

# LINCOLN-ELIOT LEADER

**RESPECT-RESPONSIBILITY-EXCELLENCE-LIFELONG LEARNING**

**December 2008**

[www.newtonpublicschools.com](http://www.newtonpublicschools.com)  
[www.newton.mec.edu/LincolnEliot/index.htm](http://www.newton.mec.edu/LincolnEliot/index.htm)



Main Telephone Number: 617-559-9540  
 Call Back Number: 617-559-9560

## Reflections from Katie

*Make new friends,  
 But keep the old  
 One is silver and  
 The other is gold*

As a school community, we took the opportunity to celebrate our new playground with a playground re-opening ceremony right before Thanksgiving. The ceremony began with the entire school community encircling the playground on a cold, Monday morning, singing Make New Friends.

In my mind, this playground represents several important ideas: the importance of play as an avenue to learning, the value of hard work and team work, and the role that a community plays in making things happen.

Children come to this playground to play. Perhaps they see it as their break from learning, but if we look closely, their learn-

ing continues in this space. Children are learning how to make new friends, how to negotiate with each other, and how to solve problems. This is not just social and emotional learning (though these are essential). It is also critical thinking; creative problem solving that couldn't possibly happen inside the walls of a classroom, directed by a teacher. This is consistent with what the Newton School Committee just voted in as goals for the entire district: Developing excellent critical and creative thinking capacity; Becoming collaborative and inventive problem-solvers; Learning to communicate effectively in both speech and writing; and Building social skills to live respectfully, responsibly, and successfully in a changing society. The fact that the Lincoln-Eliot community chose to put their time, energy and money into building this new playground, shows that we understand the value of this kind of learning. We understand that without the space to play, we risk limiting student learning.

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## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS



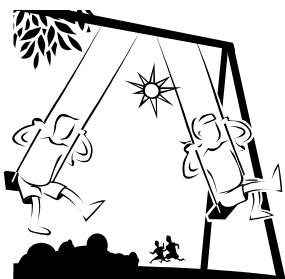
<b>Thursday, December 4</b>	<b>Early Release School Dismissed at 12:30</b>	<b>Wednesday, December 24 - Friday, January 2</b>	<b>No School December Recess</b>
<b>Wednesdays: December 3, 10 &amp; 17</b>	<b>Andy Green of Potato Hill Poetry will visit each 4th &amp; 5th grade classroom</b>	<b>Wednesday, January 7</b>	<b>School Council Meeting L-E Library, 6:30 pm</b>
<b>Tuesday, December 9</b>	<b>Andy Green of Potato Hill Poetry visits 2nd graders</b>	<b>Tuesday, January 13</b>	<b>PTO Meeting L-E Library, 6:30 pm</b>
<b>Tuesday, December 16</b>	<b>Lincoln-Eliot Book Swap</b>	<b>Monday, January 19</b>	<b>No School Martin Luther King Day</b>
<b>Friday, December 19</b>	<b>Walk to School Day</b>		

**REFLECTIONS FROM KATIE**

*(Continued from page 1)*

This playground reconstruction also represents the importance of working together as a team, and never giving up. When I came on board this summer, I remember meeting under the shade of a large tree on the playground to chat with parents and parks and recreation staff members who were working together to figure out how and when the installation could happen. As glitches came up in this process, the various parents who were involved consulted each other, figured out where to go next, and moved forward. Leadership of this project was shared, and without that shared leadership, there were several turning points at which the project could have come to a halt. But the parents who were involved persevered. It is this lesson that I hope we can share with our children so that they can see that the things we really want do not come without effort. We must persevere; continue to work hard in the face of difficulties. And when we do face those difficulties, one of the most important resources is the community around us.

Without the support of the community, this project may have never gotten off the ground. This project had support from the Newton Department of Parks and Recreation. The project was also supported by Alderman Scott Lennon. The project is a direct result of the fundraising efforts of last year's Silent Auction Committee. I truly believe that these people came together because they, too, were able to see the importance of play, and the value of that time that children spend on a playground. They also came together because they believe in the importance of community supporting each other.



And so as I think about giving thanks in this holiday season, I'm not just grateful for having a great playground for our children, but I am grateful for all of the important lessons that this playground represents. I wish all of you a happy and healthy holiday season, full of family, connectedness and joy.

**Reminders and Announcements:**

The following Morning Clubs are open and available from 8:00 am-8:20 am

- Mondays Gimp Club in the gym
- Tuesdays Math Club for 2nd -5th graders in the library (starts at 7:45 am)
- Wednesday Basketball Club in the gym
- Thursday Math Club for 4th & 5th graders in the library (starts at 7:45 am)
- Friday Kickball Club in the gym

Please let me know if you would like to offer a club, and we will find the space

Children should not be hanging around in the lobby before 8:00 am.

School Council meetings are open to the public, and are generally held the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm. If you have questions about agenda items, feel free to contact the school.

We sent out a Connect-Ed phone message the day before Thanksgiving break. Connect-Ed is a recorded message from me that everyone should get via phone. If you did not receive this message about early release on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, please call the school so that we can make sure we have the correct phone number for you.

**Interview with 3rd Grade Teacher Ms. Emlie Barkow**

*3rd grader Gabriel Kotsonis and his brother, 2nd grader Julian Kotsonis, sat down recently to talk with Ms. Emlie Barkow. It just happened to be her birthday, November 20.*

*GK: Where are you from? What country?*

EB: I'm from the United States, from Wisconsin. I grew up on a lake - Pine Lake.

*JK: Who is in your family?*

EB: I have a large family- three older brothers and an older sister and my parents. I'm the youngest of five kids. My family is getting bigger. I have two nephews and one niece. One of my other brothers just got married, so there are more kids to come.

*GK: When did you come to Lincoln-Eliot?*

EB: I came three years ago. I worked as an aide in Ms. Penczar's 5<sup>th</sup> grade class and got my own third grade classroom last year.

*JK: We heard your sister was in the Olympics.*

EB: Yes, for sailing. She came very close to getting a medal. She was third throughout most of the races and ended up seventh overall - in the world. She's probably going to try to compete in the Olympics again in 2012.

*GK: Did you go to the Olympics?*

EB: Yes, my family went to China to watch her. Besides sailing, I also saw women's track and field, tennis, and rowing.

