

The Potter Road Post

December 2011
Volume 3, Issue 2
Paula J. Del Prete, Principal

Message from the Principal



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Upcoming Events

- ◆ Holiday Recess - 12/23 - 1/2
- ◆ PTO Meeting - 1/11 - 7:15pm
- ◆ No School - MLK, Jr. Day - 1/16
- ◆ Report Cards - 1/27
- ◆ Prof. Day - Early Release - 2/2
- ◆ Bus Driver Apprec. Breakfast - 2/3
- ◆ PTO Meeting - 2/8 - 7:15pm
- ◆ No School - President's Day - 2/20
- ◆ Winter Recess - 2/21-2/24
- ◆ Picture Day - 3/1
- ◆ No School - Prof. Day - 3/16
- ◆ Conferences - Early Release - 3/22

Dear Potter Road Families,

We are now in the busy holiday season. At the Turkey Trot, we kicked off our "Season of Giving". We have been very busy collecting food for local food pantries and warm coats to be donated to Anton's Coat drive. I'm very proud of all the students' efforts and it's heartwarming to see students as young as Kindergarten wanting to give back to their community and to people who are less fortunate.

Every day I feel so very fortunate to be the Principal of such a wonderful community. I'm thankful for all of our students, staff, families and volunteers who collaborate, support each other and work together every day to make Potter Road a very special place. The overwhelming support I feel whenever the school needs anything is just outstanding! I believe Potter Road exemplifies what it means to be a true school community.

By now, all 4th and 5th grade families have received copies of their student MCAS scores from last spring. Our students worked very hard and put forth their best effort on these tests. I am proud to report that we made our Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA, but did not make it in Math as classified by the the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. We have analyzed our grade level data, collaborated with the District Student Data Coordinator and are working with the School Council to update our School Improvement Plan.

On December 14th at 6:30 pm at Potter, we will have a presentation on bullying for parents. This is a parent only event. The presentation will be a joint effort with Dunning. Our PTOs have generously sponsored this evening. It promises to be very informative and will support you in understanding the new Massachusetts bullying law. I urge you to attend.

I have a few reminders I'd like to share with families:

1) ALL visitors must sign in at the office and take a badge to walk throughout the building. This is in an effort to protect all children and staff at our school. Please do not be offended if a staff member asks if you have checked in at the office. All visitors **MUST** have a badge and there are no exceptions.

2) Attendance: Regular daily attendance is important for every child. Being on time for school is very important. Also very important is being in school for the entire day and not being dismissed early. Coming in late and leaving early is disruptive to the entire class. It interrupts learning and causes students to fall behind. We request that parents schedule appointments that involve their children before or after school whenever possible. We also ask that families not take extended vacations when school is in session. If you decide to go on vacation during school time, it is a parent's responsibility to have your child make up the work when he/she returns. Per district policy, teachers are not required to provide work in advance for students. Please do not request work in advance from any teacher.

3) School hours are 9:10 am to 3:10 pm. Morning kindergarten is from 9:10 am to 11:50 am. On early-release days, school hours are 9:10 am to 1:00 pm. Children may begin to enter the school at 8:55. Children who travel to school by bus will remain seated on their bus until 8:55. Teachers and other staff will greet the children outside at 8:55. There is no adult supervision before 8:55. **Please do not drop your children off before 8:55.** Children having breakfast at school may enter the cafeteria at 8:55am. The first bell rings at 8:55 am, at which time the children may walk to their classrooms. All children must be in the classroom by 9:10 am or they are considered tardy. The school day ends at 3:10. (cont. on pg. 2)

. . . Message from the Principal continued

4) Each day many parents are faced with a decision of whether they should keep their **sick children** at home or send them off to school. A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in classes in a meaningful way. Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in the school community and allows the child opportunity to rest and recover. When a child has a fever, they cannot return to school until they are fever free for 24 hours. Anytime you have a question regarding your children and their health you may call Mrs. Archambault, our School Nurse.

5) The weather is getting colder and it's time for students to come to school dressed for the **winter weather**. We will be going out to recess each day as long as weather permits. It's important for children to get fresh air and exercise each day. We want all children to be able to participate at recess, however, children will only be allowed to play in the snow if they are wearing: hats, mittens/gloves, snow pants, snow boots and a coat. If children are not dressed properly, they will need to stay on the hard top areas. Thanks for your cooperation!

