

May-June 2018 Newsletter

(The final Newsletter of the year will be e-mailed at the end of June)

Aladdin!

Please join us for this year's musical production of Aladdin

May 15th and 16th at 7 pm in the school gym

Doors open at 6:30

Dress Rehearsals are May 15th and 16th at 11:15

Parent Council would like to thank everyone who supported our Soccer-a-thon. The kids really enjoyed it!

Our last council meeting of the year will be Tuesday May 29th at 7pm. It's never too late to attend!

Parents often have questions about EQAO. Following, is a simple explanation of the Education Quality and Accountability Office and the test. If you would like more information, please visit the EQAO website <http://www.eqao.com/Pages/launch.aspx>.

The **Education Quality and Accountability Office** (EQAO) is an arm's-length crown agency of the Government of Ontario. It was legislated into creation in 1996 in response to recommendations made by the Royal Commission on Learning in February 1995. EQAO is governed by a board of directors appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. million CDN. The purpose of EQAO tests is to ensure that there is accountability between school boards and schools in the publicly funded system in Ontario. Educational accountability is important to three key stakeholders: taxpayers, elected officials, and teachers. By providing these yearly standardized tests, the Ministry of Education aims to increase the quality of education in Ontario, while also using the tests to make plans for future improvement. EQAO tests are intended to measure the students' ability to:

- Make sense of what they read in different kinds of texts
- Express their thoughts in writing using appropriate grammar, spelling and punctuation
- use appropriate math skills to solve problems

EQAO vs Classroom tests.

It is important to note that EQAO tests have different goals and intentions than normal classroom evaluations. These tests are not the same, but when considering the EQAO test results along with the classroom results, they can provide a meaningful picture of the students' overall learning.

Classroom evaluations:

- measure how well students have learned specific information
- provide quick results teachers can use to modify teaching strategies
- may have subjective components, based on the teacher's knowledge of each student
- provide results that may not be comparable across the school, board or province

EQAO tests:

- measure students' cumulative knowledge and skills in relation to a provincial standard
- are given at key stages of students' education
- are administered, scored and reported on in a consistent and objective manner and
- provide results that are comparable across the school, board, and province from year to year

Information for parents

EQAO tests are based on The Ontario Curriculum, which is the foundation for what is taught in classrooms every day. Therefore, students should not need to study or do extra preparation for

the test. All of the information in the test will have been covered by the classroom teacher throughout the entire school year. The best way for parents to support their children in writing the test is simply to be supportive and play an active role in their children's learning every day of the school year. This support includes being aware of what the students are learning, being in constant communication with the classroom teacher about the student's learning development and needs, and providing a welcoming environment at home where students are able to complete any homework or assignments they may have. An additional way that parents can help students in preparing for the test is to visit the EQAO website (eqao.com) in order to find links explaining the format and sample test items, a result guide that explains how to interpret the marks, as well as a parent bulletin regarding the test. The school boards also provide parents with information sessions regarding the tests, to ensure that the parents are fully aware of the purpose, format and implementation of the test.

Parent Requests for Class Placements

Teachers will soon be sitting together with me in teams to build classes for next year. Making a request for a specific class placement for your child (-ren) is an **extraordinary** step which must be supported by specific and detailed reasons. If you are going to make a request please outline in detail the **extraordinary circumstances and needs** of your child. This must be done in writing and addressed directly to the Principal.

Please note that when school staff draft class lists a variety of factors are taken into consideration and some of these are as follows:

- *total number of students
- *balance of male/female
- *balance of ability
- *number of exceptional students and programming
- *positive and negative combinations of students
- *formation of interactive learning groups

We welcome any helpful information that you wish to provide us and will make every effort to place students appropriately.

JK Orientation

There will be a Junior Kindergarten Orientation on Monday, June 11th from 5:30 - 6:30 PM. Children will have a chance to visit classrooms and there will be information for parents. All registered families will receive an invitation in the mail shortly. Please mark this date on your calendar if you have a JK student who will be joining our school family in September. And spread the word if you know of a family who will be joining us!

New Grade 7 Orientation

Likewise, the families of the grade 7 students who will be new to EPS next year, are invited to an Orientation evening where some information about the school will be shared as well as a tour of the building. Parents will have an opportunity to ask questions and meet each other.



