



CMES NEWS

March 2016

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE:

Despite the cold temperatures outside, we have amazing learning opportunities and extracurricular activities happening inside. February was definitely a month of "sports" at Credit Meadows. We had the start of Junior floor hockey and Intermediate ice hockey, curling, as well as, the Badminton Tournament for Dufferin County. Intermediate and Junior basketball season has begun. Thank you to our Cobra athletes who continue to represent our school so well!

It is hard to believe that March has arrived and spring is just around the corner. This month we are looking forward to our CMES Dance-a-thon, Zumba, Lego Club, Reading Club, Basketball, Tech Club, and Shopkins Club to name a few events that will be happening.

I was able to participate in a "Google Hangout" hosted by one of our Superintendents, Ms. Heaslip, and other Principals in the Dufferin Family of Schools. The "Google Hangout" allowed us to each share information about our school improvement goals and what strategies we are implementing to help close the gap for our students in math and reading. It was wonderful to talk about strategies that teachers are using to help build our students' problem solving skills and engagement level when doing math and reading. It has been impressive to see the learning that is taking place in our building.

The "Three Part Problem Solving" model has been a strategy to help with our math focus. This way of learning helps create a classroom environment where our CMES children collaboratively solve problems with their peers. This process also involves a consolidation piece, where children discuss and compare their process of solving the problem with the class as a whole. The consolidation allows children to examine the efficiency of the strategy used, as well as, the opportunity to learn new strategies to apply in future problems. Lastly, students are given the opportunity for independent practice.

We are also working on reading strategies to help our youngest students who are learning to read, as well as, our students who are struggling with reading.

The walls at CMES share the story of what we are focused on and what we are about as a school community. You can definitely see our math focus when you enter the classrooms and our foyer. You can also see Character Education is extremely important to our school. You can read our story if you look at the walls with anti-bullying messages, to hearing morning announcements with a character education thought or a quote for the day. There are many initiatives where our staff, students, and parents support our outside community, to our community partners working with our students and staff when they visit us.

The staff who work in our building, those who volunteer countless hours, our amazing students and our supportive parents make our school a wonderful place.

On behalf of our staff at Credit Meadows Elementary School, we wish you all a Happy March Break and Easter!
Sincerely,
Ms. Lagundzija-deFreitas



CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

March 1	Lions Club Speech Competition, Grades 6-8
March 2	Pizza Day
March 4	Popcorn Day
March 7	School Council Mtg @ 7PM
March 7-10	CMES Book Fair
March 9	Pita Pit Day & Dance-a-thon
March 11	Cookie Day
March 14-18	March Break
March 22	Grad Photos Grade 8s & Senior Kindergarten
March 23	Pasta Day
March 24	Smoothie Day (NOT MARCH 25TH)
March 24 -May12	Family Transition Place, Grade 6
March 25-28	Easter Break— (Good Friday and Easter Monday)
March 30	Hot Dog Day

REMINDER:

March 14 -18th - March Break
March 25 -28th—Easter
No school for students

Happy Holidays!



School Council Meeting

Our next CMES School Council meeting will be on Monday, March 7, 2016 at 7:00 PM.

All CMES parents are welcomed to attend!

UGDSB & CMES NEWS

As always, please check the UGDSB website and our CMES website for the latest information and news happening in our Board and school.



The Library Learning Commons News

February has been a busy time at the CMES Library Learning Commons. Lunch hours and breaks find our students engaged in a variety of extracurricular activities. Students from grade 2 and up have enjoyed the opportunity to try their hand at computer coding. Many thanks to some of our older students who volunteer their time to help the younger students. Members of the Scratch club meet once or twice during the week designing their own computer games. Budding film artists have been experimenting with stop animation equipment which has been on loan from Terry James Resource Library. Stay tuned for our next Maker Space activity coming after March Break. Students can be found blogging, conferencing or just reading in a cozy chair.

Our Forest of Reading clubs are in full swing with many participants in each of the three divisions. Voting for their favourite books will take place at the end of April.

