

*From the Principal's Desk...*

I hope you and your kids enjoyed the surprise days off this week! I understand that students were informed by their bus drivers before many schools were told of Tuesday's weather closure. A quick reminder – all official announcements of school closures are made on the front page of the Boulder Valley School District web site – [www.bvdsd.org](http://www.bvdsd.org). School closure information will be posted there prior to the media being informed.

I overheard a conversation between a parent and a teacher last week – the parent asked why the teacher was not permitting candy at this year's class Valentine's Day party. "Not even a little candy heart? Valentine's Day is all about candy," the parent said.

I jumped in at that point, because her question and comment was timely. The teachers and I talked at length last week about different ways to celebrate Valentine's Day at Douglass in an effort to make the day more meaningful for all of us. Many classrooms will continue with classroom parties and exchanging Valentines with each other – making sure that no one is left out!

A great Douglass tradition for Valentine's Day continues with the Pony Express. This is Kindergarten's community service project, with all proceeds going to charity – in the past, Kindergartners have raised money to build houses for the poor, washing machines for a community center, donations to charities and organizations that work with abused or sick children.

When you talk to your kids this week about Valentine's Day, the teachers and I encourage you to steer the conversation towards giving as well as receiving Valentines and other special tokens of kindness, gratitude, and appreciation. Think of all the classmates your child has during the Pony Express delivery, not just a few close friends. Perhaps there is a student new to Douglass who might appreciate a kind note, or who they know has had a rough time and could use a little cheering up.

Many classrooms will take part in a different caring way of celebrating Valentine's Day by participating in Operation Gratitude. Students will create hand-written notes and cards to servicemen and women, with those same themes of kindness, gratitude and appreciation. It's sobering to me to realize that some of those men and women overseas were in elementary school just eight years ago. They're not so far removed from their own appreciation of Valentines.

Returning to the candy conversation. There is also some unfortunate timing with Valentine's Day this year, because our 3<sup>rd</sup> graders begin their CSAP Reading assessments on the following day, Tuesday, February 15. That's why the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms are holding their parties on Friday, February 11 – we'd like our students to feel their best for all sessions, and healthy eating can only contribute to that goal. Some of our other classrooms will hold their parties on the 11<sup>th</sup> as well, and many are moving to have only healthy treats provided at their parties.

Happy Valentine's Day to you all!

Your principal,  
Jon Wolfer