6) **Toys, electronic devices, ipods and cell phones** are not allowed at school. I've noticed an increase in students bringing expensive electronic devices to school. Please refer to the Handbook online for more information. Please speak to your children at home and let them know that toys are not allowed at school. Any toys or electronic devices that are taken away from a student and sent to the office by any staff member will only be returned when a parent comes into the school to pick them up. The school will not be responsible for any electronic device or toy that is brought to school that is lost, stolen or broken.

7) Connect Ed – I will continue to use the **Connect Ed messaging system** to share important information and upcoming events at the school with you. Please make sure that we have your most updated information so that you won't miss out on any calls. If you have recently changed your phone number or email, please call the office and speak to one of the secretaries. You can also send in a note with your child with any phone number or email changes. It's very important in the interest of safety that we have a phone number where we can always reach you in the case of an emergency.

8) **Parent Drop off and Pick up** areas during the snowy weather. With the winter weather just around the corner, I want to remind parents to follow the drop off and pick up safety guidelines. We need to work together so that the safety of our children is the number one priority. Drive slowly, park in the designated areas and give yourself extra time on snowy days.

9) A gentle reminder to all parents that Potter Road has a no sweet policy when celebrating birthdays in school. So, in order for Potter Road to be the healthiest environment possible, we are instructing parents not to send in sweet, sugary foods. Please do not send in cookies, cupcakes, candy, brownies, soda etc. We always welcome, arts and crafts, a small gift grab bag, fruit or a healthy snack. If you are not sure if a snack is acceptable, please feel free to check with Mrs. Archambault our Nurse.

I hope you all have a happy, healthy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Paula J. Del Prete

Potter Road Team Wins Spelling Bee

By: Leslee Hodgman



For the very first time, the team from Potter Road won the **Annual Townwide Spelling Bee** presented by the Framingham Education Foundation! A team made up of two teachers, Third Grade teacher **Jenn Ansin** and Second Grade teacher **Leslee Hodgman**, plus one parent, "Spelling Master" **Julie Wolf**, competed against 19 other teams in this 20th Annual Spelling Bee, sponsored by Genzyme Corporation. Most of the other schools in Framingham were represented as well as several community groups. The November event is a major fundraiser for the Foundation, which provides grants to Framingham educators to encourage innovative approaches to instruction in the classroom.

The Potter Road team competed in, and won, the first round of the Spelling Bee, and then competed in the final round. Correctly spelling words like **absorbefacient**, **quoin**, **panegyric** and **scorpioid**, the team battled with the team from the Performing Arts Center, finally winning on the word, **horripilation**. Major credit for the win goes to Julie Wolf, who came well prepared and clearly has a gift for spelling! Thanks also go to our terrific Potter Road cheering section – we had the loudest and best group of cheerleaders there!! It was a fun night for everyone and a proud one for Potter Road School!!

You've Made It Happen

By: Nancy O'Connor

The Potter Road PTO would like to thank all our families for supporting and participating in the many fundraisers we have during the year. We cannot emphasize enough how important they have become to the school. Whether the money goes to funding our cool extra-curricular clubs, controlling costs of field trips, providing equipment, tools, and supplies to the classrooms, mulching the playground, or the many other items on our "expense" list, it is all needed, appreciated, and put to good use.

So far this year, all our fundraisers have met or exceeded our goals. Thanks to everyone who helped make that happen with the Direct Donation Drive, Pumpkin Fair, Book Fair, and Genevieve's. Our BoxTops program is also doing extremely well, and we have made over \$460 through November with the Stop and Shop Aplus program! We had another successful Book Bingo Family Fun night, and we hope you are looking forward to another one planned for April. Also, remember that your Target REDcard can earn money for our school. For more info, see the accompanying box.

Coming up, we will be trying a new fundraiser with [KidStuff Coupon](#) books. These books contain a ton of useful and valuable coupons for merchants and services in the Metrowest area. Look for them in January. Our yearly [BJs membership drive](#) will be run in February, and the popular [Square One](#) fundraiser will come your way in the spring. Also in the works is the [Spring Auction](#), and we will keep you abreast of how that is coming along.

Lastly, a heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers who make all these terrific events and drives happen. They give their valuable and precious time, energy, skills and talents and are the reason we can call ourselves a successful PTO and school community.

Have a wonderful holiday season everyone, and see you in the New Year!

Nancy O'Connor
Co-President

Five Guys Fundraiser (January 9th)

By: The Editor



After a previous successful fundraiser, **Five Guys Burger and Fries** is inviting Potter Road families to dine on **Monday, January 9th from 3pm to 10pm**. While you are out taking advantage of all the post-holiday sales, stop by Five Guys for a bite to eat and **10% of each sale will be donated to the Potter Road School PTO**.

