier, Marla Sirois, attended their second and final day of training at the RTI workshop held in Natick, Massachusetts.

December 1, 2008 – Gretchen D’Andrea and Rob Hammerton attended the 12 Step Music Literacy Program. This was the first part of a two-day workshop.

December 4, 2008 – Carla Mason attended a workshop on Disciplining Students with Behavioral Problems in a Legally Complaint Manner. The workshop was held in Boston, Massachusetts.

December 5, 2008 – Pamela Seagrave attended the Seventh Annual Conference Just for New Teachers, educators currently in their first four years of practice. This workshop was held in Marlborough, Massachusetts.

December 10, 2008 – Paula Montesi attended the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s First Annual Summit on Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. The workshop was held in Marlborough, Massachusetts.

## **PTO Reports and Information**

The principal attended a PTO meeting on December 11, 2008.


The PTO held a Scholastic Book Fair during parent conferences. In addition to being open for the week during library classes, the fair was also open during conferences and again on Saturday, December 6 for the ELC parents. The profit from this fundraiser goes back into the PTO general fund. In addition, gift certificates were given to over 30 students who may not have bought books otherwise. The PTO works with the school social workers to identify those students in need. The highlight of the book fair is always the Book Talks held over the intercom during the announcements. 10 interested students prepared a short summary and critique of a book in the fair. After reading it over the intercom they were able to select a book of their choice.

*Next Meeting January 8, 2008 in Taft School Cafeteria*

### **Upcoming Events**

January 8, 2009	PTO Meeting Executive Board 6 p.m. PTO Meeting 7:00 p.m. Taft Cafeteria
January 14, 2009	Family Night for ESL Students and their families 7:00 – 8:30 Taft Café
January 16, 2009	Prof. Development Day – No classes
January 19, 2009	Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No School
January 20, 2009	Books and Beyond Reading Program Begins – Week 1
January 23, 2009	Miscoe Skippers Jump roping Team (To kick off Jump Rope for the Heart)
January 23, 2009	PTO Free Family Fun Night
January 26, 2009	Books and Beyond Reading Program – Week 2
January 30, 2009	Spirit Day: <i>Support Your Favorite Sports Team</i>

Administrator,



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