

JOHN BLACK PUBLIC SCHOOL

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Scott Preston, Principal

February 2017

Belinda Norris, Office Coordinator

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

We've had quite a busy month at school since our return from the Christmas break. Sledge hockey and curling for Junior (Grade 4-6) and Intermediate (Grade 7-8) students has been going on for the last weeks of January and will continue into February. Both have been very popular with students. The sledge hockey program has given us an opportunity to introduce an accessible athletic activity to all students regardless of abilities. At this time it is in the introduction and awareness phase but it has been proven to be very popular with students and I expect we'll see it develop into a mainstream athletic competition in the future. In addition to being challenging and a lot of fun for students the sport also fits in with our school's and the Board's equity and inclusion strategies. We also have two ski trips coming up as part of our winter phys. ed. program. On January 31 the Juniors are going to Mansfield for cross country skiing and on February 22 our Intermediate students will be going to Mansfield for downhill skiing.

Teachers have been gathering assessment and evaluation data in preparation for writing term 1 report cards. This Friday's P.A. is designated by the Ministry of Education for the purpose of working on the reports which will be going home on February 16th.

Teachers have also been working on our school improvement plan since the Fall. The plan has pulled together goals and targeted strategies developed by division teams (Primary/Junior/Intermediate) and the Directions Team. This is a working document which will provide focus for school improvement initiatives over the next year. This plan will cover the period from this January to January 2018.

PLAYGROUND UPDATE

We have great news to share with all our John Black families. Through the generous donations of our families and community partners and our Parent Council we have raised over \$20,000 for our playground, just since September! We are in the process of ordering and arranging for the installation of our first climber this Spring. This climber will be installed on the Primary playground. Our goal is to install this Primary climber, a Junior climber and benches and other upgrades for the Intermediate area. Our total anticipated cost for all three areas is \$50,000. The school is contributing funds and the John Black Parent Council is also supporting this project. Watch for our new Primary climber in the Spring and information coming home over the remainder of the school year regarding upcoming events and fundraisers aimed at supporting our goal.

SLED-A-THON FOR THE PLAYGROUND

Thursday, February 16th, weather and snow conditions permitting, will be a day of sledding fun at John Black Public School. Sleds will be provided and throughout the day classes will take turns sledding on our school yard hills. Each student in the class that raises the most money to support our new playground will get to take home one of the orange torpedo sleds at the end of the day. The class that gets the most runs down the hill in their allotted time will win a movie and pop corn party. Please watch for pledge sheets coming home.



Parent Council Corner

We all hope you had a safe and happy holiday season and welcome to the New Year. Parent Council has been busy planning the rest of the 2017.

E-mail List

Do you want to receive Parent Council meeting agendas and minutes? Do you want to know about events and requests for help and other information that we feel is pertinent? If you would like to be added to this list to receive information please forward us your name and e-mail address to: sc.johnblack@ugdsb.on.ca.

Next Meeting

The next Parent Council meeting is **Tuesday, February 28 at 6:30 p.m.** at the School. Please join us... Everyone is welcome. If you have any questions or comments please e-mail us at: sc.johnblack@ugdsb.on.ca.

The meetings are an opportunity to come together, discuss school events and receive a Principal's update for the school. We hope you will join us in some capacity this year to help us improve our children's lives and our John Black Community!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM WELLINGTON –DUFFERIN-GUELPH

PUBLIC HEALTH: Your Child's Immunization During a Disease Outbreak.

For school attendance, parents are required by law to provide proof of their child's Immunization to Public Health. To find out what vaccines are required and if your child's immunization records are up-to-date, please call 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4395. You can also book an appointment for your child's immunization at any Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health location.

If you've chosen not to immunize your child, you must have a notarized statement of medical exemption or a statement of conscious or religious belief on file with Public Health. Please contact Public Health to arrange for your child's exemption to be on file if you have not already done so.

If the Medical Officer of Health declared an outbreak of a disease in your child's school and his/her Immunization record is not up to date with public Health, or you have an exemption on file, your child will not be allowed to attend school for the entire duration of the outbreak.

