

From the Principal's Desk...

This week, we saw two innovative projects take shape and come to fruition – our immediate Douglass

family will yield results, as will our global neighbors!

We were all touched by the disastrous earthquake in Haiti a few weeks ago, and many students and parents wanted to help in some way. After hearing many suggestions, I was delighted to see our Student Council

under the leadership of Leann Mullineaux, take the lead on a community-building fundraising project.

On Tuesday, we brought together parents and students for a “construction party” where they built over 1,000 bracelets to then sell to our community. These bracelets have been on sale at the end of the school

day this week, and are also available in the school office for \$5 for each bracelet.

I'd also like to thank Julie Annear for spearheading this effort, securing supplies and snacks for our volunteer

bracelet builders! We have the potential to raise up to \$5,000 for UNICEF's Haiti Relief efforts – thanks

to all the kids and parents who put the bracelets together and to those who purchased the bracelets. Also this week, we saw two book clubs meet – our teacher-librarian Kelli Chynoweth came up with an

idea earlier this year to encourage our kids' literacy skills through a moms/daughters and dads/sons book

club. We had over 35 attend the mother/daughter book discussion on Tuesday morning, and close to 20 on

Thursday!

I enjoyed our Dads, Dudes and Doughnuts book discussion on No More Dead Dogs (a book I found very

funny and engaging!) on Thursday – and what I treasured was watching and listening to our dads talk about

themes in the book, ranging from honesty and integrity to jealousy and true friendship – the author's style of

writing, using different characters' voices interchangeably throughout the text – and our favorite characters

that we could relate to in different ways.

I wish you could have seen the rapt attention that our boys were paying to each father's voice – the kids were focused on what their role models had to say: not just their own dad's words, but to the other elders

around the tables.

This was a perfect demonstration of what Michael Gurian, author of such books as *The Wonder of Boys*, as well as our mentor as we implement what works in teaching boys and girls here at Douglass Elementary,

refers to as the importance of the tribe for boys. Gurian writes that boys need three families in their lives

on the road to healthy and happy adulthood – their own parents, their extended family, and a community

group of elders that help our kids grow.

Today, more than ever, our kids need role models not just in the nuclear and extended families, but also in the community at large. It was clear to me this week that our kids benefited here at Douglass from a

philanthropic effort to help Haitians, and in our book club experiences where we didn't just talk about a book – we talked and learned about some important aspects of character that will turn our young people into extraordinary adults.

Many thanks to the elders at Douglass for guiding our children this week and all year!

Your principal,

Jon Wolfer