

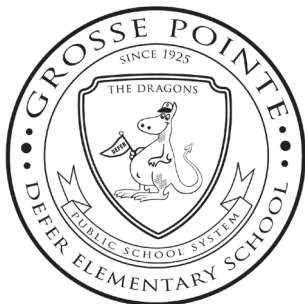
DEFER DRAGON'S BURNING NEWS

DECEMBER 4, 2014

Defer Elementary



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www.gpschools.org/defer

Communication Tools Conferences & Progress Reports

Conferences

I want to thank all of the Defer families for attending conferences last month. There is so much that is accomplished at a good conference and they send a powerful message to your child about their learning and your partnership with them.

This year's conferences were characterized by two new features:

- **Student Data /Leadership Binder** - This year all students at Defer are keeping a *data binder* in which they are tracking their work; for Kindergarten it is *sight words* while in 5th grade it is Wordly Wise tests, Spelling tests, number of minutes read at home, etc. During conferences students and parents studied the data collected and set goals for improvement. Your older child's data binder might have clearly shown that homework completion is a problem, while your 2nd grader's data might indicate that studying for spelling tests is not being done consistently. It isn't the collecting and graphing of data that makes the difference here - it is the conversations about the data that impact learning. *Research shows that when students track their own learning and data, they take ownership of their learning, have intrinsic motivation, and perform better on high stakes tests.*

- **WIG (Wildly Important Goal) Board** - Each grade level has established a *WIG* goal for the year. This is another piece of data that our students are tracking, but this time, they are tracking it as a grade. *For instance, less than 50% of our 5th grade students could identify, rename, and find equivalent fractions on the MEAP test. Our 5th graders are determined to raise that up and their goal is to have 90% of our students master these skills by May, 2015. The WIG bulletin board gives base-line data for each grade's goal, work samples, and reflections on how to get there. Ask your child about their grade-level WIG goal. How are they doing on it?*

continued on p. 2

Progress Reports

A progress report serves as a communication tool to help parents understand how their child is progressing. It helps explain whether a student is meeting the developmental milestones that are expected in their current grade. On our Standards-Based Report Cards, students and parents will have a deeper understanding of performance due to the detailed picture of student learning with a focus on what students know, instead of an overall average of what they have done.

Marking Period Academic Expectations and Benchmarks are relative to learning up to the time of reporting. The 1st marking period progress report indicates the student's learning relative to November expectations. In individual marking periods there may be some benchmarks that are left blank. This is a result of the district curriculum pacing guides and indicates that benchmark was not an area of focus for that particular marking period. However over the course of the academic year each benchmark will be marked so that the report card is a complete document of your child's academic progress.

The Academic Expectations are as follows:

ES - Excels at Standards

- Consistently shows depth of understanding and flexible application of grade-level concepts and beyond.
- The student, with relative ease, grasps, applies, and extends key concepts, processes, and skills for the grade level and beyond

MS - Meets Standards

- Consistently and accurately demonstrates skills
- Independently applies the knowledge, skills and standards appropriate to their grade level
- Shows evidence of mastery on multiple and varied assessments over time

AS - Approaching Standards

- Demonstrates skills inconsistently
- Shows progress, but is not at grade level standard yet
- Requires some support

CA - Concerns in this Area

- Needs considerable assistance and is performing below standards
- Struggles in this area; shows little or no progress
- Requires support

Thanks for your continued support!

Progress Reports will be distributed to students on Tuesday, December 9th.



DECEMBER 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	A 1	B 2 Winter Vocal Music Concert Grades 1, 3, 5, 2/4, 4/5 & Choir @ Pierce - 7 p.m.	C 3	D 4	A 5	6 PTO Holiday Craft Fair 9:00 a.m. Book Fair
7	B 8	C 9 Report Cards Distributed	D 10 Market Day	A 11	B 12	13
BOOK FAIR 12/6 - 12/12						
14	C 15	D 16	A 17 Safety/Service Party @ Defer 3:50 - 5:00 p.m.	B 18	C 19 Instrumental Concert & Holiday Sing Along 10:30 a.m.	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Winter Break 12/20/14 - 1/4/15 School resumes Monday 1/5/15						
28	29	30	31	27	28	29



