Eramosa Public School

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Newsletter

Katrina Plazek, January 2017 - Issue 5 Sheri MacKenzie,

Principal Office Co-Ordinator

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL’S DESK…

Sending our very best wishes to all of you for a happy, festive holiday season and break! We will look forward to seeing everyone back well rested and ready for learning on January 9th, 2017. May your family enjoy peace, love and laughter. We want to send our best wishes to Mlle McLeod, who has accepted a full time position in Guelph. We will miss you!

Happy holidays to all, from the Staff at Eramosa

## AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR VISIT

On January 25th we are very excited to welcome Janet Wilson, author and illustrator, who will be sharing her “Inspiring Young Hearts and Minds” presentation based on her award winning series of non-fiction books that cover social, environmental and indigenous topics. Her presentation is subsidized in part by Writer’s Union. Janet writes that our students will be hearing true stories of young activists, will be introduced to the challenges that children experience around the world and will be encouraged to be responsible local and global citizens and leaders of the earth. Janet Wilson’s website can be visited at [www.janetwilson.ca](http://www.janetwilson.ca). The following titles have been ordered for our school and will be in the library very soon!

Shannen and the Dream for the School

Our Heroes: How Kids are Making a Difference

Our Rights: How Kids are Changing the World

Our Earth: How Kids are Saving the Planet

One Peace: True Stories of Young Activists

Severn and the Day She Silenced the World

## School Cash On-Line – Starting in January 2017

Starting in January 2017, Eramosa School is excited to start using **School Cash Online** for fieldtrip costs and the yearbook payments. School Cash On-line is a convenient, secure, on-line parent portal that can be used to pay for school activity fees. Five key benefits of using this portal are that it is convenient (you can make payments in your home 24/7), easy to use (fill a shopping cart and check out), safe (no need to send cash or cheques), secure (the website is protected, encrypted and personal information is not shared with any third party and saves time (take less than 5 minutes to register). Payment can be made with a Credit Card, with an eCheque or by loading cash into myWallet. Watch for more information coming home in January.

## Inclement Weather and Buses – Important Update

The Transportation Department is no longer sending out messages to parents via phone to notify families when a bus is cancelled due to inclement weather.

**This year, families and staff have two ways of knowing if a bus is cancelled, starting at approximately 6:30 in the morning. Eramosa PS is in the blue card division.**

#1. Visit [**www.stwdsts.ca**](http://www.stwdsts.ca) (You can visit the site earlier and subscribe for an email notification.)

#2. Visit the Transportation Twitter feed **@stwdsts.**

## Community Hours for High School Students through East Wellington Community Services

If you know of a high school student looking to start collecting their volunteer hours (starting the summer before grade 9), please contact Barb Cascadden, Manager of Volunteer and Community Engagement. She can be reached at 519-856-2113 or [barb.c@ew-cs.com](mailto:barb.c@ew-cs.com). The East Wellington Community Services group is where we donate our food bank collections to throughout the year.

## New to You

The East Wellington Community Services also has a New to You store located at 107 Harris Street in Rockwood. They accept donations of gently used clothing, books and accessories. It is a great place to find reasonably priced clothing and all proceeds go right back into EWCS programs that make our community a better place. They are open 10:00 - 4:00 pm, Monday to Friday.

## East Wellington Community Services MITTEN & Food Drive

A huge thank you for your generous donations to the food drive. Together our school community has helped many people to be able to provide nutritious food and warm hands for their families. Although we live in a relatively affluent society compared to the rest of the world, we know that there are children in our community who go to bed hungry sometimes and who wonder where their next meal will come from. Thanks for making a difference in the lives of our neighbours.

## CSA approved Hockey Helmets for Ice Skating on February 24 and March 3, 2017

This is another reminder that it will be a mandatory requirement for **all** people skating (students, staff and volunteers) to wear a CSA approved Hockey Helmet while skating on the ice. We have booked our ice pads. We hope to have many parents/guardians join us, and this is a new requirement for many of us. Please ask Santa to bring one for Christmas or borrow one from your neighbor so we can all have fun!

## Bus Cancellations – Notification

Please ensure that you register for email notification of bussing information for your child (school closures, bus delays, etc.) at <https://www.findmyschool.ca/Cancellations.aspx>. Click on Delays and Cancellations and click subscribe to enter your email.