Mark your calendar for our Scholastic Book Fair, March 7th - 10th. It will be open daily until 4:00pm. Here is your chance to stock up on some great reading for the March Break. Stay tuned for our 2 for 1 sale which will be coming in June.

As you can tell, the Library Learning Commons has been a beehive of activity!

Finally, with mixed emotions, I would like to announce that at the end of March I will be retiring from my teaching career. Credit Meadows has been my home for the past 20 years, 10 years teaching grades 4, 5 and 6 and 10 years in the library. It has been an honour and a privilege to have worked in such a wonderful community. I know I will miss "my little chickadees" and the ladies and gentlemen in the older grades, but it is time to pass the torch.

Thank you for your support over the years. Happy Reading and remember, Credit Meadows Rocks!
Kim Gammage

Farwell Ms. Gammage



Dear Ms. Gammage,

The CMES Team and our amazing students want to thank you for all your good work at CMES in your role as teacher and librarian. We appreciate your dedication to your students in always striving to create a positive and productive learning environment. We want to thank you for helping transform the library in to our new Learning Commons. We wish you all the best in your retirement and know that you will enjoy your time with your family and friends.

The CMES Team and Students

March's Environmental Theme: REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE



The environmental theme for this month is not a new one. We are talking about Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. These are the 3 R's of environmental stewardship and by practicing them we will help planet Earth. Did you know all of them are not created equal? The best one of the three is: Reduce.

Reduce means to use less of something. This is the best of the 3 R's because we don't even use our natural resources to begin with! What could we use less of? There are many things you can think of. Use less water, or use less paper, or – very important - buy less 'stuff'.

Recycle is critical if we want to keep things out of the landfill. More and more items are starting to be recycled, so be responsible and put them in the proper containers provided. If you don't, they end up in the regular garbage and harm nature by forcing us to create more garbage dumps that pollute our planet. We also need to make sure toxic items like paint and batteries don't end up in the garbage, but are brought to the hazardous waste depot. And never throw out your old smart phone. Take it back to your cell phone company for recycling. It contains minerals that are being mined in areas that are destroying precious habitats.



The Möbius loop is the universally recognized recycling symbol. It consists of those 3 circular arrows. We can put compostable items into our organic bins, like food scraps including fruit & vegetables, dairy, meat, breads, as well as paper tissues and paper towels. We can recycle containers including plastics, glass, metals and tetra paks and milk cartons. And we can also recycle paper, boxboard like Kleenex boxes, and cardboard. So DO NOT throw these items into the garbage at home or the garbage containers here at school. Find the right recycling bin. Let these items be turned into something new again!

Slogan of
*Don't trash
cycle!*



the month:
*our future! Re-
cycle!*

Engaging Your Child in Mathematics At Home!



As parents we have the wonderful opportunity and responsibility for nurturing our children's growth. Parents play a key role in the physical, emotional, and intellectual development of their child. As parents we can usually find time to read a story to our children, thereby instilling a love of literature, but we are often at a loss as to how to instill a love and appreciation for mathematics.

Like reading, mathematics is a subject that is indeed necessary for functioning adequately in society. More than that, mathematics is a subject that should be more enjoyable than it is perceived to be. Parents' attitudes towards mathematics has an impact on their children's attitudes. Children whose parents show an interest in and enthusiasm for mathematics around the home will be more likely to develop that enthusiasm themselves.

Activities in the Home

If you have dice, playing cards, and a bit of time...oh the "number sense" fun you can have.

1. Work on Place Value-use a grade appropriate number of dice and use the numbers rolled as digits to "make the biggest number you can, make the smallest number you can, make a number close to 100" etc.
2. Work on Number Sense-use 2 die to add numbers together....to make it harder, you can use the 2 die to subtract, and multiply.
3. War-Use a deck of cards to compare numbers. Each person flips their cards at the same time, the person with the