P.E. Reindeer Games
12/3 - 12/19

**PLAY
REINDEER
GAMES**

JANUARY 2015

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY					
						1					
2	D	5	A	6	B	7	C	8	D	9	10
11	A	12	B	13	C	14	D	15	A	16	17
	Lunchtime Enrichment Begins		PTO Meeting Defer Library 7:00 p.m.				Kindergarten Info Night 7:00 p.m.				
18	MLK Day No School	19	B	20	C	21	D	22	NO SCHOOL Elementary Professional Development	23	24
				Market Day			Multi-Age Info Night 7:00 p.m. @ Trombly				
25	A	26	B	27	C	28	D	29	A	30	31
					Safety/Service Pierce Swimming 3:50 - 5:15 p.m.						



Dragon Dens Celebrate 90th Birthday

November's PBIS Reward Party was a part of Defer's year-long 90th birthday celebration. In keeping with the monthly birthday celebrations a team of PTO parents set up shop on each floor of the building earlier in November and helped students paint their hand print on a piece of material. At Monday's celebration each Dragon Den of students created a banner clothesline of their handprints. Students in grades 1 - 5 met to decorate their handprints with everything from puff paints, to googly eyes, to fabric pens, to a variety of foam pieces. Students added their own personal flair to create their banner.

As each Dragon Den's banner is completed it will be displayed in the building and in the Spring at our Defer Birthday Party!

Thanks to all our parents for supporting this project and congratulations to our students on another month of great PBIS behavior!



Spirit Fridays

Let's start showing our Defer Dragon Pride! *It's official* - every Friday is now **Spirit Friday**. We'd like to see all of our Defer students wear their Defer t-shirts on Friday's to school each week. Let's fill the halls, our classrooms, the lunchroom, and recess with a *rainbow* of Defer pride!

New Staff

We are excited at Defer to be welcoming Mrs. Kelly Osborne. Mrs. Osborne is a Social Worker and she will be filling a full time position at Defer. She will be supporting our students in a myriad of ways that will enable them to maximize their learning experience. Welcome Mrs. Osborne!!!





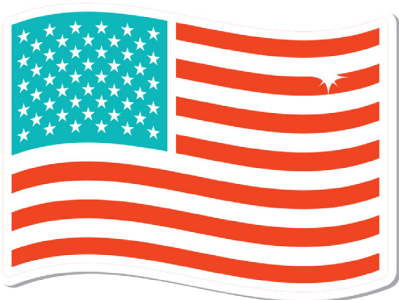
Defer's Distinguished Employee 2014 -2015

During the 2008-09 school year, the Grosse Pointe Board of Education established the **Distinguished Employee Service Awards Program** to recognize distinguished service by employees in various programs and activities sponsored by the public schools. Board-level recognition is intended to reward those employees who have initiated a new program, service, or activity and/or who have served the district above and beyond their daily employee responsibilities.

This year's *Distinguished Employee* representing Defer Elementary is Mrs. Kari Mannino. As defined above, Mrs. Mannino truly goes *above and beyond*. At the district level Kari is one of two elementary teachers that worked to revise the Grosse Pointe Writing Assessment rubric. This assessment has been in place for over 30 years and has served the district well. Thanks to the hard work of Kari the rubric has now been aligned to Common Core, Oakland Writing Units of Study (our curriculum), and the elementary progress report. This works will continue through the 2014-2015 school year as she collaborates with not just the pilot team but the entire elementary staff on implementation. It is for this work that Mrs. Mannino was nominated for this award.

Mrs. Mannino goes *above and beyond* in her 4/5 magnet classroom at Defer as well. Her students are deeply entrenched in *Problem Based Learning* and she uses technology to provide the vehicle for research and presentation. She is passionate about writing instruction and recently four of her students took medals at the *Young Authors Contest* at UM/Dearborn. Together with Mr. Senska she formed a *Boys' Writing Club* last winter during lunch hour. They worked to engage those boys in writing that might never see themselves as having that skill. Over 60 third, fourth, and fifth graders participated! She is part of a Defer team of teachers synergizing around *Leader in Me* and she has co-chaired *One Book, One School* for the last two years.