Our AIZAN voice messaging system will be used to notify families when the Upper Grand District School Board Transportation consortium makes the decision to cancel buses to Eramosa PS, when possible. If the phone lines, power lines or internet system is down the system will not function. This is an additional notification. Listening to CJOY or checking the UGDSB website are also great ways to find out about current bussing information.

## Inclement Weather Notification

The school board has new information on its website regarding inclement weather.

This document contains important information on school bus cancellations, school closures due to severe weather and extreme cold temperatures.

You can read the full document at [www.ugdsb.on.ca/inclementweather/](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/inclementweather/)

The document also contains information on the risks of frostbite in extreme cold temperatures. Frostbite can happen within minutes of skin being exposed to extreme cold temperatures. Please ensure your children are dressed properly for frigid temperatures.

## Extra Socks and Mitts and Supplies

When we return in January, we are sure to have more snow and cold weather. Children spend a lot of time outdoors here at Eramosa. If you can pack an extra pair of socks and mitts, it will make the day more comfortable if a change needs to be made. Our kindies could use a full set of clothing in case of an accident. This is a great time to check school supplies, laces and whether shoes still fit!

## Kindergarten Registration

Registration for full day Kindergarten will take place January 9th – 27th, 2017. If your child is 4 years of age by December 31st, 2017 (s)he is eligible to register for JK (Junior Kindergarten). If your child is 5 years of age by December 31st, 2017 s(he) is eligible to register for SK (Senior Kindergarten). If you have a neighbour with children entering Kindergarten for the first time, would you please pass this information along to them!

## Recycle Your Pop Tabs, MARKERS and Used Batteries after the Holiday

Please remember to send in your pop tabs, old markers and old batteries to the school where we can recycle them. The pop tabs help raise money to purchase wheelchairs. The battery recycling program keeps toxic materials out of the regular landfill.

## Food Program Changes

If you wish to make any changes to your child(ren)’s food program order, please write a note to Ms. MacKenzie in the office advising of the changes. Changes will be effective February 1st onward.



## Avoid school suspension by keeping immunization records up-to-date!

Student’s immunization records must be provided to Public Health in order to attend school. In the next few weeks, Public Health will be sending notices to students with incomplete immunization records. Anyone who gets a notice should contact their family doctor so they can update their vaccines, and then report their new vaccines to Public Health.

Report every vaccine to Public Health using one of the following methods:

* Online: Fill in the form at www.immunizewdg.ca
* Email: Send a photo of the immunization record to vaccine.records@wdgpublichealth.ca
* Call: 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4396

If a student is not getting vaccinated for medical reasons, reasons of conscience or religious beliefs, an exemption form must be submitted to Public Health. The forms are available at www.wdgpublichealth.ca.

Public Health is committed to helping students update their vaccination records so they can avoid suspension from school.

## What is the Special Education Advisory Committee?

Every school district is required to have a **S**pecial **E**ducation **A**dvisory **C**ommittee (SEAC).

SEAC is a broad-based, educationally focused committee that meets monthly to engage in a variety of discussions all related to the educational programs for students with special needs. These meetings are open to the public and are held on the second Wednesday of each month throughout the school year.  Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Upper Grand District School Board office in Guelph.

At SEAC meetings, the representative members from different organizations (ABC - Association for Bright Children, Autism Ontario Wellington Chapter, FASD-Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, Integration Action for Inclusion in Education and Community (Ontario), Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County, Parents for Children’s Mental Health, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children) share knowledge about their agency programs with the committee. These community members then take back points of information about the Board’s educational programs to the agencies that they represent. In addition, SEAC makes recommendations to the board with respect to any matters affecting the establishment, development, and delivery of Special Education programs and services for exceptional students within the board. The SEAC committee also participates in the board’s annual review of the Special Education Plan and participates in the board’s annual budget process as it relates to Special Education.

For further information about SEAC or Special Education Programs in the Upper Grand District School Board please call the Program Department at 519-941-6191 ext. 254.

Talking About Mental Health January 2017 – Nature and Mental Health

## TALKING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Getting outside makes such a difference to how we all are doing inside. Spending time in nature improves our mental health and well-being. It is a simple way to add some much needed down time from screens. Adding some time in nature is having some much deserved peace and quiet in our busy lives.

If you want your family:

* To be less stressed
* To be happier
* To be more resilient
* To feel better about themselves
* To have increased attention
* To have a better ability to learn

Then GO OUTSIDE! Take your kids outside! Enjoy and be part of nature.

One study showed that even 5 minutes in nature improves our mood. 5 minutes! We all can take 5 minutes (or more if have it) to go outside and enjoy nature.

