

January 2019

Newsletter

From the Principal's Desk

Happy New Year to all! I hope everyone had an opportunity to enjoy the company of family and friends during the holiday season. The school staff and I would like to take this opportunity to express a sincere thank you for the tremendous support that the school has received over the past year. The staff greatly appreciate everything that has been done to assist the students and staff at our school. A special thank you to our School Council members for all of the work they continue to do for our students and school community, including raising funds to purchase valuable resources, organizing Hot Lunch Programs and coordinating fun-filled activities. We wish all of you a safe, happy and prosperous 2019!



Allergy
Alert!

Before the update with the new events at school, I would like to extend a sincere Thank You to everyone who has helped make our year-end activities at EPS a huge success!

- Thank you to all of our dedicated staff who have contributed to a great Winter Concert! We have a lot of talent at EPS!
- We have been working hard on making our school a happy and welcoming place to be. One of the ways to achieve this is to build warm traditions of events in the school. Hot cider for the Winter Concert, Christmas Bazaar, Spirit Week for the last week of school and Pancake Breakfast are traditions we hope to continue into the coming years. Thank you to all who contributed their time and talents for these events and thank you to those who have sent kind words of encouragement to let us know that these events are worth the effort to continue and are meaningful!
- Thank You to all the families who supported all of our fundraising activities, such as the Book Fair, Fresh From the Farm, QSP, and FundScrip gift cards.
- Thank You to our Parent Council, who have organized the Christmas Bazaar for the grade K-6 students. This has now become an annual event to be sure because our students and parents alike loved it!
- More recently, our grade 8 students listened to a presentation about course selections for high school.
- Here are some upcoming News and events:
- Mr. Curry will be conducting our annual Waste Audit, with the help of some student volunteers to see how much waste and how much recycling we collect. Awareness and knowledge are power for positive change for the environment. On that note, we are looking at ways to involve our students in spearheading some Green initiatives at the school level. Stay tuned for updates on those.
- Erin District High School is opening its doors for the Grade 7 & 8 Parents' and Students' Information Night for the 2019-20 school year. The Open House will be on Tuesday, January 15, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the Theatre. For Parents and students of French Immersion students, specific information about the F.I. program will begin at 6:30 p.m., also in the Theatre.
- College Heights Secondary School is holding their Open House on Wednesday, January 10th, 6:30-8:30pm. Parents and students are invited to attend.

Allergies: A number of students in our school have a life-threatening severe allergy to peanuts and tree nuts. In order to reduce the risk of exposure, we respectfully request that allergens, or other products that mimic the qualities (taste and smell) of the known allergen, not be brought into the classrooms or cafeteria. If there is a different life-threatening allergy in your child's classroom, we will send out a reminder letter specific to that classroom as well. We thank you in advance for helping keep all our children safe and healthy.

Cold Weather: A reminder to parents to send their children to school dressed warmly enough to be outside during recess breaks, which are 25 minutes long, even on very cold days. We will generally call an indoor recess when it is -20C with wind chill, otherwise we go out. It is healthy for children to get fresh air and exercise during the day. It helps them to concentrate and learn better. Please send a scarf to cover the face, snow pants, a warm coat, a hat, mittens and insulated, waterproof boots. Extra mitts and socks are nice in case things get a little damp at first break and don't completely dry by second break. **We are noticing that our Intermediate students in particular, are not dressed for the weather.** If your family is going through a difficult time financially and you need some support to ensure that your children are warmly dressed, then please do not hesitate to call Mrs. Harrison (519-833-9685 ext. 223). There is funding that we can access through the Board to help out and this will be done discretely and respectfully.



Our own school website and Twitter account will also be updated as promptly as possible. On days when school buses are cancelled in the morning, they will not be running at the end of the school day, even if the weather improves. If you wish to drive your child(ren) to school on days when buses are cancelled, you must pick them up at the end of the day as well.