Enough said – Defer has terrific teachers and Mrs. Kari Mannino was recognized this year for her distinguished service. Please join me in congratulating her!



Grosse Pointe War Memorial Veterans Day Breakfast

Mrs. Gout's fourth class wrote Thank You cards for this year's Veterans Day Breakfast at the Grosse Pointe War Memorial. The veterans were delighted by the beautiful cards and the thoughtfulness of Defer students brightened their day!

5th GRADE POETRY CORNER

Thanksgiving Song of an Owl

For all my colorful feathers that keep me warm throughout the winter.

The flowing water that splashes in the night.

For the strong trees I live in.

For all the mice I find to eat with my family.

For my wide wings that swish me in the air.

For all my flying fun.

I am thankful!

By: Sophia Simopoulos



Thanksgiving Song of a Cute Dog



For the warm comfy bed I sleep in every day
And the cold ice water after running around that I drink
For a warm hand petting my chin
For the family that greets me when they come home from school
And for the niceness they give me
The times when they take me to the park
And the squirrels in my back yard that I chase all day
And for the other collies that I greet
For the bone I bury when I get one

I am Thankful!

By George Kuhnlein

Thanksgiving Song of a Piggy

For the pinkness of my skin

The brown mud I slide in

For the slop I eat

And the hay I sleep on

For the squeals when people pull my pink curly tail

For my big pen that keeps the fox away

For all the friends I have!

I am Thankful!

BY Maggie Cielieska



Thanksgiving song of a Chameleon

For the horns I have to protect my body

For my tongue I use to catch my food

For the colors I change with my mood

For the fights I won against gardener snakes

And the beautiful colors I change every day

Too escape a rattle snake by blending in

And for all my Chameleon fun

I am Thankful!!!

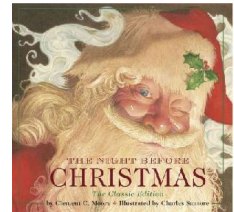
Lukas Baer



Suggested Holiday Reading from Your Elementary Library Media Specialists

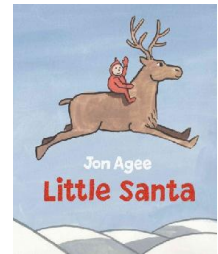
The Night Before Christmas, or A Visit from St. Nicholas: The Classic Edition by Clement C. Moore, illustrated by Charles Santore.

Presents an illustrated version of the well-known poem about an important Christmas Visitor. *Available at Central, Ewald, Woods, Ferry, Monteith libraries. Call number E MOO*



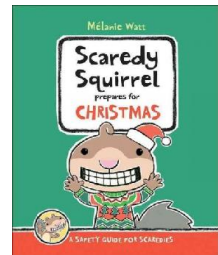
Little Santa by Jon Agee

A resident of the North Pole with the ability to slide up and down chimneys meets a flying reindeer and some industrious elves, in this fictional biography of Santa Claus. *Available at Central, Ewald, Woods, Ferry, Monteith libraries. Call number E AGE*



Scaredy Squirrel Prepares for Christmas by Melanie Watt

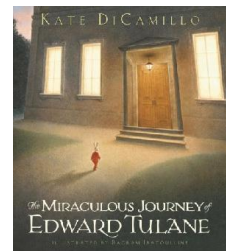
Scaredy Squirrel offers suggestions and tips for preparing for Christmas, covering wrapping, baking and more. *Available at Central, Ewald, Woods, Ferry, Kerby, Monteith, Richard libraries. Call number E WAT*



The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane by Kate DiCamillo

Edward Tulane, a cold-hearted and proud toy rabbit, loves only himself until he is separated from the little girl who adores him and travels across the country acquiring new owners and listening to their hopes, dreams, and histories. *Available at Ewald, Woods, Defer,*

Ferry, Kerby, Maire, Mason, Monteith, Pierce, Poupard, Richard, Trombly libraries. Call number PB DIC of FIC DIC