DRESSING FOR OUTSIDE

We have not had a very cold winter so far this year, but we still could experience severe wind chill and snow conditions.

Each day, weather permitting, our students go outside twice for up to 25 minutes at recess. If your child is well enough to come to school, he or she is expected to go outside for recess as it is healthier to get fresh air and exercise. There are exceptions for injury or at a doctor's request, but please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for recesses and the trip to and from school and understand that we do not have the facilities nor personnel to care for ill children.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Feb. 16	Report cards go home
Feb. 20	FAMILY DAY HOLIDAY
Feb. 28	School Council, 6:30
March 13-17	MARCH BREAK
April 4	School Council, 6:30
April 14	GOOD FRIDAY
April 17	EASTER MONDAY
April 28	P.A. Day
May 16	School Council, 6:30
May 22	Victoria Day Holiday
May 23	VICTORIA DAY HOLIDAY
June 6	School Council, 6:30
June 9	P.A. day.
June 15	School Council Spring Fete
June 27	Report Cards go home Grade 8 Graduation
June 29	Last Day of School

Engaging Your Child in Science 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 Science. Science encourages problem solving skills, curiosity and questioning, creative and critical thinking, observational skills and reinforces both literacy and math skills...and it's FUN! Here are some ideas for fostering Scientific skills in your children.

6 Tips to foster Scientific Thinking at Home

1-See science everywhere. Parents can take opportunities to ask "What would happen if ...?" questions or present brainteasers to encourage children to be curious and seek out answers. Children need to know that science isn't just a subject, but it is a way of understanding the world around us.

2-Lead family discussions on science-related topics.

Dinnertime might be an ideal time for your family to have discussions about news stories that are science based, like space shuttle missions, severe weather conditions, or new medical breakthroughs. Over time, children will develop a better understanding of science and how it affects many facets of our lives. Movies and TV shows with science-related storylines are also great topics for discussion.

3-Encourage girls and boys equally.

Many girls are left out of challenging activities simply because of their gender. Be aware that both girls and boys need to be encouraged and exposed to a variety of subjects at a very early age.

4-Do science together.

Children, especially elementary-age children, learn better by investigating and experimenting. Simple investigations done together in the home can bolster what your child is learning in the classroom. Check with your child's teacher on what your child is currently learning in class and what activities you can explore at home.

5-Connect science with a family vacation.

Family vacations are a great way to explore science. It could be a hiking trip where you explore nature or a discussion on tides during a beach vacation.

6-Show excitement for Science!

Reference:

"NSTA Science Matters: Tips for Busy Parents - National Science" <http://www.nsta.org/sciencematters/tips.aspx>.

Monthly Environmental Activities to help celebrate our planet February 2nd is National Sweater Day! It is vital to teach our children to respect and take care of the environment.

Celebrate International Sweater Day on February 2nd!

"National Sweater Day is a fun way to learn about the importance of saving energy and to inspire you to use less heat all winter. Heating accounts for 80% of residential energy use in Canada and is a significant source of emissions. If all Canadians lowered their thermostats by just 2 degrees Celsius this winter, it would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 4 megatons – that's equivalent to shutting down a 600 megawatt coal-fired power station or taking nearly 700,000 cars off the road!" http://www.wwf.ca/events/sweater_day/

"National Sweater Day is about valuing energy. It's a chance to think differently about how we use energy, where our energy comes from and how we can play an important role in fighting climate change by using energy wisely, not wastefully. It is designed to help raise awareness about renewable energy and change behaviours around energy consumption in Canada." -- World Wildlife Fund Canada

Ideas for your family to celebrate Sweater Day!

- **Turn down your thermostat and wear a sweater!**
- **Ask your children to brainstorm with you about ways to save energy at home. Make a pledge to implement as many as you can.**
- **Research the differences between climate and weather. Ask your child to characterize some different climate types (polar, tropical, coastal, etc.).**
- **Read a children's book on conservation such as: Why Should I Save Energy? by Jen Green. Encourage lots of discussion and questions.**
- **Valentine's Day is just around the corner - use recycled materials to create your cards this year!**