Bus Cancellation Procedures: There are several ways you can find out if the buses are cancelled. You can check the UGDSB app (search "upper grand" where you get apps); you can check the UGDSB Transportation Website (<http://www.stwdsts.ca/> updated by 6:30



am); you can follow the Transportation Consortium on Twitter (@stwdsts); and you can listen to the local radio station. Our own school website and Twitter account will also be updated as promptly as possible. On days when school buses are cancelled in the morning, they will not be running at the end of the school day, even if the weather improves. If you wish to drive your child(ren) to school on days when buses are cancelled, you must pick them up at the end of the day as well.

Lates and Absences: Please continue calling our Safe Arrival line (519-833-9685 ext. 100) if your child will be late or absent. With the onset of colder weather, we see a sharp increase in the number of students who are late or dropped off late. Being late puts students at a disadvantage because the instruction on what the day is going to look like, as well as the instruction in the subject, are missed and the student starts his or her day in a "catch up" mode. This is a particularly stressful and difficult situation for students who are already struggling at school and who benefit from stability and predictability. Of course, life happens and who hasn't been late once or twice? But chronic lateness is a concern: it disrupts the teaching and learning that has already started for other students. If your child is chronically late, please speak with the teacher or the principal if there is an explanation; we sincerely want to support our students and families and may be able to work out a reasonable solution together. But if students continue being late without demonstrating an effort to solve this problem, they may have to wait in the office until the end of the period to transition into class more smoothly without interrupting others.



Get ready! JK Registration is from January 9-19

Junior Kindergarten Registration for the 2019-2020 school year is from January 8 to 18, 2019 at all schools in UGDSB between the hours of 9 AM and 4 PM. All Kindergarten students (JK and SK) who are new to the UGDSB must pre-register online at www.ugdsb.ca/kindergarten. For more information, you may wish to use [this link](#) as well. The school website has a link on the Homepage if that is more convenient for you.

Each elementary school will have a computer available for families to pre-register online at the school if you do not have access at home. Once they've pre-registered online, parents must go into their child's home school before the Jan. 18th deadline, to drop off required documentation and complete their registration.

Required documentation:

1. Proof of Age (child's birth certificate or passport)
2. Proof of Immunization (Health Record card)
3. Proof of residency identifying parent/guardian's current home address (e.g. utility/tax bill, bank statement, purchase/lease agreement)
4. Verification of date of arrival/immigration documents (if child was not born in Canada)



School Supplies: January is a good time to take stock of your child's school supplies and replenish them if need be: paper, pens, pencils, crayons and markers, calculators, rulers, sharpeners, erasers and scissors are some of the items that get used up quickly or lost.



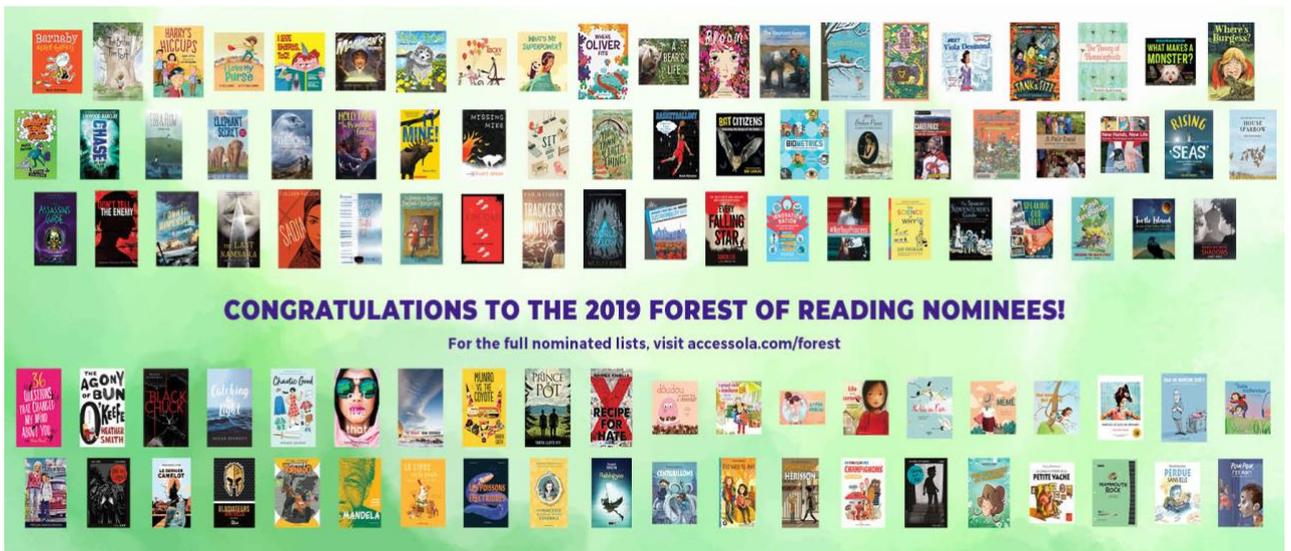
Indoor shoes: All children must have indoor shoes at school. Boots bring in snow, which creates unsafe, slippery puddles. They also tend to scuff the floors. Indoor shoes will keep the students' feet dry and warm while inside.