Media Specialists

Jeanne Dolson	Poupard
Amy Hermon	Maire, Mason, Monteith, Trombly
Sherry Martin	Ferry, Mason, Poupard
Anne Maurer	Kerby, Mason, Richard
Cheryl Quinlan	Defer, Monteith
Rachel Walpole	Richard, Trombly



Suggested Holiday Reading from Your Elementary Library Media Specialists

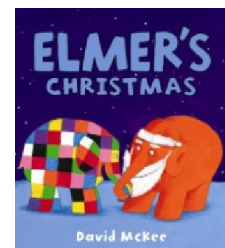
Is It Christmas Yet? by Jane Chapman

While waiting impatiently for the big day to arrive, Teddy tries to help Big Bear with Christmas preparations. *Available at Central, Ewald, Woods libraries. Call number E CHA*



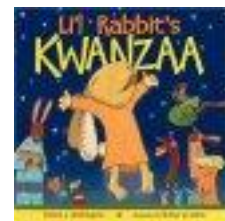
Elmer's Christmas by David McKee

Elmer, the patchwork elephant, helps the excited youngsters prepare for the Christmas visit of Papa Red. *Available at Central, Mason, Poupard, Woods libraries. Call number E MCK*



Li'l Rabbit's Kwanzaa by Donna Washington

L'il Rabbit searches for a gift for his grandmother when she is sick during Kwanzaa, and surprises her with the best gift of all. Includes "The Nguzo Saba - The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa." *Available at Central, Ewald, Woods libraries. Call number JE WAS*



Making a Friend by Alison McGhee

A celebration of winter and friendship, plus a lesson about the water cycle, all in a charming choice for fans of Ezra Jack Keats' classic, A Snowy Day. *Available at Richard, Trombly libraries. Call number E MCG*



Media Specialists

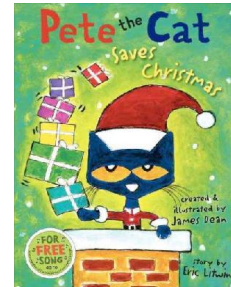
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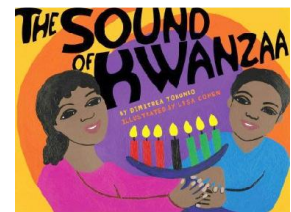
Pete the Cat Saves Christmas by Eric Litwin

When Santa falls ill and Christmas may have to be canceled, Pete the cat comes to the rescue. *Available at Central, Ewald, Kerby, Monteith, Mason, Richard, Woods libraries. Call number E LIT*



The Sound of Kwanzaa by Dimitrea Tokunbo

Presents the traditions and principles of the African American celebration known as Kwanzaa, in a text enhanced with illustrations, verse, and a no-bake recipe for Kwanzaa brownie bites. *Available at Central, Ewald libraries. Call number 394.261 TOK*



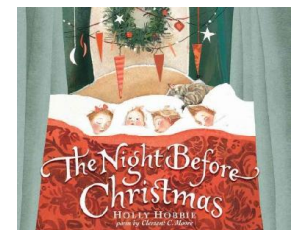
Over and Under the Snow by Kate Messner

Over the snow, the world is hushed and white, but under the snow is a secret world of squirrels and snowshoe hares, bears and bullfrogs, and many others who live outside in the woods during the winter. *Available at Ferry, Richard libraries. Call number 591.4 MES*



The Night Before Christmas by Clement C. Moore, illustrated by Holly Hobbie.

Presents an illustrated version of the well-known poem about an important Christmas Visitor. *Available at Central, Ewald, Woods, Ferry, Monteith. Call number E MOO*



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Happy Holidays
from the Defer Staff



How far have we come?

*Dr. Martin Luther King greets a Grosse Pointe resident during his 1968 visit.
photo: Grosse Pointe Historical Society*



*Area residents meet and greet at the Detroit/Grosse Pointe border on September 21, 2014.
photo: Detroit Free Press*

How far will we go?

Questions we will ask:

- What builds community?
- How can our schools inspire an appreciation of our differences?
- What does good governance look like?