Go for a walk or a ski or a skate or a run. Head for the woods. Go birdwatching. Follow tracks in the snow. Watch the sunrise or the sunset. Watch the clouds drift by. Visit a river or lake or pond. Listen for all the sounds of nature. Take in the smells. Notice all the colours and textures. Notice the light as the days get longer.

If you are not sure where to go, check out the links below for lots of great parks in our area.

<http://guelph.ca/living/recreation/parks/>

<http://www.wellington.ca/en/discover/trailsandforests.asp?hdnContent>=

<https://www.grandriver.ca/en/grand-river-parks.aspx>

<http://headwaters.ca/experience/parks-conservation-areas/>

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum/>

Have a mentally healthy 2017!

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

*Follow me on Twitter @drlynnwoodford.*

## Creative Thinking

The Ministry of Education recently released a document entitled *21st Century Competencies* that outlines four key competencies. They include critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and **creativity and innovation**. The document outlines how these key competencies impact learning in the classroom, in the world, and later in life in careers.

Looking for some ideas to inspire creativity at home? Consider these invitations to create and innovate:

1. Read picture books that promote creative thinking with everyday materials such as Not a Box or Not a Stick by Antoinette Portis. Then collect some sticks or a few boxes and let your child’s imagination run wild!
2. Explore the idea of provocations at home. A provocation is simply putting materials or items together that provoke thinking and curiosity. It could be as simple as a basket of unusual household items (old vinyl records, a variety of nuts and bolts, open-ended building materials, some paper and writing materials, etc.) and asking your child what they might be able to do with these items. Offering similar materials over a period of time allows children to challenge themselves to come up with even more creative ideas using the same things.
3. Offer your child a variety of open-ended art materials (markers, watercolours, plasticine, buttons and loose parts, etc.) to allow them to do the creative thinking and planning instead of pre-planned crafts.
4. Together create a dance routine to a current song, or even better, use an oldie but a goodie. Inspire your child to create dance moves for the verses, and then change up the moves in the chorus. Engaged in the fun of being innovative; your child will be creating *dance phrases* and exploring *musical form* by doing this!
5. Re-purpose containers or small boxes and create a scavenger hunt outside in the snow. Place found objects in the containers/boxes as clues that your child needs to piece together. By placing the containers/boxes ahead of time as a scavenger hunt, you will have created a large scale “provocation” that can lead to imaginative play afterwards. Use the idea of discovering artifacts in the outside environment as an invitation to create a map of your backyard, or a forested area near your house. Build on this idea...and make new scavenger hunts and maps as an inquisitive way to learn about your home and local environment together.

*“Awareness of one’s inner feelings and thoughts is a prerequisite to making art. Inspiration and innovative thinking spring from this awareness and provide us with new answers and solutions, and new questions to pursue”* (The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: The Arts, p.19).

Monthly Environmental Activities to help celebrate our planet

January 5th is National Bird Day!

***It is vital to teach our children to respect and take care of the environment.***

# Celebrate the 15th Annual National Bird Day on January 5th!

*“Nearly 12 percent of the world's 9,800 bird species may face extinction within the next century, including nearly one-third of the world's 330 parrot species. The survival and well-being of the world's birds depends upon public education and support for conservation”.*

*“National Bird Day is on January 5 each year, as it's scheduled to coincide with the end of the annual Christmas Bird Count. This count lasts three weeks and is the longest running citizen science survey in the world that helps to monitor the health of our nation’s birds.”*

[*http://www.nationalbirdday.com/index.php*](http://www.nationalbirdday.com/index.php)

# Activities to get your kids involved on National Bird Day!

* Sharpen your senses and take a bird call quiz! *“Fun for fledgling birders and experts alike.”* <http://www.nationalbirdday.com/g_birdquiz.php>
* Design a poster for National Bird day that you can put up on the fridge at home.
* Spend the day learning about endangered bird species and find out what you can do to help to keep all birds safe, like Audubons “10 Things You Can Do For Birds”. <http://www.audubon.org/magazine/march-april-2013/10-things-you-can-do-birds>
* Go out and count how many birds you can spot and learn to identify the common birds in your neighbourhood. You can use a bird identification guide such as the National Geographic online backyard bird identifier tool. <http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/birding/backyard-bird-identifier/>
* Design and make bird feeders that you can put up to help feed the birds in your area.

<http://frogsandsnailsandpuppydogtail.com/10-bird-feeders-kids-love-to-make/>

