



**Dates to Remember**

**Wednesday, October 7**  
**Individual school picture day**

**Friday, October 9**  
**Jogathon**

**Friday, October 16**  
**Early dismissal, 12:30**

**Monday, October 19**  
**PTO Meeting, 6:00 p.m.**

**Thursday, November 19**  
**Bookies Night, 5:00 p.m.**

**Friday, November 20**  
**Grandparents Tea/  
Thanksgiving Lunch**

**Monday, November 30**  
**PTO Meeting, 6:00pm**

**From the Principal's Desk**

Dear Polaris Families,

**Distinguished Accolade**

Last week, Denver Public Schools released updated 2009 School Performance Framework (SPF) reports for every one of our 140 schools. Polaris @ Ebert received the distinguished designation. Criteria used to derive this rating include academic performance, academic progress/growth, post-secondary readiness, student engagement, parent engagement, and school demand. A distinguished designation is the highest rating achievable in the SPF.



I want to congratulate our student, faculty, and paraprofessionals for their tremendous efforts, which are apparent everyday throughout the school and in such district-wide evaluations. Kudos to our faculty who consistently prepare our students for testing. It is no easy task to prepare our high achieving and gifted children to perform well and consistently on the CSAP year after year. Many of our children join us in the intermediate grades with varying levels of preparedness. The focused and intense work that our teachers accomplish from kindergarten through the intermediate grades is an incredible accomplishment. We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated and expert faculty.

Additionally, I extend my gratitude to all of our families who support the work of our teachers and students. Your constructive and supportive feedback on the annual parent surveys translated into outstanding scores for Polaris in the category of "parent engagement." Polaris is and continues to be a success story for Denver Public Schools and your contributions are not overlooked.

I do want you all to know that I am delighted on a daily basis with data not directly measured by the SPF. I believe we are distinguished because of our school's philosophy, culture, arts integration, and enriched curriculum, including our electives program. We offer instruction and curriculum far more rigorous than many other schools—Polaris is distinguished because of our unique, in-depth approach to teaching children how to learn for life.

In closing, our rating of distinguished is a rare and public accolade of achievement and highly valued throughout the state. Our ranking will be widely known by the Denver public and captures not only our students' academic achievement, but our reputation for consistently rigorous programming for gifted and high achieving students. Congratulations all!

For the complete SPF data log on to:  
<http://communications.dpsk12.org/initiatives/school-performance-framework/>

*(continued on next page)*

### Stop buggin'

Last March, Polaris @ Ebert was fortunate to be chosen among a select few, including East and Merrill, to pilot Integrated Pest Management in Colorado schools. IPM is dedicated to prevention and the eradication of pesticides. Our goal is to keep mice and bugs out of the building without the use of potentially harmful chemicals. The first phase of the program is complete, which was the inspection of our entire building over the summer. Last summer every possible nook and cranny of our building was sealed. Phase two is education of our staff about how to routinely implement IPM in our specific classrooms and throughout the building. Phase three is implementation of new practices and procedures for the building staff and visitors.



Please help us with our new pest management strategies! After class parties, please help us clean up any foods and crumbs. This is a cooperative endeavor involving building occupants along with operations and maintenance.

I am grateful to CSU, DPS and the EPA for teaming with us to rid our building of creepy crawlers that invade our classrooms for food and lodging. This initiative does not apply to any beloved creatures that belong to kindergarten teacher Miss Eileen.

### Shining Stars

Polaris @ Ebert has long prided itself on educating gifted children not only academically but as compassionate world citizens. We do not tolerate bullying of any sort; instead, we consciously embrace and celebrate children's compassionate tendencies.

A strong positive behavior support system is key to student achievement and can significantly reduce stress and improve academic performance school-wide. In order to strengthen our commitment to and our maintenance of our healthy school culture, I am proud to announce that Polaris is implementing PBS (Positive Behavior Support).

PBS is a researched based system dedicated to improving the behavior of students. PBS provides a positive and effective alternative to the traditional methods of discipline. PBS methods are research-based and proven to significantly reduce the occurrence of problem behaviors in the school, resulting in a more positive school climate and increased academic performance. PBS is consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which advocates the use of positive behavior interventions and school-based disciplinary strategies. Danny Mey and Chris Konrad represented our team last spring at PBS training for DPS participants. They composed our school's motto with minimum tweaking and maximum endorsement from faculty. This STAR motto will be shared school-wide and integrates our school rules and philosophy.