Email us at: gpdiverse@gmail.com
or Facebook/DiverseGP

WHAT'S AHEAD?

an eastside community workshop on racial diversity

keynote speaker: Shirley Stancato, President & CEO, New Detroit, Inc.
moderator: WDET's Sandra Svoboda

Saturday, December 13 • 2 pm
at Salem Memorial Church 21230 Moross at Chester
just east of I-94 • ample parking behind the church (enter from Chester)

Format: Select one of three workshops on: Schools; Government, or Communities. Workshop participants will work to identify positive models of racial diversity and suggest actions that can be taken. **All are welcome. PLEASE COME** willing to listen, ask questions, and help plan constructive action to build better communities.

Sponsored by **DiverseGP**, a group of residents from the Grosse Pointes, Detroit and eastside communities who are committed to bridging divisions of race, socioeconomic status, and culture. We seek to build communities that honor and respect the humanity in all people. We work to foster partnerships with community groups, schools, faith-based institutions and local governments to achieve social justice and inclusion for everyone.

Grosse Pointe Public School System

Kindergarten Info Night



Head to your home elementary school

7 p.m., Thursday, January 15.

**DEFER
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL**

2014-2015

DECEMBER:
Volume 10, Issue 4

**P.T.O.
DRAGON
TAILS**



**UPCOMING
PTO
EVENTS:**

Dec. 2:
Winter Vocal Concert 7pm

Dec. 6:
Defer Craft Fair (9am-1pm)

Dec. 6-12:
Scholastic Book Fair

Dec. 9:
Report Cards Distributed

DRAGON SPEAK:

Birthdays are grand, especially when they last an entire year, and George Defer Elementary School is doing exactly that for its 90th! The planning committee, under the leadership of Christina Michaud is doing some marvelous work, with a multitude of fun things planned.

Did your child come home with paint under his or her finger nails recently? If so, don't lament, for it is a good thing that they will be memorialized in a special Defer Dragon hand print garland we will use all year long. You can have fun trying to figure out which print is that of your child!

In December, birthday festivities will occur under the umbrella of the Scholastic Book Fair, with special readings and a Best Friends Book Drive and, in January, we will be collecting non-perishable food items to distribute to local families in need.

For you seasoned Defer veterans, you know we usually celebrate the 100th day of school but this year, guess what day we are going to celebrate??? I'm sure you all came up with the 90th (high five to ya!), and I hope you are looking forward to the time capsule that will be compiled as part of it.

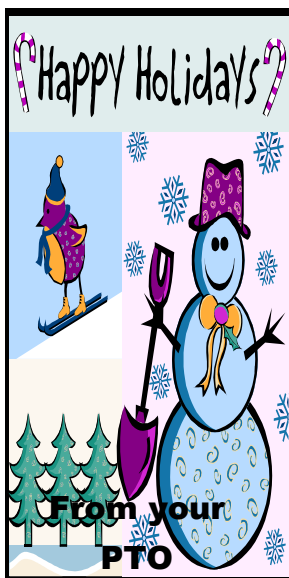
Are you a movie fan? Then March is your month to heal from that good old cabin fever that tends to afflict us about then, as we will be doing a Family Movie Celebration, complete with a 1920's theme and tasty vittles. And, speaking of vittles, April brings a Rhubarb Bake-Off (Defer is built on the site of a former rhubarb patch), so start your recipe research and calorie conservation now.

May. It will be here before we know it, I'm sure, and with it, a Birthday Party on the lawn. You will not be bored, we

promise. There will be much to do, but my favorite is the Birthday Cake Walk, a Defer 90th birthday spin on the old classic cake walk, with every entry a birthday cake. I'm going fork shopping NOW, and I'm saving up for some durable walking shoes, cuz those cakes are mine! Ha-Ha! I'm sure I'll have some stiff competition from you all and when it gets down to it, I promise to be a lady and not tackle you for your cake. :)