Talking About Mental Health – Anger and Calm March 2016

When one of my children was about 8 years old, he had a lot of anger in him. He would shout, slam things, throw things, break things and stomp about. When he got very angry, it was upsetting for all of us, but particularly for him. He did not like the way he felt when was angry, but it seemed to come on so fast. He would quickly feel out of control and then feel upset afterward about what had happened. So, when he was calm, we talked about his anger. We drew pictures and read stories about dealing with anger. And he told me “Mom, when I am angry, don’t talk to me, just let me go to my room and be angry, when I feel less angry I will talk to you”. So the next time, he was angry and started yelling, I started to say “What is making you so angry?”, but he stopped me and said “Mom, you promised you wouldn’t talk to me when I am angry and would let me just go to my room”. It was hard not to try to solve the problem, but I let him just go to his room and yell and throw things. After about 30 minutes, he came down and we talked about what was up. He knew he did not like being angry and needed to gain some more skills to be able to deal with his anger. He decided he wanted to do meditation to help with his anger, which he did, and over time, it helped a lot.

We all get angry. Different things set off different people. We all have our pet peeves and our easy triggers. Often our child/youth know how easy some of our buttons are to push. When our child/youth gets angry, it is hard not to get upset and respond in anger. But we all know that does not usually result in the best outcome. Here are some tips for dealing with anger in your child/youth and yourself.

- Don’t respond to anger with anger. It is hard not to, but yelling at our child/youth when they get angry makes everyone feel out of control and increases the anger. No one likes the feeling of being out of control. The best thing you can do is remain calm and not feed the fire of the anger. Have compassion for your child and how they are feeling.
- Don’t try to reason with an angry person. When someone is angry, they are not able to process what you are saying. Their brain space and energy is taken up by the anger and they don’t have much space left to think, process and reason. Instead, wait to have the conversation until you have both calmed down.
- Pay attention to how you are reacting. When dealing with someone who is angry, often our heart rate increase and the adrenaline begins to pump. The trick is for you to have already practiced how to stay calm, so when you are in these challenging situations, you know how to calm yourself. By staying calm, you are not engaging in a power struggle, which escalates the anger.
- Allow your child/youth time to be angry. Allow them a safe place to let off steam. So long as they are not hurting themselves or others, let them be angry and safely calm down. It also teaches them that feeling angry is OK and we can learn how to process our anger in a safe way.
- Give consequences for the behaviour, not the emotion. Teach your child/youth that whatever they feel is OK and it is OK to feel frustrated and angry. However, there are still rules and consequences. Don’t negotiate or change the rules when trying to get an angry child to calm down. In the moment, the focus is on calming strategies. After the child is calm, then have a discussion of safe ways to express anger.
- Take a break. For most of us, we need a break from the person and situation, so allow your child to take a break. This helps our kids to calm down and also allows ourselves to calm down as well.
- Make a plan. When everyone is calm, talk with your child/youth about what helps them stay calm and what calms them down when they are upset. Create a plan of what things the child/youth finds calming and empower them to use those strategies. It could be music, breathing exercises, relaxation exercises, physical activity, drawing or just being on their own for a bit. Whatever works for them is included in the plan. Calming strategies that a child/youth will use when angry need to be taught and practiced regularly, so they can be used when the situation arises. Include strategies to keep calm and decrease frustration and then what to do when they feels really angry. Having a plan makes you and your child/youth feel like you have some control over the anger. The child/youth knows that the anger does not control them, because they know what to do when it happens.
- Role model appropriate responses to anger. Show your child/youth how you deal with anger. You can say things such as “I am getting frustrated, so I am going to take a break” or “I can’t talk to you right now, because I am upset. I am going to calm down then we can talk”. Admitting that you are angry and need to calm down is not a weakness. It takes strength to talk about your feelings. You are teaching your children the lesson that it is good to talk about your feelings and that we can manage our anger by using our coping skills.

Here is a link to a great video of kids explaining what it feels like to be angry and how breathing helps:
Just Breathe. by Julie Bayer Salzman & Josh Salzman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVA2N6tX2cg>

Dr. Lynn Woodford is the Mental Health and Addiction Lead for Upper Grand District School Board

Follow me on twitter: @drlynnwoodford

Talking About Mental Health – March 2016

Kids Do Well If They Can - Collaborative Proactive Solutions

In our schools we use a positive supportive approach with all our students. One such approach that we follow in our schools is Collaborative Proactive Solutions (CPS). This is a very effective way to help children and youth who are struggling by working with them to building skills and resources.

