



# Lyseth Newsletter

December 18, 2007

Principal  
Lenore M. Williams

Assistant Principal  
Phoebe A. Russell

## Principal's Message

Dear Families and Friends of Lyseth:

The holidays are upon us and the winter weather appears to be as well! The temperatures continue to plummet, however we always try to get outside for recess even if it needs to be for an abbreviated period of time. Thank you for continued support with ensuring that your child(ren) dress appropriately for the Maine winter weather. While on this topic, I would like to make a formal request to our parents and guardians for donations of clothing. There are times when gloves or mittens are lost or forgotten at home or when clean, dry clothing is needed in an emergency. If you are willing to purchase or donate gently used children's gloves and/or mittens, unisex sweat pants and snow pants it would be greatly appreciated. Our clinic is also in need of **new** girls and boys underpants.

Another area that I need your help is the growing numbers of students arriving late to school. Winter travel certainly can slow down a morning commute, however Mrs. Liming informs me that we have had record breaking numbers of students declared tardy in recent weeks. Please allow for the extra time for travel in inclement weather. **Students are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:50 AM.** I find students that arrive late have a difficult time transitioning into the day and morning activities and day starters are very much a part of daily curriculum and routine.

I want to thank all parents for understanding the importance of keeping our front traffic loops free of traffic to ensure the safety of students and parents. With the recent snow accumulations it is even more important to keep these areas clear of vehicles as traveling on foot becomes more treacherous. Please continue to assist us by having your child ready to exit from the right of the vehicle only.

I'd also like to take a moment to talk about the new school budget process. State of Maine law now requires that all school budgets are passed by local referendum. Our referendum will be held on April 8, 2008. If the budget is not passed, additional referendums will take place until voters approve the proposed budget. We are now beginning the work of preparing a budget to be presented to the School Committee, City Council, and voters. Your input and/or questions throughout this process will be very critical. The first reading of the 2009 Fiscal Year Budget is scheduled for January 23, 2008 at 7:00 PM in room 250 at PATHS. A second reading will occur on January 30, 2008 same time, same location. The School Committee vote is scheduled for February 27, 2008. There is a blog on the Portland Public Schools website ([www.portlandschools.org](http://www.portlandschools.org)) where you can pose questions about budget items. Please feel free to share any questions you have with me in writing or during a visit and I will forward this information to Central Office staff.

Lyseth School has been buzzing with activity in the past weeks! Recently our first graders have "traveled" to several countries to learn how different cultures celebrate the holidays. Those suitcases were brimming with creative works of art that highlight traditions of each unique culture. Very exciting! Please be sure to ask your child about the Standards of Behavior and our new "ROAR" pledge. This pledge underlines what each student contributes as a member of the school community. Lyseth Leopards "ROAR"! Ms. Smith's kindergarten class just celebrated their love of learning to read by hosting an Author's Tea and I was invited to read with students and enjoy refreshments. Thank you for all the support you lend at home to support our budding readers!

Sing-a-longs, craft fairs, Lyseth School Store...it's very difficult to highlight all the exciting happenings here! Teachers continue to examine and improve their instructional practice in math during our professional development work on our Early Release Wednesdays...please be sure to ask questions when you are dropping by!

In closing, I'd like to thank you all for your continued support! Happy Holidays and wishes for good health and happiness in the New Year!

*Lenore M. Williams, Principal*

## The Arts of the Longfellows

Mrs. Judge's class and Mrs. Philbrook's class completed a program at the Maine Historical Society: Drawing Together, The Arts of the Longfellows. Students learned about the family of Longfellow and how the Arts impacted their lives and our lives today. Students visited the exhibit at the museum and Carolin Collins and her intern. They worked with the students within our classrooms on two separate occasions focusing on the family tree of the Longfellows, creating a rebus of one of Longfellow's poems and creating a continuing saga. Within each class, each student then worked alone or in small groups to create a magazine

inspired by Edith Longfellow's The Secret. The magazine included puzzles, couplets, and several versions of the continuing saga of "Charley Williams, or The Lame Boy", a story started in The Secret in 1865 and never finished. There was a celebration of the third graders' work for the students and their parents at the Maine Historical Society on Tuesday, November 26th. If you would like to see Mrs. Judge's class magazine or Mrs. Philbrook's class magazine, please view it in their classrooms.

## November Food Drive: Thank You Students and Families

As you are aware, Lyseth School held a food drive in November for almost three weeks. The students brought in canned goods, condiments, and many other food items. It was a huge success!! Lyseth collected 24 boxes of food from its students and families. The boxes overflowed in my office and it was a wonderful sight to see. The food drive in the community was organized by WYNZ-FM (100.9) and Chuck Igo who is the morning host of that radio station. Chuck and his helpers went to several locations (including Lyseth ) with a school bus to collect the boxes of food. The "Stuff A Big Bus" food drive collected over 117,000 lbs. that went to the Preble Street Resource Center and the Wayside Soup Kitchen. What a tremendous outpouring of community support and I am very proud of all that Lyseth contributed to this very worthy cause! This food will go to feed thousands of hungry individuals and families in Portland over the next several months. Thank you all again for your help! I very much appreciate your involvement. When the "Big Bus" pulled up to Lyseth, it was great to see box after box ( all 24 of them ) get loaded on to

the bus. Mr. MacDowell's 4th grade class helped to collect the food during the three weeks. They too were very excited to see it loaded on to the bus! It was a great morning that day! I hope everyone has a peaceful holiday season!