Support learning  
Think responsibly  
Accept others  
Respect others, yourself and our school  
Safe and secure



### Seal the Deal

I am honored to serve as principal of this distinguished school. In order to distinguish myself from other principals, and with the playful encouragement of the staff, I announce the following fun school-wide challenge:

I challenge the Polaris community to raise \$10,000 as part of the Jog-a-Thon activities this year. This money will be used by PTO to address DPS budget cuts - specifically in the areas of paraprofessional pay, supplies for the library, and computer leases. If the Polaris families can achieve this goal, I offer a reward above and beyond the intrinsic satisfaction of helping our school: students will get to duct-tape me to the gym wall on October 16th. Please join us all - in the spirit of fun - as we celebrate all that this school is and can be.

Tape me down! I am jumping-out-of-my-skin proud of this school!!!

Karin Johnson  
Principal



## Testing and Application Deadlines Approaching

Please help us spread the word about upcoming testing and identification procedures for families/students seeking attendance at Polaris @ Ebert.

### How to Apply:

Students must apply centrally for consideration and testing for this program. Parents, teachers, or anyone who knows the student well may nominate him/her, and students may self-nominate. Nomination forms are available at your neighborhood school or at [gt.dpsk12.org](http://gt.dpsk12.org).

Look online at [gt.dpsk12.org](http://gt.dpsk12.org); or call the GT Department at 720-423-8272 for Highly Gifted Program information.

### The HGT nomination deadline is November 2, 2009

The Advanced Kindergarten recruitment flyers will go out in October and the application will be on the web within a week.

**The application deadline for Advanced Kindergarten is December 11, 2009 – later than HGT.**

### Information:

Polaris Families please extend an invitation to prospective families to our **HGT/Advanced Kindergarten presentation on September 29th from 6-7pm at Polaris @ Ebert** 410 Park Ave. West. Representatives from the Gifted Office as well as Principal Karin Johnson will be on hand to answer questions about our Polaris program for highly gifted and high achieving students.



## \$ Student Count Day \$

**October 1st** is the official student count day for receiving state funding for Colorado schools. Please make certain that your child is counted for attendance that morning. **We receive funding for your child based on his/her attendance on that one day.** Please refrain from scheduling dentist, doctor or reprieves from school that morning.

**Please help us achieve perfect attendance on Thursday, October 1st!!!**



*To the Staff Appreciation Luncheon Committee,*

*Thank you so much for the wonderful Staff Appreciation lunch on Wednesday! You fill our hearts (and our tummies) with such warmth and generosity! Thanks for making our day very special indeed!*

*The Polaris Staff*



### **Box Tops for Education**

The Box Tops donation box suddenly filled up after school started – a pleasant surprise! Thanks to everyone who clipped and saved coupons over the summer. Last year Polaris received \$372 from our coupon redemption program. We would like to have new Ebert families participating. What can you do? Look for products with Box Tops redemption logos (including Betty Crocker, Bisquick, Cascadian Farm, Chex, Cheerios, Cottonelle, Fiber One, Fruit Roll-Ups, General Mills, Hefty, Kleenex, Lucky Charms, Nature Valley, Old El Paso, Pillsbury, Scott, Total, Yoplait, Ziploc). A new company offering Box Tops coupons is Avery (office and school supplies). Then save, clip, and drop them in the large Cheerios box in the office. Each logo is worth 10 cents.

*Please join Principal Karin Johnson for coffee at 9am in the library on the first Friday of the month. This is an opportunity for dialogue with Ms. Johnson about the Polaris Program and an opportunity to socialize with other Polaris parents.*

*Coffee with the Principal:*

*October 2, 2009  
November 6, 2009  
December 4, 2009*



*Mark your calendars boys and ghouls. This year the annual Polaris Halloween Parade will commence on Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. Parties will follow in classrooms with parents helping CLEAN at 3:15, so we don't get any creepy crawlies in classrooms.*