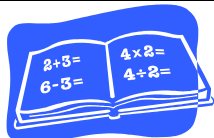
*JK: Did you see anything else in China?*

EB: Yes, we did a lot of touring around. We went to the Forbidden City, the Great Wall... My brothers and sister and I raced up the Great Wall. It took us two hours to run up it. Usually it takes people a good five hours to hike it.

*(Continued on page 11)*

## SCHOOL NEWS

### It All Adds Up



An article about holiday gifts has been in me for a few years now but I have never managed to get it written on time. I would like to suggest that as you shop for the right gifts for your children please consider buying one math related gift.

Math related gifts include a wide range of activities from puzzles to strategy games to math concept games to geometric building kits. Although I am going to mention some games by name, I am not endorsing these games, but using them as examples. There are many other games on the store shelves that fill the qualities I am writing about.

Buying a math game that focuses on one skill is tricky because kids can get bored working on a single skill. Consider buying a fast moving math concept or strategy game that has lots of interesting things going on. In Math Club, Yatzee (addition/multiplication), Blokus (geometric thinking), Knockout (addition/subtraction), Money Bags and Mastermind are popular games.

Manipulative puzzles like Rush Hour, in which you drive a car off a crowded parking lot, or Hoppers, in which you have frogs jump over each other until only one frog remains, allow students to work on problem solving skills and endurance. I like these puzzles because they have several levels of difficulty, which allows for both immediate access to the puzzles and continued challenges.

Geometric building sets allow students to explore geometric concepts. In Math Club we use Geofix by Didax. Students often start building simple 2 and 3 dimensional shapes and end up creating large complex structures.

Having a math related game to pull out with friends and family would help students work on needed skills in a fun way. If the budget this year does not allow for the purchase of a math related gift, remember we have many games and puzzles to check out from the Math Game Library for home use.

I wish you all the best in the new year,

Elka Kuhlman  
Math Coach, Title 1

### Newton Survey Needs Parent Input

The Safe Schools/Healthy Students Program Director has developed a survey to make sure that the education offerings meet the needs of the parent community. Below is a link to this survey. It should only take five minutes or less to complete. The survey will be open from Monday, December 1st through Friday, December 12th. Thanks for your help. For more info, please contact Nancy Holczer, Safe Schools/Healthy Students Parent Education and Outreach Specialist, at [nancy\\_holczer@newton.k12.ma.us](mailto:nancy_holczer@newton.k12.ma.us). Survey Link:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/?p=WEB228HWKBNNMB>

### Newton's Child Assault Prevention (CAP) seeks volunteers

We can't do it without you.

Each year CAP volunteer Prevention Specialists present 120 workshops to students in Newton's kindergarten, second and fifth grade classrooms. Working in teams of 3, we teach Newton children that they have the right to be Safe, Strong and Free with their friends and peers, with adult strangers, and with those who are trusted to take care of them. Using simple and age appropriate language we address bullying, stranger safety, and sexual assault by known persons.

We are looking for parents and other community members who are interested in becoming volunteer Prevention Specialists. Please join us. The next training will be held on January 30th, 31st and February 1st from 9-4 pm. CAP volunteers include parents of pre-school and school- aged children, empty nesters, professionals and retirees who are interested in child safety, and who can contribute 6 hours per month for one school year.

For more information about this training, please call Gail Sommer, CAP Director ((617) 969-5906 x 143 or by email, [gsommer@ncscweb.org](mailto:gsommer@ncscweb.org). CAP is a program of the Newton Community Service Center. For more information, visit our website at [www.ncscweb.org](http://www.ncscweb.org).



# Creative Arts and Sciences Visitors

**T**he Creative Arts and Sciences Committee is completely supported and funded by our Lincoln-Eliot PTO. Our committee hires presenters to support our teachers with curriculum related presentations. We also fund and support the Concert Series which is a Newton City-wide program. Thirty percent of our PTO budget goes toward these excellent presentations. Please visit [www.lepto.org](http://www.lepto.org) to see our updated CASC site with photos!

"**Bug Works**" came to visit our first graders in early November. Our students got "up close and personal" with a 3 month old, one year old and six year old praying mantis, twelve inch millipede and a hissing Madagascar cockroach.

**Andy Green of Potato Hill Poetry** will visit 4th and 5th grades on **12/3, 12/10, and 12/17**; and will visit 2nd grade on **Tuesday 12/9** as well as two dates in February. [www.potatohill.com](http://www.potatohill.com).

"**Day in Ghana**"; Joe and Vida will visit each 2nd grade classroom sharing artifacts, music, games and proverbs. The "day" will include the family's morning chores, the marketplace, school and the family's evening activities; **Tuesday, March 24th**

"**New England Indians**"; Rob Aptaker will visit the 3rd Grade classrooms sharing his knowledge of Native American life before the arrival of the Mayflower. He will focus on the Nonantum people and students will hear about work, play, family life and social customs of the Woodland tribes; **early March**

Children's book illustrator/author and Newton local **Emilie Boon** will visit the kindergartners. She will show examples of her artwork and talk about the process of writing a story and illustrating it as well as guiding the young students in creating their own booklet. Spring date to be determined. Find out more at [www.emilieboon.com](http://www.emilieboon.com).

**Bay Colony Educators**, a Lincoln-Eliot favorite, return to give an overview of a "Child's Life in Colonial America". Discussion will include artifacts, clothing, the rigors of daily life; Grade 5, **early March**

Elaine Smith Purcell,  
Sherri Meek and Dow Brain  
Creative Arts and Sciences  
Committee Co-Chairs



Please SAVE THE DATE for this year's  
**Children's Learning Fund 6th Annual  
Silent Auction**

**Saturday, March 14, 2009 - Newton Elks**  
7:00pm - Midnight

The Silent Auction is Lincoln Eliot's largest fundraiser and 100% of the money raised goes directly towards our children. This year the proceeds will go towards much needed technology for our school.

We need volunteers! If you can help solicit donations, if you know someone or have a special skill you would like to donate please let us know. You can contact **Maria Gentile Vachon at 617-244-6160** or [maria.gentile@rcn.com](mailto:maria.gentile@rcn.com)



## Nursing Notes

**W**ith the wet and cold season ahead of us, the health room is running low on extra clothing, especially pants with elastic waistbands. If you have any old clothing that you are willing to part with (and your child would not become upset seeing someone else wearing it in school), please consider making a donation to the school. Children often are unable to reach their parents during the day and must sit in class with soggy clothing on after splashing through a puddle at recess. They are miserable and I feel bad that I often have nothing else for them to wear. Any contribution will be greatly appreciated.