Forest of Reading: The Forest of Reading® is Canada's largest recreational reading program! This initiative of the Ontario Library Association (OLA) offers eight reading programs to encourage a love of reading in people of all ages. The Forest helps celebrate Canadian books, publishers, authors and illustrators. More than 250,000 readers participate annually from their School and/or Public Library. All Ontarians/Canadians are invited to participate via their local public library, school library, or individually. We are participating in 4 of the programs here at EPS: ***The Blue Spruce***, which will start next week; ***The Silver Birch Express*** (Grades 2-4), ***The Silver Birch*** (Grades 4-6) and ***The Red Maple*** (Gr. 7-8); the latter three will start in early February. Please encourage your youngsters to participate in this wonderful program!

Goals of The Forest of Reading:

- Love of reading: Create a meaningful experience for young readers and create exciting opportunities for reluctant readers to create lifelong readers.
- **A proven head start: The results are in! Children who read for fun have higher literacy scores, have more success in science and math, and are more socially and civically engaged** (Reading for Joy, P4E, 2011).
- Libraries at centre stage: With fun activities, prizes and more, the Forest of Reading puts libraries at the heart of the action!
- Reading Canadian: Help support and celebrate Canadian books, publishers, authors and illustrators by taking advantage of the Forest's curated, all-Canadian reading lists for all ages and levels.



Family Literacy Day is January 27

- ABC Life Literacy Canada is encouraging Canadian families to have "15 Minutes of Fun" learning together. Learning can happen at any time. Practicing literacy together every day has tremendous benefits for both children and parents. Here are some great ways to get started:
- **I wonder why?** Go online as a family and learn something new. Ever wonder why the ocean and sky are blue?
- **Read ANYTHING!** A book, blog, magazine or letter from grandma. Read together and get in your 20 minutes each day
- **Be a Rockstar:** Sing along with the radio or do Karaoke – maybe a duet?
- **Make something yummy:** Follow a family recipe or create a new one together.
- **Travel the world:** Your library card is your passport to travel the world and to take a learning journey.
- **Jot that down:** Write an e-mail, letter, blog post or text your family and friends. Which is the most fun?
- **Scientist in the House:** Do a kitchen experiment or mix up a batch of playdough.
- **It goes something like this:** Tell your favourite story and give it a new ending, or take turns making up a new story.
- **Crafty Crafter:** Paper, glue, yarn, paint – so many things to create! Do a craft together.
- **Stepper challenge:** Go for a walk and count your steps. How many steps to school, the park, your friend's house?
- **Deal me in:** Play cards and keeping score is a fun way to practice counting.
- **Tell it to me:** Tell someone about your day at dinnertime or pick-up the phone for a chat. What was the best part?
- **Shopper Time:** Make a grocery list together with kids finding what's on the list and checking off the items (and maybe adding one special treat!)
- **I'm on Staycation:** A vacation at home can be lots of fun. Plan a trip in your neighbourhood.
- **Riddle me This:** Tell jokes and riddles while doing chores around the house – can you stump your parents?