Betsy Van Betuw  
Lyseth School Social Worker

## Student Council

Student Council is forming great skits that will be shown in the gym on Friday, December 14th. We are working on ROAR! The Lyseth Student Council is trying to improve on the playground, lunches, and trying to make Lyseth School a better place.

Submitted by: Liz Fowler

## Author's Tea

I hosted my annual Author's Tea in my classroom on Friday, December 14th from 2:00-3:00 PM. It featured the kindergarten students (authors) sharing their self and class-made books with their parents. The students wrote out their invitations. Popcorn and drinks were provided.

Rachael Smith, Room 8

## Grade 5 Craft Fair

The fifth graders will be holding a craft fair on Wednesday, December 19<sup>th</sup> in the Lyseth gym. Students in kindergarten through fourth grade will be invited to shop from 9:15- 11:30! Most of the proceeds will be used to help defray the cost of our field trips in the spring. Some will be donated to four local nonprofit organizations, selected by the fifth grade students. Our fifth grade parents and students have been busily crafting for the last few weeks. Some parents have come into the classroom to make crafts with small groups of students. Others have had "crafting parties" in their homes with their own children and a few friends or with family members. There will be handmade crafts, raffles, and free gift-wrapping at the sale. Items range from 10¢ to \$3.00 (a few may be more.)

We hope the students have fun shopping at the sale and can make some special purchases for friends and family members!

## The Lyseth Math Team

The Lyseth Math Team attended their second meet last week at Reiche School last week. Fifth grade teams from various elementary schools in Portland competed. We had two official teams representing Lyseth School. The Lyseth Divisors (Ethan Pierce, Hannah Hungerford, Donnelly Warren, Rachel Glover, Ben Knop, Margaret Rigney) won first place overall. The Lyseth Denominators (Nicole Pineau, Rebecca Goodman, Matty Myers, Ayan Ali, Jacob Coon, Emily Mooney) won second place.

We had quite a few individual winners as well. Jacob Coon won third place for his individual score. There were six individual trophies for perfect scores. Those students were: Rebecca Goodman, Ethan Pierce, Donnelly Warren, Rachel Glover, Hannah Hungerford, and Matty Myers. Congratulations to the Lyseth Math Team for doing a terrific job representing our school at the December math meet!

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## Donorschoose.org Helps Portland Teachers

The Portland Public Schools and Portland Education Partnership are collaborating with a nonprofit website, DonorsChoose.org, to help teachers raise money for classroom materials, textbooks and special projects. To date, Portland teachers have submitted 150 proposals for classroom materials ranging from audio books, photography supplies, building tools and Latin textbooks to an LCD projector.

Individuals may contribute to the projects by going to [www.donorschoose.org](http://www.donorschoose.org) and typing "Portland, Maine" in the search field. The Web site provides details about each project and how much money has been raised.

Claire Crocker, a Lincoln Middle School teacher, received \$291 from DonorsChoose.org to purchase

materials to help sixth graders who are falling behind in math. "I'm grateful for such a straightforward, efficient method of asking for funds," Crocker said.

Once a teacher's proposal is fully funded, DonorsChoose.org purchases the equipment or supplies and sends them to the teacher along with a disposable camera to document the project. Donors receive thank-you notes and photographs directly from the recipients.

Founded in 2000 by a New York City teacher, DonorsChoose.org has helped raise \$15 million in books, art supplies, technology and other resources for 30,500 public school teachers.

## Heifer International

Ms. Almy and Ms. Stover's class are doing quarter chores to raise money for the Heifer Project. The Heifer Project gives animals to developing communities throughout the world.

These animals include chickens, pigs, goats, water buffalo and ducks to name a few. Some of these chores are setting the table and making beds, doing dishes and getting little brothers dressed, scraping snow off the windows and folding laundry (Andrew's favorite) and shoveling the driveway. On December 21 the classes will look through the catalogue and vote for their choice. To read more about the Heifer Project go to [www.Heifer.org](http://www.Heifer.org).

Andrew Brenneman (Ms. Almy's class)  
Maria Gagnon (Mrs. Stover's class)

## Lyseth Dance Group

Several Lyseth students have done an outstanding job learning dance steps from the Middle East. The dance group, which meets on Tuesday afternoons from 3:00-4:30, is open to students in grades 4-5. Students have been working on dances from Iran, Serbia, Palestine, Greece, Turkey, and Armenia. Most of the dance steps build on basic skills of 1-2-3-kick but varying in speed and lateral moves. Students enjoy the fast paced "kotsari" which is a traditional Greek dance from the Pontus region located in what is now Turkey along with the Armenian shuffle, a graceful, rhythmic dance of slides and steps. The faster paced Serbian dances with

their many hops have been more of a challenge, both in being fleet of feet and a cardio work out! Plans call for a Middle Eastern dance night for the Lyseth community to learn these steps in February.