And, finally, with flu season around the corner and at the risk of once again sounding repetitive, I'd like to review some simple health practices to keep us all healthy.

- December 7th – 13th is National Handwashing Awareness Week. Perhaps the simplest and most effective way keep yourself from getting sick is to wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water or use an alcohol based hand rub or gel frequently, especially after visiting public places or being in contact with anyone with a cold or the flu. Rub your hands together vigorously and scrub all surfaces for at least 20 seconds before rinsing and drying (tip: have your children sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice while washing). Soap combined with the scrubbing action helps dislodge and remove germs. Always let the alcohol in the hand rub dry completely. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cover your mouth when coughing or



sneezing. Turn your head (never cough in the direction of someone else) and cough or sneeze into a tissue. If tissues are not available, cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow.

- Do not take young children, those with immune system problems or the chronically ill into large crowds unnecessarily when the flu is in your community.
- Avoid close contact (holding, hugging and kissing) with anyone who has a cold or the flu. Be very careful with children, as they are most likely to become sick with the flu.
- Stay home from work or school and avoid public activities for at least 5 (7 for children) days if you have symptoms of the flu.
- Do not share items that can spread germs and viruses, like drinking cups, straws, or other items that you put in your mouth.
- Clean things that are touched often in household, classroom and child care settings: toilet flusher, door or refrigerator handles, phones, water faucets, etc.

If your child is ill, please use your good judgment as to whether to send them to school. They will be uncomfortable and unproductive here when they are ill and expose others to unnecessary germs. School health room are not equipped to accommodate sick children and since crowded health rooms lead to further spread of disease it is imperative to keep your sick children home and/or pick him/her up as soon as possible if you are called during the school day. Any changes in emergency phone numbers should be made immediately.

Keep sick kids home from school. Please follow these policy guidelines:

And, again, as a reminder, the Newton Health and Human Services Depart-

ment has established guidelines as to when to keep your child home from school. They are:

- A fever over 100° F during the past 24 hours (must remain fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school)
- A cold in the active stages, i.e. coughing, runny nose, sneezing
- A sore throat and/or swollen neck glands
- An undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours
- Head lice that have not been treated

Please notify the health room if your child has been injured, hospitalized, or ill for an extended period so that I can assist with any issues that may arise.

For more information about National Handwashing Awareness Week, go to <http://www.henrythehand.com/> and about handwashing, in general, [www.mass.gov/handwashing](http://www.mass.gov/handwashing).

"...a child must be healthy to learn and a child must learn to be healthy..."

Stay healthy,

Sue Schy, RN



**PTO UPDATE: The Silent Auction, Fifth Grade Fundraising, the New PTO Website & Chinese Watercress**

*The PTO Holds an Informative and Mouth-Watering Meeting - By Vicki Ritterband, PTO Secretary*

If you haven't caught on yet, PTO meetings are the place to keep your finger on the pulse of what's happening at the school and to meet other like-minded parents – people like you who care a lot about education and Lincoln-Eliot. Twenty-two people attended our November 22 meeting. If you've never been to a PTO meeting, come check us out. **Our next meeting is Tuesday, Jan. 13 at 6:30 pm.** Megara Bell, who works as a sex educator, will be our guest parent expert. She'll share her expertise on talking to your child about sex and will answer any questions. Megara is the director of the nonprofit organization Partners in Sex Education.

And thank you to Anne Chang for her terrific presentation on cooking with Chinese vegetables. Check out her recipes on our spanking new PTO website: [www.lepto.org](http://www.lepto.org). Go to the home page, click on the Nov. PTO meeting minutes, and you'll find her recipes as an attachment. I have tried several of them and they are great.

**Here are the highlights of November's PTO meeting.**

**Silent Auction:** Maria Vachon gave an update. The silent auction is Lincoln-Eliot's biggest fundraiser. It not only raises much-needed money for the school, but it's also a lot of fun. The auction will take place Saturday, March 14, from 7-midnight at the Elks' Lodge in Newton. The hall was generously donated by the McAuliffe family. Alderman Scott Lennon will be the MC and we are asking Ben Franklin Bank to again be our event's major sponsor. The DJ's from the Halloween dance have been approached to work the event.

We are in need of items and services to auction off as well as ads for the ad book. We'd like every L-E family to solicit or contribute one item or ser-

vice. We're looking for things like camp memberships, a spa or restaurant gift certificate, a piece of jewelry, etc.

We have a master list of solicited items posted on Google docs <http://tinyurl.com/5ou25h> where people can put their names if they plan to solicit a business, so there is no duplication. You can also email Maria ([maria.gentile@rcn.com](mailto:maria.gentile@rcn.com)) to let her know who you plan to solicit. Maria will also try to put an updated list of places that have been solicited on the PTO board in the school once a week. On the PTO website ([www.lepto.org](http://www.lepto.org)) you will find solicitation letters and forms that you can drop off or mail to your favorite business. We need a lot of auction items and ads to make the evening a success. Our fundraising goal for the silent auction is \$16,000. Approximately \$11,000 of that will go toward technology, specifically:

- 5 MacBooks
- Cart
- 5 Proscopes (microscope)
- Printer
- Elmo (Scanner/photo)
- LCD Projector
- Software
- Mics, surge protectors, etc.

The remaining \$5,000 will cover other items and programs the PTO has committed to paying for this year.

**In Other Fundraising News:** Agi Sardi gave an update.

We are still in dire need of parents to join our fundraising committee, which needs help brainstorming and organizing our fundraising efforts. Here are the fundraising ideas/programs we're hoping to pull off this year and the parents who have already volunteered to head these up. We need to make a concerted push with fundraising.

**Holiday fundraiser:** Ideas that have been floated include "five-bags-in-

one" (these are five reusable mesh bags that fit into a pouch that you bring to the grocery store to put your fruits and veggies in so you don't have to use the store-supplied plastic bags) and energy efficient light bulbs.

**Spiritwear:** cookbooks, shirts, mugs, etc. Heather Kelly will take this on.

**Box tops:** Heather Kelly will continue doing this. Emile Kfoury graciously volunteered his son Jonathan to make a boxtop collection box to replace one that went missing last year. This program brings in a few hundred dollars/year.