Feedback welcome on draft policies The Upper Grand District School Board is welcoming public input on draft policies. Currently under review are Policy 214 Accessibility Standards and Policy 518 Students with Life-Threatening Medical Conditions (Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, Epilepsy/Seizure Disorder) The deadline to respond is April 26, 2018 at 4 PM. Persons without internet access may call 519-822-4420 (or toll-free 1-800-321-4025) ext. 723 to request a printed copy of the draft documents

Talking about Mental Health - May 7-11 is Child and Youth Mental Health and Well-being Week!

Child and Youth Mental Health and Well-being Week is about promoting mental wellness, increasing awareness of child and youth mental health, decreasing stigma and understanding that support is available. Let's improve everyone's mental health and well-being!

The theme for Child and Youth Mental Health and Well-being at UGDSB is: Have a **SUPER** Week!

Social Connections

Understanding Emotions

Personal Health

Empathy

Resilience

Each day of the week will focus on a different aspect of Mental Health and Well Being. The schools will be provided with resources and activities related to each day's theme.

As a parent, you can increase the Mental Health and Well-being of your children, youth and family too! Here are some suggestions:

- **Monday May 7 -Social Connection** - ``Don't be shy. Just say hi!``
 - Say Hi to 3 people that you do not know. Perform a random act of kindness.

- **Tuesday May 8 – Understanding Emotions** – “Sad, glad, happy, mad – just be you”
 - Right now, stop and reflect on how you are feeling. Take a couple of moments as a family to do some deep breathing. <http://youth.anxietybc.com/how-do-it>
Now, how are you feeling?
<http://youth.anxietybc.com/how-do-it>

- **Wednesday May 9 – Personal Health** - “Healthy Self. Heal-thy self”.
 - **Wear green today to support Mental Health Awareness.**
 - Did you know that how our bodies feel affects how good we are feeling? Three of the best things you can do to improve your mood is to exercise, sleep well and eat well. Go for a walk or play a game, get outside, turn off the devices an hour before bed and eat fresh food! The more you do to help your body feel good, the better you will feel!

- **Thursday May 10 – Empathy** - “Be somebody who makes everybody feel like a somebody”.
 - When in doubt – be kind. Try seeing something from another person's perspective today.

- **Friday May 11 – Resilience** - “If Plan A doesn't work, the alphabet has 25 more letters!”.
 - Mental Health and Well-being means coping with the ups and downs of day to day life. Building more resilient thoughts and skills can really help. Children and youth can also find support by seeking help from caring adults. Take time now to talk with child or youth about who those caring adults are in their lives.

For more information about Mental Health and Well-being and interactive activities with your children and youth:

Mind your Mind (online) www.mindyourmind.ca/Interactives

Fun, interactive options for de-stressing for youth.

Smiling Mind (Free App) smilingmind.com.au/

An app that guides you through simple, calming meditations.

GoNoodle (Free App) <https://www.gonoodle.com/>

Fun interactive body and mind breaks for kids.

At the end of the week, talk with your child/youth about the things that made them feel more connected, emotionally aware, healthy, empowered and resilient and continue to do those things every day!

Most of all... have a SUPER week!

Jenny Marino is the Mental Health and Addiction Lead for Upper Grand District School Board

Monthly Environmental Activities to help celebrate our planet



May 22nd is International Biodiversity Day!

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

Celebrate Biological Diversity Day on May 22nd!

The United Nations has proclaimed May 22 The International Day for Biological Diversity to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues.

Biodiversity simply means: 'A wide range of life'" Some of the things we do are harmful, so we need to learn more about how to protect all the different types of life on our planet.



International Day for
Biological Diversity

<https://www.cbd.int/>

Ideas for your family to celebrate Biodiversity Day!

- *Visit farmers markets in your local area to try new types of produce. Whether you incorporate heirloom tomatoes into your cooking, or try one of the rainbow of colors of carrots, biodiversity can bring a great new experience to your table.*
- *View photos of endangered species on the Internet with your child and discuss the reasons why these animals are threatened and why they should be protected.*
- *Join a community group and help to remove invasive plants from your local environment.*
- *Get out into the world and enjoy all the different types of life your local area offers. Even your street or a local park can have an amazing variety of life you've never noticed, from insects, birds, chipmunks, to trees and flowers.*
- *Consider planting a pollinator garden in your yard (or in a flowerpot) to help save the bees and butterflies from declining.*

Adapted from: <https://www.daysoftheyear.com/days/international-day-for-biological-diversity/>

Celebrate the diversity of our natural world every day!