-Paul MacDowell

## Requests

**Wanted:** creative people able to create Middle Eastern costumes for the dance group. If you're able to sew or be creative in other ways, please let Paul MacDowell know.

**Wanted:** cross country skis or snow shoes for student use. Cleaning out the garage...tired of stepping over the skis that your child has never used... please feel free to donate them to school. Many students love skiing during recess time...!

-Paul MacDowell



## Fourth Grade Researches the Body Systems

The students in Mrs. Whittum/Mrs. Gavitt and Mrs. Fenton's room are working on a science project around the body systems. The students are working in cooperative groups with a mixture of students from each home-room. There are nine groups and they each have a students groups. Each group has a facilitator who is responsible for making sure the group

follows group norms when working together and stays on task to meet deadlines. Students use their computer class to gather research as well as spend time researching at home. Each group has mini-topics within their system and each student has taken on the role of becoming an expert about one of those topics within their body system. Students work

together in their group to identify key vocabulary and ensure that they knew what each of the technical terms meant. The week of December 11-14 students will be preparing a poster to show their knowledge as well as preparing their presentation speech. Group presentations will take place the week of Dec 17-21.

## Third Grade Holiday Sharing

I would like to share with the Lyseth community a true gift of sharing that happened in the third grade classrooms. The students decided that they wanted to help a Lyseth family in need this holiday season. The third grade teachers, Mrs. Philbrook, Ms. Flynn, Ms. Healy, and Mrs. Judge, approached me and of course, I welcomed the students' help. The students brought in money from their families or money that they had earned. Many of the students actually did chores to help earn the money; either chores around their homes or helping their neighbors such as shoveling. The students were excited about helping and for the last couple of days have helped wrap the presents that were purchased. I am very proud of these students as are their third grade teachers! It truly is a gift to have students so generous in our school! Thank you so very much third graders and their families! You will bring many smiles to a Lyseth family this holiday! Betsy Van Betuw, Social Worker

## Sensory Motor Program

Thank you to all the Lyseth families that have been making donations to the sensory motor program at Lyseth School. The sugar-free gum, Purell, games, toys, blocks, Legos, puzzles, stuffed animals, copy paper, art supplies, sheets, Ziploc baggies and shaving cream have all been appreciated. The children are all very grateful. We have been very creative and imaginative with all the donations. Please keep the unwanted goods coming. These donations keep our occupational therapy program strong at Lyseth. Not only for the children receiving services, but all the children.

Happy Holidays,  
Ms. Stephanie Vares

## Note from the Nurse

Due to the recent outbreak of mumps in Maine, we (school nurses), have been directed by the Maine Center for Disease Control (ME - CDC) to send home notices to parents of children who are under - immunized or not immunized against mumps. We will be reviewing your child's health record in the immediate future, and if your child's immunizations are not up to date, you will receive a letter asking for those immunizations. If your child is exempt from said immunizations, an exempt letter (hand-written) is required by law every school year. In the event of a verified outbreak, children who are exempt will be excluded at the direction of the Maine - CDC. The requirements for immunizations are:

- 5 doses of diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (DPT) 4 doses if 4<sup>th</sup> dose after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday
- 4 doses of oral polio vaccine (OPV) or (IPV), 3 doses if 3<sup>rd</sup> dose after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday
- 2 doses of Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) administered on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday
- 1 dose of Varicella (chicken pox) or documentation of disease

Any child who does not meet these requirements will receive a notice and have a limited amount of time to produce documentation. If you have any questions, please contact us. Thank you for your cooperation with the state law governing immunizations of our school children.



Juanita McLeod, R.N.  
Mary-Jo Brink, Health Assistant

## First Grade Holiday Express

In order to better understand similarities and differences between children around the world, students in Mrs. Dawson's, Mrs. Harris', Ms. Lipson's and Mrs. Murphy's classes participated in a first grade holiday tradition by learning about holiday customs and celebrations from different parts of the world. Each classroom was tuned into a different country. Students "traveled" to England, Germany, and Mexico. They also learned about Israel and the holiday of Hanukkah. Additional countries and holidays were added by each teacher. Students were very excited as they prepared for their "travels" by making a passport to enter each country, a travel bag to keep their hand-made souvenirs in, and a travel journal to record their experiences. With each new country visited, they learned how to locate it on the world map, made a flag of the country,

and learned about its history and holiday traditions. Students eagerly worked in centers making souvenirs and created memories while they listened to music with each country's flavor. The final activity was a "Taste Your Way Around the World Party." Students revisited each country to receive a sample from that country or holiday that was prepared by first grade parents. Our students had a great time taking part in this informative learning experience!

***Students return to school on Wednesday, January 2, 2008. Please remember that this is an Early Dismissal Day (2:00 PM.)***