**Tech a la mode:** Maria Gentile said she would organize the ice cream social part of this. We still need someone to spearhead the event. The teachers organize the technology part of the evening.

**Sally Foster:** We need to decide soon if we want to do this again next year.

**Silent Auction:** Maria Gentile and Kathy Hart are heading this up

**CitiTownInfo:** <http://www.citytowninfo.com/survey/career-story-fundraiser.shtml> A Burr School father is looking for Newton parents to fill out a 20-minute online survey about their jobs and other things for a business he is involved in. He will pay \$20 for each completed survey and the money will go to the PTO. (Since the PTO meeting, mom Nataliya Kofman has agreed to spearhead this. Thanks Nataliya!)

Heather Kelly mentioned that our local Stop and Shop has a program whereby organizations/schools can purchase gift cards for a discount, then sell them at face value.

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Thank You Notes from the PTO



How lucky we are to have such a terrific group of parents who help the PTO out in so many ways. And we apologize to anyone whose name was inadvertently left out of these thank yous. As you'll see, we have a lot of parents and kids to thank and unfortunately, we may have forgotten a few.

The Halloween Dance wouldn't have been possible without the gargantuan efforts of the dynamic trio of Melissa Fang, Andrew Hargens and Brandy Cook. And thank you to the many parents who helped decorate, run games, sell tickets, tell fortunes, make and serve food, clean up and more. They include: Kathy Hart, Andrea Boucher, Kate Mooney, Alanya Bostwick, Shannon Flint, Vicki Ritterband, Sherri Meek, Stacey Harris, Agi Sardi, Pete Richmond, Michele and Emile Kfour, Sherly Jean-Baptiste, Leslie Langston, Nancy Caira, Sherri Meek, Mandi Smith, Liz Adler, Gaurav and Puja Kapur, Jenn Rogan, Shannon Lynch, Jeanette Lee, Anne Chang, Alanya and John Bostwick, Maria Greenberg and Nancy Caira.

Thanks to Stacey Horsik and Brandy Cook for taking on the Sally Foster

fundraiser, which turned out once again to be a terrific source of funds for the school. And hats off to the parents who helped organize and distribute the orders. They include: Jennifer Beaulieu, Yanick Grignon, Miriam Alyndydy, Jeanette Lee, Kate Mooney, Michele Kfour and Melissa Fang.

Our school grounds look fantastic thanks to the toils of our green team and facility and grounds czars Elaine Purcell Smith and Andrew Hargens. They and the following people helped shovel 22 yards of wood fiber around the new fire truck climber: Sherri Meek and Harper and Oliver; Emile, Michele, Jonathan and Andre Kfour; Mark and Taya Frishman; Steve, Michela and Danielle Morrill; Andrew, Grayson and Holland Hargens and Andrew's mom Amy; Alanya, Tessa and Rose Bostwick; and Agi Sardi and Zach.

And on a cold Saturday, we had a fearless crew of several dozen people raking the grassy areas near the playground, in preparation for our playground re-dedication. Again, our fearless leaders were Elaine Smith Purcell and Andrew Hargens. They were joined by: Domenica, Angelus and Gio-

vanni Rizza; John Bostwick; Tammy Ireland and kid(s); Alison Leary Mooradian

with a few kids in tow; Isabel Roeder, Santiago and her adorable baby; Sherri Meek, Harper and Oliver; Vicki Ritterband, Gabriel and Julian; Shawn Huang and Jenny; Megara Bell and Brian Flaherty; Melissa Fang, Grayson and Holland; Maria and Matteo Greenberg; Galina Frishman, her mother and Taya; Miriam Alandydy; Stacey, Lazlo, Tyler and Ryan Horsik; Francine Marcello, Michael Rothstein and Sam; Agi Sardi and Zach, Lambert Ayinon and his son; and Emile, Jonathan and Andre Kfour.

And the PTO dues payments are still coming in. We received our most far-flung check so far from Jeffrey Maiken, Michele Kfour's dad. Thanks to him and also to Beth Porter and Pete Richmond, Tom and Connie Yeh, Denean Johnson, Alla Belova and Nataliya Kofman.

### PTO UPDATE

*(Continued from page 6)*

**5th Grade Committee:** Melissa Decina gave the report.

The fifth grade is currently doing a coin drive so please contribute your loose change. The school store is now open Fridays from 8-8:20 am. A future fundraiser will be pajama day. Kids pay \$1 if they want to wear their PJ's to school. Melissa needs help with upcoming events and the yearbook. Call her at 617-244-5979 or [pmdallas013@yahoo.com](mailto:pmdallas013@yahoo.com).

**The Senior Holiday Party** – traditionally hosted by the fifth grade - will be run by Dawn Proia. It will take

place on Tuesday, Dec. 2. Fifth graders eat lunch at school and then walk to two senior centers and host holiday parties for the seniors.

**Principal's Report:** Katie Charner-Laird

**Before-school clubs** are off to a great start. So far we have gimp club (that plastic string you used to make cool stuff back in your summer camp days) on Mondays, basketball on Wednesdays and kickball on Fridays. About 50 kids showed up for kickball on the first Friday it was offered. Katie said while there are some kinks that need to be worked out with such large numbers, she is very happy the clubs

have been received so enthusiastically. She loves having these additional ways to have kids involved in the life of the school and thinks these activities are a wonderful way for kids to start the day. If you have an idea for a before-school activity that you would like to lead, let her know.

**Parent-run book clubs:** Within two days of floating the idea of these book clubs, Katie had seven parents interested in running them. Each parent has a different vision of how they would like to run the groups, which is good because kids will have a "menu of offer-

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Wanted: Fun games and puzzles for the L-E cafeteria.

Tired of looking at that Connect Four game that your kids haven't touched in years? Put that Connect Four - and the other neglected games and puzzles lying around your house - to good use. The school welcomes gently-used games and puzzles, which are badly needed during lunchtime. Help ensure that your kids are happily engaged in games in the lunchroom, and not shooting spitballs at their classmates.



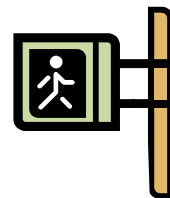
Please bring your donations to Principal Katie's office.