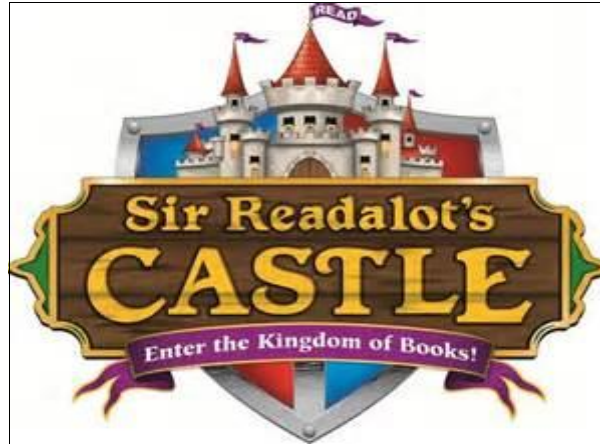
Thank you to the 90th Birthday Team for all of the work you are undertaking! You are some super cool dragons, and I'm sure you've made George Defer smile as he looks down upon his namesake during this important milestone year.

Michele Hodges
PTO President



Scholastic Book Fair

December 6-12th



Be sure to mark your calendar for a new event this year celebrating the joy of reading.

Defer will be hosting Family Reading Events during two evenings of the Scholastic Book Fair. Please plan to join us at one or both sessions:

Grades 3-5 Family Event - Wednesday, Dec. 10 from 6-8pm

Grades K-2 Family Event - Thursday, Dec. 11 from 6-8pm

You may also stop in the during the craft fair Saturday Dec. 6th. (9-1pm).

Also after school on Tuesday, Dec. 9th. until 5pm.

Shopping will be available at these events along with your child(ren)'s regularly scheduled library time.

Please consider making a book donation to Best Friend's Books Foundation. This charitable organization honors former Defer teacher, Tracie Volpe, and places new books in the hands of children who most need them.

VOLUNTEERS ARE STILL NEEDED!!!!!!

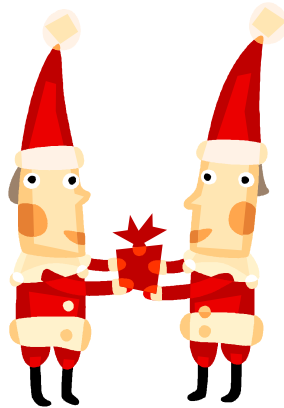
<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c48acae2babf49-book>



The Defer Holiday Craft Fair

A special thanks goes out to Aimee Miller and Sarah DeYoung for co-chairing the Defer Holiday Craft Fair on Saturday. This event is a highlight for families during the holiday season year after year. The event could not happen without the vast pool of volunteers working behind the scenes as well as on the day of the fair.

We truly appreciate all the wonderful little elves that go the extra mile!



Lunchtime Enrichment

Another program unique to Defer is Lunchtime Enrichment. During the winter months, students have the opportunity to sign up for various classes taught by adult volunteers. We are always seeking new and interesting topics to share with the children. If you have a special hobby and could give an hour of time during lunch, please contact asap:

Elizabeth Tengler (b-beth@sbcglobal.net) or Tracey Secco (traceysecco@gmail.com) .

Past classes have included:

chess, yoga, decoupage,
storytime, origami, knitting,
beading, computers,
science experiments, Legos,
boardgames, etc.



Is there something

YOU could offer?

We are open to ideas &

working with your

schedule.

P.T.O. Positions and Committees

Below are the current PTO positions and committees associated with the 2015-2016 school year.

Please thoughtfully consider where you can volunteer your time and talents.

Contact: Michele Hodges (michelelhodges@gmail.com) with your selection(s) or return this form asap to the office with your interests circled.

Please don't hesitate to ask for more information.

Thanks, in advance, for your efforts.



President

Vice President

Treasurer

Secretary

Communications

Volunteers

Hospitality

Membership

Fundraising

School Board Observer

Historian

Spring Social Committee

Morning Office Assistance

Fall Family Event

Euchre Night

Fun Run

Gardening

Lunch Duty

Market Day

Progressive Dinner

Bake Sales

Holiday Craft Fair

Publishing Center

Pumpkin Patch

Waking School Bus

Beautification

Clinic Volunteers

Scholastic Book Fair

Field Day

Disability Workshop

Green Squad

Lunchtime Enrichment

Pancake Event

Bingo Night

Teacher Appreciation Lunch

5th Grade Promotion

Name: _____

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____