



DUXBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DUXBURY FREE LIBRARY

RECREATION

## SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

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It is my pleasure to submit to the community the annual report on the accomplishments of the Duxbury Public Schools. This is a bittersweet task for me as it will be my fourteenth and final report to the community. It has been an honor to be superintendent of the Duxbury Public Schools and to share in its successes since 1993. I am proud of the efforts of many dedicated administrators, educators, support staff, School Committee members and volunteers who have helped to move the system forward toward the realization of our vision: The Duxbury Public Schools is a community of learners that appreciates and respects the diverse contributions of all and inspires in each of us a passion for learning, a desire to make a difference and the courage to act with integrity.

During my tenure here the student population has grown by 26%, from 2696 to 3402 pupils. The facilities in which we provide them a quality education have also changed, including the reopening of Alden School, the near doubling of space for elementary instruction, and the addition of a performing arts center to support the efforts of our students as well as bring cultural events into our community, and the addition of fields and a gym to provide for our athletes.

We currently have an excellent balance of new and experienced faculty. The blend of expertise and new ideas makes the system vibrant and better able to continue to change and meet the needs of our students. We had a number of excellent teachers who retired at the end of the 2005-2006 year. We wish a healthy and happy retirement to some dedicated members of our school community, Kathleen Dunn (27), Candace Gabbard (36), Phyllis Hernandez (38), Rosemary Horesta (21), Teresa Lister (26), Anne McCooley (38), Stephen Radcliffe (34), Judith Reagan (24), Donna Roine (28), Betsy Schlesinger (29), Patricia Shea (33), Jennifer Sylvia (34) and Charles Vautrain (33). These people have exemplified extraordinary commitment to the children of Duxbury and have earned our gratitude and admiration.

Our faculty and staff are well educated with 71% of the professional staff having achieved Master's level or above. The vast majority of faculty meets the "highly qualified" standard of the No Child Left Behind Act and the rest are working toward it.

Our technology program has gone from a few dozen computers in the early 90's to a system of 1,000 and from a very small number of computer users to a school system where the vast majority use computers on a daily basis for communication, task completion and instruction.

Student scores on all standardized measures are considerably above state average and, I feel confident, will continue to improve with the implementation of revised curriculum focusing on essential questions and standards. Our professional development program is also designed to support increased student achievement.

People often move here from a distance after doing extensive research on our school system because they have decided that this is the best place to raise their children. Duxbury has a higher than state average percentage of school age children and this is not by accident. Many other families move from surrounding towns because they have come to the conclusion that the Duxbury Public Schools is where they want to educate their children.

Duxbury also has a lower than state average per pupil expenditure. In other words, families receive a high quality education for a smaller expenditure.

Taxpayers in Duxbury know what they get for this expenditure. Each year we publish and send to every home an annual report which indicates the objectives set out through the strategic plan, the activities completed, and the progress toward the goals. The strategic plan was developed with extensive input and reflects the values and priorities of the community. Few school systems provide this kind of detailed information on the efforts made to improve student achievement and create a positive climate in the schools.

I would particularly like to mention two of these objectives, which will have great impact on the progress of our students. We have a new literacy initiative which will assist our students in making the connections between reading, writing, speaking and listening and improve their achievement. Most of our professional development for this year is focused on the successful implementation of this literacy program. We have also developed a new model of curriculum leadership. It is a distributive leadership model which focuses

on the talents and knowledge of teachers and is designed to share best practice in our classrooms on a broader basis, to continue to learn from one another, in order to improve student achievement.

The dedication of our faculty, support staff and administrators remains our greatest asset. All those within the school system, are committed to meeting the diverse needs of our student body. We continue to depend on the extensive support provided by families and the community. Individual volunteers, PTA and PTO, Music Promoters, athletic booster groups, Interfaith Council, the Duxbury Education Foundation, local businesses, and many others support our programs and services on a daily basis. School Council members spend many volunteer hours writing the yearly School Improvement Plan and overseeing its fulfillment. I would like to thank my fellow department heads for their support and assistance over the years. The team spirit is alive and well within this group and the townspeople are fortunate to have such dedicated leaders.

As I leave for a new life experience, I would like to express appreciation to all of the wonderful people who have shared with me the responsibility for the success of our school system. I owe a debt of gratitude to so many over the years and I will keep you all in a special place in my heart. Duxbury is an extraordinary place to raise children and the school system is an exceptional place to educate them. I hope that you will all recognize what you have here and work hard to preserve its uniqueness.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Eileen C. Williams  
Superintendent of Schools

## DUXBURY FREE LIBRARY

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Elane Siddall Mutkoski was elected to the Board of Library Trustees in March 2006. Long-time trustee and library advocate, Lynne Walsh, retired after fifteen years of service on the Board. Lynne's long history with the library, her historical knowledge and her dedication will be sorely missed. Fiscal year 2006 saw the implementation of the first year action plan for the Library's long-range plan developed in 2005. A partial restoration of funding that was cut in FY05 allowed the re-hiring of a part-time position and restoration of full-time custodial hours.

Funding voted at Town Meeting in March 2006 allowed the restoration of Sunday afternoon service from Columbus Day to Memorial Day. Residents and staff are pleased with these additional hours, which allowed the staff to begin to restore Sunday afternoon programs.