## Walk to School Day Now Every Month!

Newton Walk to School Day is the last Friday of the month, which will be **December 19<sup>th</sup>**. "Go Green" by walking to school and don't forget to see your crossing guard for a walker's prize."

### Future Citywide Walking Dates

January 30, 2009  
 February 27, 2009  
 March 27, 2009  
 April 17, 2009  
 May 29, 2009  
 June 19, 2009



If you notice any trouble spots as you and your children are walking, such as sidewalks that are not shoveled after a snowstorm, a lack of crosswalks, obstructions or other dangerous/difficult spots, please notify me at [MegaraB@verizon.net](mailto:MegaraB@verizon.net).

## PTO UPDATE *(Continued from page 7)*

ings." If you'd like to run a book group, give Katie a holler.

Staff news: The school has hired Roberta Hayes-Bautista as a full-time English language learner aide. Katie Arnold will be replacing building aide Joanna Paola while she is on maternity leave and Ally Andrews will be returning to her position as Learning Center Teacher.

### School council parent members

The meeting passed a slate of parent members for the school council. The school council is an advisory committee to the principal comprising parents, teachers and a community member. It generally meets the first Wed. of the month at 6:30 pm in the library and is open to anyone who would like to attend. The council discusses issues like MCAS, the school improvement plan, building needs, etc. Parent members approved are: Brandy Cook, Andrew Hargens, Emile Kfourri, Alicia Matos (who is the co-chair with Katie Charner-Laird), Vicki Ritterband and Bithya Whittaker. The teacher members are Sally Benbasset, Ann Ritchie and Joanne Shapiro. Community members are Dory Codington (Silverstein) and Sue Tresca.

### Playground Renovation/Grounds Updates: Andrew Hargens

The ladder for the new slide was misordered, but the playground will be reopened Wednesday (Nov. 12), and the new slide will be cordoned off. Two pipes from the old part of the playground were discovered to be damaged, so we'll also need to replace those. Hopefully the project will be completely finished in about a week and a half.

We will have an accessories catalogue from the manufacturer- w/things like a fire pole - so we can have a wish list for the future.

### Creative Arts and Science Committee presentation: Elaine Smith Purcell

There have been some great creative arts and science programs at the school, including storyteller Len Cabral, Prometheus Dance and most recently, Bug Works. When Bug Works came, there were lots of great tie-in activities, including library teacher Ann Ritchie reading books about bugs and art teacher Jen Sutherland doing bug-inspired art. See PTO website for full schedule of events.

### L-E PTO Website update:

Beth Porter

Our new webmaster Beth Porter unveiled the PTO's fabulous new website (<http://www.lepto.org>) that she has worked on assiduously for several months. Here are some highlights:

She tried to decrease the amount of work the webmaster has to do by enabling other people to post information. At this point, the PTO board and a few others have permission to post information.

The site tries to provide information in a more timely and appealing manner. We want the site to be a place parents want to check out.

The content is still a little skimpy, but in the coming weeks and months it will be beefed up.

### School Directory and Walking to School: Megara Bell

Megara handed out a draft of the family directory. She will circulate drafts for parents to proofread. She also said that the city has designated the last Friday of each month walk-to-school-day, so L-E will be joining in on the Friday walk-to-school festivities.

# Lincoln-Eliot Playground Reopens!



*Sister Helen Jensen and her family created whimsical poster boards!*

On November 24th, after what proved to be a week of record low temperatures, Mother Nature was on our side and gave us a warmer day for our Playground Ceremony. Students ran out to our newly renovated playground, faces full of glee as they passed under a balloon arch. Helen Jensen and her kids created whimsical poster boards announcing the ceremony. Children encircled the playground joined by parents, teachers and staff members. Our music teacher Caroline N'diaye led our children in several rounds of "Make new friends..." while the students played various instruments of finger cymbals and xylophones. Principal Katie thanked the City of Newton and the Lincoln-Eliot community for their combined efforts in making our playground renovation come to fruition.

The week before our re-opening celebration, each class led discussions on playground rules and etiquette. During the ceremony, class "representatives" announced a playground rule: The new rules include: **No bullying or ganging up on others, don't pretend-fight with weapons, keep your hands, feet and bodies to yourself, include everybody, if you see a rule being broken, say something.** When the brightly colored ribbon was cut by two fifth graders, the cheers soared throughout the playground. We look forward to the exciting future of our playground and are grateful for a fun and safe area where our children can exercise and play together.



*Alderman Scott Lennon, Stephanie Pelkowsky of Newton Parks and Recreation, PTO member Elaine Smith Purcell and Principal Katie Charner-Laird joined us in the celebration.*



*Ribbon cutting; no easy task!*



**More playground photos on page 15 & 16!**

## Literacy Matters: Upcoming Literacy Events at Lincoln-Eliot

by Deana Lew, Literacy Specialist

### Winter Book Swap

**Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>.**

Please scour your shelves for any gently used books and send them in starting today. Each class will come to the cafeteria so students can choose books to take home to read over the holiday break. Your participation makes this day a success. Ask friends, neighbors, relatives, church groups, book clubs and colleagues if they have any books to donate. We're looking for picture books, non-fiction of all types, easy-read chapter books, novels for upper grade students, poetry, biography and even books for adults.

Volunteers greatly appreciated. Please call me at 617-559-9553 if you can help anytime from 8:20-12:15.

### Parent-Child Bookclubs

**Beginning in January**

Several parents who volunteered to host parent-child book clubs for all ages. Keep your eyes peeled for sign-up sheets. These will be great opportunities to read, chat, socialize, learn, think and share in your child's learning. Hope you can make it!

### Looking for Holiday Gifts? Think Books!

Some recommended 2008 New and Noteworthy books selected by Alison Morris, Children's Book Buyer for the Wellesley Booksmith.

#### Picture Books:

***Abe Lincoln Crosses a Creek: a Tall Thin Tale*** by Deborah Hopkinson - A semi-fictional tale of Honest Abe's childhood adventure.

***The Black Book of Colors*** by Merena Cottin - Colors as described by a blind child, with tactile pages.

***Glass Slipper, Gold Sandal: A Worldwide Cinderella*** by Paul Fleischman - Great combination of Cinderella tales from ALL around the world, rolled into one.