Dr. Ross Greene, who developed Collaborative Proactive Solutions, believes that **Kids Do Well If They Can**. If they are not doing well it is because they're lacking the skills not to be challenging. If they had the skills, they wouldn't be challenging. Dr. Greene also stresses that **Doing well is always preferable to not doing well** (*if a kid has the skills to do well in the first place*).

When children and youth are faced with challenges that are too much for their skills and resources, they often engage in challenging behaviour because they do not have the skills to engage in positive behaviour.

Challenging behavior in children and youth is best understood as the result of lagging skills (in the terms of flexibility/adaptability, frustration tolerance, and problem solving) rather than as the result of lack of motivation on the child/youth's part. And second, the best way to reduce challenging behaviour is by working together with the child/youth – collaborating – to solve the problems setting them in motion in the first place.

Dr. Greene's Collaborative Proactive Solutions is a very successful approach for children and youth presenting with a variety of challenging behaviours, which is why we use this approach in our schools.

Dr. Greene also has many tips for parents, so they can use Collaborative Proactive Solutions at home. If you are interested in learning more, please see his website:

<http://www.livesinthebalance.org/parents-families>

Information for this article has been taken from Dr. Ross Greene's website.

Dr. Lynn Woodford, Psychologist, is the Mental Health and Addiction Lead for Upper Grand District School Board
Follow me on twitter: @drlynnwoodford

Transition Plans

While it may feel like it is early in the year to think about moving on to the next school year, plans are underway to ensure that students have a successful transition in September. For students that are changing schools, visits may have already begun. Specific transition plans are often particularly important for students with an Individual Education Plan and therefore are a required component of any IEP. For many students, the support provided to the whole class is all they need to have a successful transition, however other students may need more specific goals and support to help them deal with a variety of changes throughout the day.

Common transitions that can be addressed on a transition plan include:

- entry to school
- move to a new school or new grade/teacher
- transition to post-secondary: workplace, apprenticeship, college, university, community etc.
- in school transitions could include: starting/stopping activities, leaving the classroom, going to recess/gym, going on field trips

As a parent, you can play an important role in transition planning for your child by:

- working together with school staff to discuss the transition goals
- providing visits to the new school
- talking about the transition in a positive way
- looking at pictures of the new teachers and school building
- reading social stories to give your child the reassurance they need



[UGDSB invites parents to learn about classroom technology at 'Digital Saturday](#)

The Upper Grand District School Board is hosting an open house featuring displays and workshops on how students are using technology to learn. "Digital Saturday" takes place on March 5, 2016, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Westminster Woods Public School in Guelph.

"In the last few years there has been exponential growth in the use of technological tools and resources in Upper Grand schools," said Brent McDonald, Superintendent of Education responsible for Information Technology. "Students don't stop using what they're learning as soon as the bell rings at the end of the day. A good number of these resources are available 24/7, so they're used at home and school."

A presentation on technology in the classroom to the board's Parent Involvement Committee was the inspiration for the idea of hosting a technology open house for all parents.

"We thought a Saturday morning would be the best time for both parents to come out and see what we're doing," said McDonald. "Students can come too."

Digital Saturday will be an opportunity to explore and learn about:

- New technologies in the classroom like Chromebooks, UGCloud
- Assistive technologies to support all learners including Kurzweil and Read&Write for Google
- Robotics and coding and virtual reality in the classroom demonstrations

Online digital resources for assisting student learning such as UG2GO, UGCloud and Homework Help.

There will be lots of opportunities for interaction and co-learning. Older children (8 and up) may find the display tables and workshops informative and engaging.

We hope to see you there as partners in education!

Event details:

- **DATE:** Saturday March 5, 2016
- **TIME:** 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Open house closes at 12 p.m.

LOCATION: Westminster Woods Public School, 140 Goodwin Drive, Guelph

For more information:

Heather Loney, Communications and Community Engagement Officer

519-822-4420 ext.725

heather.loney@ugdsb.on.ca