A new division head position was filled to oversee services to adult users and to coordinate library programming. This resulted in a 23% increase in programs offered this year; these included the very successful Fourth Friday Fringe Film Series and the introduction of a monthly Sunday Salon Series. The Film Series ran from September through June with screenings and discussions led by James Mandrell, library trustee and professor of film at Brandeis University. A generous donation from Hannaford Supermarkets allowed us to upgrade our sound system.

Services and programs for teens and children continued in full swing. The Bookmarks, our weekly teen discussion group, won third prize in the Town's Fourth of July parade for their Indiana Jones float and donated their prize to Relief International. Our staff reached all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes at DMS with book talks and library instruction and continued its collaboration with both the English and Social Studies departments at DHS. The Children's Department provided a Summer Reading program, *By the Sea*, to over 800 children. The participants voted to support dolphins and funds were donated by the Friends of Duxbury Free Library to The International Wildlife Coalition's sea mammal adoption project in Falmouth in honor of their reading.

A highlight of 2006 was the gala held to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Friends of Duxbury Free Library. Special thanks go to co-presidents Brooke McDonough and Donna Ryan, and to event chair, Cathy Dame, for graciously donating many hours and coordinating a host of volunteers to make the event a resounding success. The event raised almost \$20,000 to help support the library's programs and materials purchasing.

The Library is an active member of the Old Colony Library Network, which provides our integrated online library system, telecommunications lines and hardware, and technical support. Director Elaine Winqvist served as Network president in FY06. This was an important year for the Network as a new five-year plan was developed and approved that articulates the Network's mission and goals, and provides a blueprint for network administration.

Continually seeking to meet our users' needs, the Network implemented a new service with Overdrive, Inc., of Cleveland. This allows library users to download audio books in a format for use on PCs and MP3 players; customer response has been very positive and member libraries continue to add titles.

Once again the generosity of Duxbury Free Library, Incorporated, allow the library to meet its state-mandated materials expenditure requirement by supplementing the town's appropriation for books and audio-visual materials. DFL, Inc. also provides all of the museum passes for cardholders' use. This year we added a membership to the Massachusetts Audubon sanctuaries.

Respectfully submitted,  
Elaine Winqvist  
Library Director

Board of Library Trustees:	
Ted Flynn, Chair	Jack Hill
Carl Meier, Vice chair	Nancy Delano
Laney Mutkoski, Secretary	James Mandrell

## REPORT OF THE RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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For the third consecutive fiscal year the Recreation Department has struggled with dwindling resources allotted through the budget process. Although the Department has received the lowest percentage increase of any Town department for the past six fiscal years, we have endeavored to continue to bring Duxbury residents a quality recreation program. We are hopeful that the future will bring a brighter fiscal situation that will allow us to maintain and expand our level of excellence.

### Recreation

The Recreation Department offered 40 year round programs to Duxbury residents in fiscal year 2006. The Recreation Revolving Fund generated revenues of \$278,163 and had expenditures of \$219,303. The Revolving Fund returned \$48,859 to the General Fund which represents a record return from the Revolving Fund to the General Fund. The Recreation Revolving Fund employed 111 part time employees and was also assisted by over 200 community volunteers. Fiscal year 2006 saw 3,000 residents register for our 40 programs.

The Ellison Playground, along with other Town playground areas of Tarkiln and Wadsworth continue to host strong numbers of residents enjoying leisure time activities.

The playing fields in the Town of Duxbury continue to be an extremely popular destination for people in Town. This past year over 6,000 residents used our playing fields. The Town increased its playing field inventory with the opening of the new multi purpose field at Keene Street. This field was constructed with CPA funds and opened in the fall of 2005. The field will host soccer, football, and lacrosse practices and games.

## **Percy Walker Pool**

The Percy Walker Pool was open an average of 123 hours per week in FY 2006. Despite cuts to the expense budget the pool was opened for as many hours as it has been in years past. Budget cuts for this past fiscal year resulted in no capital projects being completed at the Percy Walker Pool for the third year in a row.

Even with the above noted budgetary difficulties, the pool was a popular destination for residents and non-residents alike. Nine area swim teams continue to use our aquatic facility as their base of operations: Duxbury High School boys and girls swim teams, Gators/Aquadux swim team, and Marshfield High School swim team, Marshfield Area Swim Klub, Dolphins, Pembroke Swim Team, South Shore Diving Club and Pembroke High School.

Fees at the Percy Walker Pool were increased by the Board of Selectmen in June of 2006 in an effort to have the facility break even. The pool also saw long time Aquatic Supervisors Tim Gaudreau and Alicia Sematore resign their positions. The pool was utilized by over 100,000 people in FY 2006.

Finally, we continue to enjoy having both Duxbury High School swim teams and the fourth grade swim program at Alden Elementary use the Percy Walker Pool at no charge. We feel that these programs provide a great service to the community at large.

## **North Hill**

This past year North Hill Country Club had approximately 28,000 rounds of play. The property continues to be a popular facility for golf, cross country skiing, running, sledding, and other leisure activities.

Due to budget cuts no capital projects were completed at North Hill for the third year in a row. The operating budget at North Hill is currently at an all time low of \$2,500.

The Town of Duxbury received \$101,000 in rent from the golf course manager and over \$8,000 in taxes, licenses and fees in FY '06.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my staff at the Recreation Department and the Percy Walker Pool for all their help and support during this past year. It is a pleasure to work in such a great community where people can pull together during very difficult economic times. Hopefully better fiscal times are on the horizon.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gordon H. Cushing  
Recreation Director