***One*** by Kathryn Otoshi - Excellent book about bullying, bystanders, and standing up for yourself.

***That Book Woman*** by Heather Henson - True story of the packhorse librarians of Kentucky.

***There's a Wolf at the Door: Five Classic Tales Retold*** retold by Zoe B. Alley - For the comic book lover, a graphic novel of fairy tales.

### Easy Readers and Beginning Chapter Books:

***Franny K. Stein Mad Scientist Book 7: The Frandidate*** by Jim Benton - The latest Franny K. Stein book is about an election, very topical!

***Hooray for Fly Guy! (Fly Guy #6)*** by Tedd Arnold - Continued hilarious adventures of a fly superhero.

***Houndsley and Catina and the Quiet Time*** by James Howe - Lovely short chapter book about a cat and dog friendship.

***Wiggle and Waggle*** by Caroline Arnold - Charming "faction" about worms.

#### For Middle Graders:

***A Beginning, a Muddle and an End*** by Avi - A story about stories by the popular author.

***Cabin Creek Mysteries 1: The Secret of Robber's Cave*** by Kristina Gregory - For Nancy Drew, Encyclopedia Brown, adventure/mystery fans.

***Ivy and Bean, Book 5: Bound to Be Bad*** by Annie Barrows - The latest adventures of these two off-beat friends.

(Continued on page 11)

### School Publication of Out-of-District Policy Statement 2008-2009:

Out of district placements for students who wish to attend a school in Newton other than his/her district school are limited. Such placements are made on a space-available basis only. Newton families as well as members of Units A, B, C, D, E, NESAs, Custodians and Boston parents of students participating in the METCO Program should call the Office of Student Services at 617-559-6025 for information. Students who receive acceptance for Out-of-District placement must remain in the school selected or file for out-of-district placement at the appropriate time. Applications for the following school year must be submitted on forms which will be available in the Office of Student Services (Room 215) at the Education Center BEGINNING NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>. If necessary, a lottery will be implemented to determine the order in which placements will be made. Completed applications, signed by the in-district principal, can be submitted NO EARLIER THAN JANUARY 5<sup>TH</sup> 2009 AND NO LATER THAN MARCH 31<sup>ST</sup> 2009. APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED AFTER MARCH 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2009 WILL NOT BE INCLUDED IN THE LOTTERY. Class size in a given grade, in a given year, in a specific school, may preclude any placements including siblings. Parents will be responsible for transportation. Tuition Free Enrollment is limited to the per pupil cost of regular education.

**Literacy Matters** (Continued from page 10)

**The Lemonade War** by Jacqueline Davies - If you've ever fought with your siblings, you'll enjoy this one.

**The Runaway Dolls** by Ann M. Martin and Laura Godwin - Third in the series about the dollhouse dolls who are really alive.

**Sophisticated Readers:**

**Acting Out: Six One-Act Plays, Six Newbery Authors** by Avi, et al - For the drama queen, or king. Plays by popular children's authors.

**The Arrival** by Shaun Tan - A completely wordless, beautifully illustrated immigration story.

**A Crooked Kind of Perfect** by Linda Urban - We all struggle to make our way in the world.

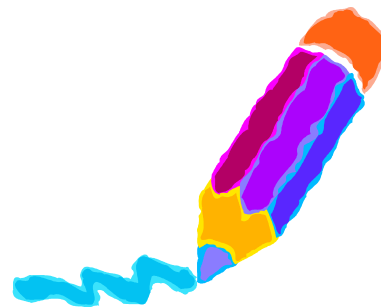
**The London Eye Mystery** by Siobhan Dowd - A young teenage narrator, who happens to have autism, solves the mystery of a child who disappears from a Ferris wheel.

Contact me if you'd like the complete list of her recommendations including poetry, science and math books, social studies, history and biography, and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade novels.



**Running Out of Pencils?**

The Lincoln-Eliot School Store is open every Wednesday morning from 8 - 8:20 am in the lobby of the Jackson Street entrance. All proceeds will benefit the fifth grade activities and graduation!



**The Kotsonis Brothers Interview Ms. Barkow** (Continued from page 2)

GK: Do you sail?

EB: Yes, I'm program director of a summer sailing camp in Marblehead. All summer I'm out on the water sailing.

JK: What's the best thing about being a teacher at L-E?

EB: Wow. That's a toughie. There are so many great things. One is that all of the other teachers are so helpful and willing to help out and answer questions. As a relatively new teacher, I can go to them for help. Also, all the students are so excited to be at school and eager to learn. And when you're happy to be in school it makes it more fun to learn. The whole Lincoln-Eliot community encompasses that spirit of having fun while learning.

GK: What do you do when you're not teaching?

EB: I like to exercise. I do a lot of running. Last month I ran in the Chicago Marathon. I like to go out on long runs as a form of therapy. I play in a floor hockey league and of course I sail!

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**Events**

**The seventh annual CELEBRATE NEWTON! HOLIDAY ARTS AND CRAFTS FESTIVAL** will take place on Sunday, December 7th from 10 am until 4 pm at Newton South High School. This Citywide PTO-sponsored fair raises money for ALL Newton schools. For the past five years, Celebrate Newton! has attracted shoppers and spirit from across the city, and this year's fair promises to be even better. The day will feature 60+ artisans with ties to Newton: crafters and artists in the show are Newton residents, teachers, parents, students, employees, alums and more. Shoppers can also enjoy onsite craft projects, live music from community and school groups, a raffle, bake sale and lunch cafe. ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE NEWTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS. Please see [www.perugi.com/newton](http://www.perugi.com/newton) for more details. Questions? Please contact Sara Coen at 617-558-3695 or at [sara-coen3@aol.com](mailto:sara-coen3@aol.com).

The Boston Liturgical Dance Ensemble's "**A Dancer's Christmas**", 'a uniquely spiritual and celebratory performance, bring out the true meaning of Christmas'. WCVB TV is quoted, "...for more than 25 years, 'A Dancer's Christmas' has delighted audiences, young and old alike, and has earned its place as one of Boston's Holiday Traditions". The ensemble includes several Newton Middle and Elementary School students, including Bigelow dancer Luisa Donovan, her sisters Grace and Isabella (Ward), Ashley Babigian (Cabot) and Caitlin Connell (Bowen). Dec 13 & 20 - 3pm and 7:30pm. Dec. 21 - 3pm. Tickets: \$30 adults, \$20 seniors and students, \$15 each for family special (2 adults with 2 children). Robsham Theatre Arts Center, Boston College. Free parking. Wheelchair accessible. 617-552-4002 or [www.adancerschristmas.org](http://www.adancerschristmas.org).