Supporting Oral Language Development (from the UGDSB Student Support Services Department)

"To listen well is as powerful a means of communication and influence as to talk well." — John Marshall

In education, we strive to teach our students how to become effective communicators so that they are successful in their future endeavours whether in English, French or any other language. Oral communication skills in French including listening, speaking, and interacting, are not unlike oral communication skills in your first language, however, oral communication in French does require attention to a different sound system, new vocabulary and at times an understanding of contexts or cultures that may differ from those of your first language.

How do educators teach oral communication in a second language to a diverse group of students that are at different stages in their oral language development?

Teachers know that the acquisition of oral language typically follows a developmental sequence. They understand that students need to hear the language repeatedly before they will begin to speak it. When students enter immersion or core programs they typically do not have an oral foundation in French. This foundation is created through an emphasis on listening and speaking in authentic contexts to build vocabulary and learn various forms of the language so that students can understand and convey meaning. Hearing and using high frequency words and expressions, learning vocabulary in context, building phonemic awareness, creating environments rich in talk, as well as engaging students in listening activities are all strategies used by teachers to support students in becoming confident oral communicators.

Teachers also support students by modelling effective oral communication, guiding students through oral communication activities, and providing many opportunities for students to practice oral language. As students enter immersion and core French programs they are beginners in the language and diverse in the skills they bring to school. Teachers provide high structure and meet students at their developmental stage to best support and move students forward in their language learning.

How can parents support student oral communication at home when they don't speak French?

One way to do this is to speak with and listen to your child in their first language. In the Ontario Ministry of Education document "Supporting your Child's Success in French Immersion and Extended French - A Parent Guide" it states "Helping your child develop a broad vocabulary in English, or the language you speak at home, has added benefits. It helps develop thinking skills, teaches your child to communicate with precision and provides more opportunities to make connections with French."

Research also shows that oral communication skills are transferable across languages. For example, understanding how to vary volume, pace and vocabulary to suit a purpose and an audience is a skill that is transferable to French.

Another way to support and motivate your child is to help them see that French exists outside of the classroom. Watching French television, listening to French radio, borrowing French DVDs and materials from the library and travelling to French speaking regions are all ways to experience French outside of the educational context.

What happens when students are not moving forward in their oral language development or parents have concerns about student progress?

Discussing your concerns as soon as they arise by speaking with your child’s teacher and then examining appropriate courses of action and supports as a team are important first steps.

It is important to remember that a student who struggles to communicate orally in French can achieve a level of proficiency **and that supports should be explored before considering more drastic measures**. French as a second language programs are for all students. Promoting this belief helps to create a supportive environment where students feel more confident and can be successful.

Further Reading:

1. Capacity Building Series. “Teaching and learning in the Core French Classroom”. The Ontario Ministry of Education.

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/CBS_Core_French.pdf

2. Capacity Building Series. “Let’s Talk about Listening”. The Ontario Ministry of Education.

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/Talk_about_listening.pdf

3. What Works? Research into Practice. “Supporting Early Language and Literacy. Dr. Janette Pelletier OISE, University of Toronto. The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat.

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/WW_Early_Language.pdf

From around the community

Erin-Hillsburgh Minor Hockey Association Rep try-outs are starting this week. To find out more visit: https://ehmha.ca/Articles/6111/Rep_Tryout_Pre-Registration_Now_Open/



Please join us!

Youth Equine Event (Free!)

Monday May 14 at Erin District High School (EDHS) 11:30 am- 1 pm

Open to all students from Grade 6 up

Displays/Prizes/Refreshments!

This is a free event—no fees or sign ups required

Come out and see what Erin has available for kids who want to learn about horses!

Questions: equineerin@gmail.com or text: 519.216.4562



Every year EDHS Grade 12 business class runs a fundraiser called “Raiders got Talent”. This is a talent show that showcases the excellent abilities in music, dance, etc. at EDHS. All

proceeds to this show go to different groups either inside the school or in the greater Erin community etc. This year the proceeds are going towards our Grade 9 camp for next fall. This will benefit the incoming grade 8's by reducing the cost of this trip. Please join us May 17th at 7pm to be entertained and help raise funds for this trip.



Representatives from the Erin Fall Fair Ambassador Committee are looking for any students interested in running for Fall Fair Ambassador.

The program is open to males and females 13 and up living in Erin, and focuses on leadership, morals, community and enthusiasm. Competitors are interviewed, present a speech and are briefly quizzed on current events on the Friday night of the Fall Fair. The winners are given scholarship money, along with the chance to travel to events such as the CNE.

Committee members will come to EPS and talk to any students interested in participating in June.