Five Guys Burger and Fries is conveniently located in Framingham at:

**Route 30 Plaza
301 Cochituate Road**

(Be sure to tell them you are there to support PRS when placing your order.)

Shopping at TARGET can help us make money!

Did you know there's an easy way to help us raise money for our school?

It's called **Take Charge of Education**, and all you need to do is to register your **Target REDCard**.

Here's how it works: Visit Target.com/tcoe and click on the blue "enroll" box, or call 1-800-316-6142 to designate Potter Road School. Then use your REDcard whenever you shop.

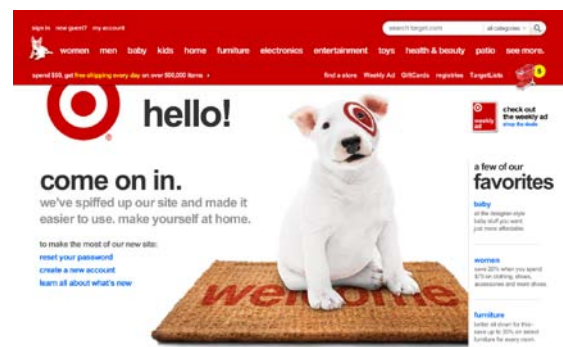
When you use your REDcardSM (Target® Visa® Credit Card, Target Credit Card® or Target Check Card®), Target will donate up to 1% of your purchases to the eligible K-12 school of your choice.

Don't have a REDcard? It's easy to apply. Get started in person at any Target store or go to Target.com/redcard.

Grandparents, alumni, friends and neighbors are all welcome to participate in the program. The more people we involve, the harder the program works for our school. Check out our school's progress anytime at Target.com/tcoe.

Our school ID is **59228**.

Thank you for your support!



Book Fair 2011 Rockets to Success

By: Tracy Lampl

It all started when a UFO landed in the hallway of Potter Road. There were even alien sightings around the school. The excitement was building as the books arrived. The following week was Book Fair week and the hallway was turned into a bookstore. Each class got a chance to preview the books and see what new titles were for sale.

Word spread through the cafe during lunch when the cases of *Cabin Fever* (the latest in the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series) arrived on Tuesday afternoon. Teachers came to select their classroom wishlist books. Thursday night, students played galactic games including "Knock Me Out of Orbit" and "Make Your Own Constellation" and the gym was a buzz with book sales. We wrapped up the week on Friday and sent some of the aliens home with their new friends.

It was truly an out of this world Book Fair as we raised over \$2600 for the PTO and \$740 in book credit for the classrooms. Our challenge this year was to sell over 75 teacher wishlist books for use in the classrooms. We rocketed past that goal and, with your generosity, we sold 195 books for Potter Road classrooms and an additional 30 books for the library. As promised, our Principal DelPrete, in her alien neon wig complete with antennae got silly-stringed at the Turkey Trot assembly.

We thank the entire Potter Road community of parents, teachers, staff and students for making the 2011 Book Fair a stellar success!

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ma.us/potter](http://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/potter)

Lego League & Robotics

By: Jacqui Goldberg, Coordinator



Potter Road's **Lego League and Robotics Club** will be starting up again in January! We are very excited about the strong interest shown in both programs. We have had many parents volunteer to be coaches. These volunteers allow us to run the program.

Lego League will be taking a new approach this year. We'll be focusing on building activities and engineering principles. The program is designed for 1st-3rd graders and will meet for approximately 7 weeks. We will work on team building and building with Legos. Some of the fun activities that we'll be doing are building a Lego chair for a beanie baby, building tall towers and building suspension bridges. For the last 2 weeks of the program, all of the teams will be working on a specific challenge which they will solve using a Lego model. The program will culminate in a **Lego Celebration** shared by Dunning, Barbieri, and Woodrow Wilson on **April 1st** at Fuller Middle School.

Robotics Club is open to 4th & 5th graders. The students will be using Lego Mindstorm NXT robots to learn the principles of basic programming. Students will spend 5 weeks learning how to program the robots to move forward, backward, left and right. They will also learn how to use touch and light sensors. For the last 3 weeks of the program, the students will work on programming their robots to get through a maze. The program will culminate in a **Maze Challenge** shared by Dunning and Barbieri on **April 1st** at Fuller Middle School. The students will be presented with a maze that they have never seen before. They will need to program their robots to get through the maze quickly and gaining points.

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