**The Sunday School for Jewish Studies invites the community to join us for our annual Chanukah celebration and gift boutique.** The event will take place at Pine Manor College, 400 Heath Street in Chestnut Hill on Sunday, December 21, 2008, 9:45 a.m. through 12:00 noon. Family, friends, kids and grandparents can come to celebrate the holiday and purchase a variety of gifts from exhibitors. The Sunday School for Jewish Studies is a one-day-a-week school for children in grades K through 7. Call 617-264-8855 for more information.

**Tutors and Lessons**

**Call Y3K TUTOR IN YOUR HOME today,** When schoolwork goes the wrong way! Our many years of experience in teaching and educational consulting has developed the right way to motivate, the right way to teach, be understood, and be remembered. We tutor special ed. such as ADD, ADHD, Asperger's, Autism, Emotional/Behavioral, and gifted. We also tutor regular ed. and test preparation. All subjects and ages are taught. Parents can now receive 25% off the first lesson. Call 781-492-8700 or log on to [Y3KTutorInYourHome.com](http://Y3KTutorInYourHome.com).

**ActiveMinds Tutoring, LLC:** Your source for in-home tutoring. Effective, Personalized and Convenient. All grades/all subjects, including test preparation (MCAS, SAT, SSAT...). Sign your child up for academic success and receive 1 free lesson by December 19th. Call: (617) 663-5700 during business hours, or (617) 227-2225 Eve/Wknds. Please visit the web site at [www.activemindstutoring.com](http://www.activemindstutoring.com).

**PRIVATE PIANO LESSONS** – Learn how to play the piano! Private lessons available for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade. Half hour, forty-five minute, or hour lessons available. Skill level – beginners to interme-

diates. Located in Newton Center, near City Hall. Piano instructor Kathy Raiz has 25 years of piano experience, and 5 years of teaching experience. Sign up now for lessons starting in January. Contact Kathy at 617-584-2153, or [kraiz@raizlabs.com](mailto:kraiz@raizlabs.com) to find out more!

**PIANO INSTRUCTION** - Berklee & New England Conservatory graduate with 25+ years teaching experience has several openings in studio. Beginners Welcome. Learn Jazz/Blues/Classical, theory, sightreading from a patient, caring teacher. Gloria Jasinski, 617.566.9704, [piano566@comcast.net](mailto:piano566@comcast.net).

**Early Education Programs**

It's never too early to start looking...The Center for Early Education of Ohabei Shalom is now taking applications for fall 2009. This is a five-day program for children age 2.9 to 5 from 8:45 a.m. to 1 pm, with a flexible schedule for working families: Early drop off at 8:00, Enrichment Program 1-3 pm and Extended Day until 6pm. This welcoming new program in our historic Reform synagogue features state-of-the-art classrooms designed to make children and their families feel safe, nurtured, stimulated and happy. Experienced teachers appreciate the uniqueness of each child, encouraging each to realize his or her highest potential. Conveniently located in Coolidge Corner near Longwood Medical Area on the 'C' train of the T's Green line. For more information, contact Shari Churwin, Education Director: 617-264-2801. Information and application can be found at [www.ohabei.org](http://www.ohabei.org).

**Miscellaneous**

**The Java Gate Café Is Now OPEN At Temple Emanuel!** The Java Gate Cafe, located in Temple Emanuel's Leventhal-Sidman Community Court, is open most Sunday mornings from 9-11:30 am. Upcoming 2008 Dates: De-

**COMMUNITY NEWS**

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**NEWTON PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS**

**Family Trip to Disney On Ice** -Join Mickey and Minnie Mouse on Saturday December 27, 2008 on a journey into the magical worlds of Disney's The Little Mermaid, The Lion King, Peter Pan, and Lilo & Stitch. Includes transportation to and from Boston and great seats in the loge section. This trip runs from 9:45 am – 1:45 pm. For more information contact Newton Parks and Recreation at 617-796- 1500 or register online at [www.activityreg.com](http://www.activityreg.com)

**Family Movie Nights** - Located at the West Newton Cinema on December 29 and 30, enjoy a family movie and get popcorn and soda all for one low price. Ticket sales begin at 4:15 pm at the Cinema on the day of the event. This is a very popular program and tickets may sell out. For more information contact Newton Parks and Recreation at 617-796-1500.

**Fun-tastic December Vacation Program** - It's like summer camp in the winter. Join us on December 29, 30, 31 and January 2 for sports, arts and crafts, cooking, inside games and more at the Lower Falls Community Center 8:15 am – 3:30 pm. Extended day is available until 5:15 pm. Sign up by day or for all 4 days. For more information contact Newton Parks and Recreation at 617-796-1500 or register online at [www.activityreg.com](http://www.activityreg.com)

Now is the time to register for a program at the **Newton South Recreation Complex**. Run by Newton Parks and Recreation, the Newton South Recreation Complex offers a variety of Sunday programs for the whole family. Register for a 4 or 8 week class, or participate in a one day special event. For more information call Newton Parks and Recreation at 617-796-1500 or visit us on our website at [www.ci.newton.ma.us/parks](http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/parks) and click on NSHS Indoor Rec. You can also register for a program online at [www.activityreg.com](http://www.activityreg.com).

**Newton Parks and Recreation Camp Fair - February 3, 2009 from 2:00 – 6:30.** Come see what Newton Parks and Recreation has to offer for the summer. Programs are available for children ages 3 to 21 and include sports, specialty camps, general recreation camps, special needs programs, counselor in training programs, swimming lessons, and more. Job opportunities are available for those 15 and up. For more information about our summer programs check out our website at [www.ci.newton.ma.us/parks](http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/parks) and click on camps, or call us at 617- 796-1500.

**The 3R's Rhymes· Rhythms· Routines** - Burr Park Community Center 142 Park Street. For 18 month -3 year olds with caregiver and 3-5 year olds drop off. During this fun and interactive class children will: sing, chant, rhyme, listen to stories, and complete an art

activity. Each class will focus on a theme for the day including letters, numbers, animals, transportation, ocean life, shapes, and colors. Fee is \$108 for 6-week session Saturdays beginning 12/6. To register email [fevercoach@aol.com](mailto:fevercoach@aol.com) or call 617.796.1500.

**Puddlestompers Winter Programs** - Winter is a magical time to explore nature! See how animals and plants are surviving the cold. Investigate animal tracks and other signs of winter activity. Discover who is taking a rest during the cold months and who is still out and about! Activity will be based at Nahanton Park. Programs for children ages 2-6 including some drop-off options. Call (781) 235-6677 or email [info@puddlestompers.com](mailto:info@puddlestompers.com) or visit [www.puddlestompers.com](http://www.puddlestompers.com) for details.

**Ice Skating classes are available at the Newton Brighton Daly Rink** on the Charles River. This Learn to Skate Program is for children ages 4.5 to 16. Students can wear either figure or hockey skates. Classes Saturdays 1 pm, Mondays 4 & 7 pm, and Tuesdays 3 pm. Also offering lessons at other rink locations including Cleveland Circle, Waltham, and West Roxbury. Fees \$95-\$190. 5-10 week classes beginning on December 6. To register call NPRD at 617.796.1500 or visit [www.baystateskatingschool.org](http://www.baystateskatingschool.org).

ember. 14 & 21. The Java Gate Café is a place to: connect with other Synagogue members in a relaxed and comfortable environment, enjoy a complementary cup of freshly brewed coffee and a bite to eat, socialize with Temple members, and for prospective members to chat with clergy and staff to learn about what Temple Emanuel

has to offer. 385 Ward Street Newton. Questions? (617) 558-8100.

**It's Your Holiday Party. Why settle for less than the best?** Newton Native John Boardman has worked with Jasper White and Julia Child and catered for former President Bill Clinton. He helped start Legal Seafood's catering division. All this after getting his start in

the family restaurant business and graduating from Newton North's Culinary Program. Now, with 20 years top-flight experience, John and his wife own and operate 'J & L Catering', serving Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, graduation parties, intimate dinners for 2, large weddings and corporate events. Specializing in personalized menus based on needs, tastes and

**COMMUNITY NEWS**

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**Register Now for Spring Soccer**

**Garden City Kindergarten and Pre-K Spring Soccer** is now accepting priority registrations for returning players as well as new Lincoln-Eliot and Franklin School students until Jan 4, 2009. Open registration begins January 5, 2009.

Children in Pre-K (4-5 years old) and students currently enrolled in Kindergarten are invited to participate. GCKS provides an introduction to the game of soccer; teaching a variety of basic skills in a fun, non-competitive environment. Team sizes are limited to 10 players in each group.

Registration is limited to 80 players per league. Fall session runs from April 11, 2009 to June 6, 2009. Practice/games are held Saturdays from 9:30-10:30 am for the Kindergarten league and 10:45-11:45 am for the Pre-K league. Games are played on the field at Burr School, Pine Street in Auburndale. Volunteer parent coaches are needed. No experience is necessary and training will be provided.

Cost is \$60 per child. GCKS is a joint venture of Lincoln-Eliot & Franklin School's Parent Teacher Organization. Proceeds benefit both schools PTO



programs. To register, [email gardencitysoccer@gmail.com](mailto:emailgardencitysoccer@gmail.com). Registration forms can also be downloaded from the PTO website's at [www.lepto.org](http://www.lepto.org) or [www.franklinpto.org](http://www.franklinpto.org). For more information, call L-E School parent Melanie Varady at 617-244-5773 or Franklin School parent Deb Rooney at (617) 630-8520. Registration deadline is March 20th. Space is limited.

budget. Info: [www.jandlcatering.net](http://www.jandlcatering.net) or contact [jnlcatering@yahoo.com](mailto:jnlcatering@yahoo.com) or 617-852-7127.

**Do you need help making your home more energy efficient?** Are there repairs to your home you need to make but can't afford? The City of Newton may be able to help. Federal funds are available for those who are income-eligible or who are landlords with income-eligible tenants. Among repairs allowed: New window, boilers, insulation, roof and gutter repair/replacement, removal of hazardous materials, structural work and installation of ramps and grab bars to make a property handicap accessible and

more. Contact the City of Newton Planning and Development Department at (617) 796-1150 or (617) 796-1120.

**Take the Newton History Museum Family Programs Survey** - Are you a parent with children under 18? The Newton History Museum would like to know how we can best serve your family. Please share your thoughts with us to help us improve our programs. Tell us about your program needs, concerns, and any suggestions you have. At the end of the survey, you may choose to be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate donated by Whole Foods Market in Newtonville. Thanks!

Click this link to take the online survey: [www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=ZrztGkgtkHUpzblxz27w3d3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=ZrztGkgtkHUpzblxz27w3d3d)



The **Lincoln-Eliot Leader** is a publication of the Lincoln-Eliot PTO. It is published monthly during the school year and is available online at [www.lepto.org](http://www.lepto.org), where you can also find regular updates on PTO activities.

**Community News submissions** can be sent to the Lincoln-Eliot office or to [jgilpin@gilp.net](mailto:jgilpin@gilp.net). Please keep submissions brief and include contact information. Submissions deemed of interest to the Lincoln-Eliot community will be printed at the editor's discretion and do not constitute PTO endorsements of product or work.

**PTO Officers, 2008-2009**

- Co-President:** Michele Kfoury
- Co-President:** Agi Sardi
- Secretary:** Vicki Ritterband
- Treasurer:** Miriam Alandydy

- PTO Newsletter Editors:** Jan and Rob Gilpin
- PTO Technology Chair:** Russ Vanderpool



Sixteen hardy Lincoln-Eliot families took part in our playground clean up event on Saturday, November 22nd. It was a sunny yet frigid day! We bundled up and cleared the hillside and play area of leaves and branches. Vicki Ritterband counted 96 bags of leaves. The Hargens family graciously provided coffee, hot cider and donuts. We would also like to thank Colleen Bianchi of Bianchi Landscaping for bringing her crew to assist in cleaning up the front grounds of our school. In addition, we were alerted that money was found in the Newton City budget to fund the full school ground clean up and that Lincoln-Eliot was one of the few schools chosen!! Thank you Newton Parks and Rec!





# Playground Reopening



*Lincoln-Eliot music teacher Caroline Ndiaye led several rounds of "Make new friends..." while the students played various instruments.*