- **Know your hood:** Draw a map of your neighbourhood, adding in important places like school, library, doctor and pet store!
- **Game-ON!** Play a board game and plan a family game night – invite your neighbours.
- **Story Dynamo:** Make-up a story and draw a picture to go with it. First, show the picture to your friend and see if they can tell you what your story is about.
- **Building Buddies:** Build something together with modeling clay or building blocks. Check out what Family Literacy Day Honourary Chair Barbara Reid can do with modeling clay!
- **Did you Know?** Teach someone you know something new. Did you learn why the ocean and sky are blue yet?



Avoid School Suspension By Keeping Immunization Records Up-To-Date!

Students' 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. Please do not send proof of vaccination to the school, these records are kept and updated by 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 www.wdgpublichealth.ca. Public Health is committed to helping students update their vaccination records so they can avoid suspension from school.



Talking About Mental Health January 2019 – Getting Outdoors

Did you know that taking a 20-minute walk can boost your memory and brain power? Getting outside reduces stress, improves sleep and creates feelings of liveliness and energy. Even in the cold weather it is important to find time to get outdoors - even if just for brief amounts of time.

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.

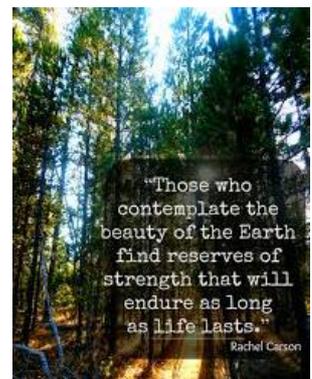
If you are not sure where to go, check out the links below for lots of great parks in our area.

<http://quelp.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/>



Have a mentally healthy 2019!

Jenny Marino is the Mental Health Lead for the Upper Grand District School Board.
Follow me on Instagram #ugdsb_mental_health



Monthly environmental activities to help celebrate our planet

JANUARY is the time to carry out your Eco Resolutions!

*“There will be more waste plastic in the sea than fish by 2050”
Dame Ellen MacArthur*

It's a brand new year and the perfect time for positive change. For example, let's end plastic pollution. Based on the daily news, it's never been more critical to increase your environmental efforts. The *Earth Day Network* is calling to end plastic pollution. Imagine a future free from harmful plastic garbage! Single-use plastics are especially wasteful and many plastics are also not properly recycled and take up precious landfill space or pollute our oceans, killing marine life and washing up on pristine beaches. Plastic garbage 'islands' are appearing in seas and oceans all over the world.
<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/great-pacific-garbage-patch/>

Tips on how to reduce single-use plastics:

- Extend your use of cloth shopping bags beyond the grocery store. Use them at all other retail stores too.
- Avoid buying over-packaged food. The choice is yours. Do you need to buy the carrots that are shrink wrapped on a Styrofoam tray?
- Let the restaurants you frequent know that you would like them to join the growing movement to ban the use of straws. Many have implemented a 'serve-straws-upon-request' policy.
- Tap water is best. Bottled water can deplete our precious groundwater resources and produce unnecessary greenhouse gas emissions through the production and transport of plastic bottles. Carry a reusable water bottle instead.
- Lug a travel mug to your local coffee shop. (The plastic lining makes coffee cups unrecyclable, and they all end up in the garbage and in our overflowing landfills.)
- Write letters to the government asking them to fix a problem that you are concerned about such as: mandating the reduction of plastic packaging, banning Styrofoam, or promoting research for recyclable coffee cups or coffee pods, etc.

Plastic leakage

Plastics are very durable, so they accumulate in nature, damaging ecosystems we rely on. In the oceans they break down into tiny fragments, which enter the food chain. The microplastics are eaten by plankton, which are eaten by fish, which are eaten by... us.



Many of these items are packaging for food and drink and most were designed to be used only once ('single-use plastics'). That's a waste of valuable resources.

INFORM US! Please notify the

school if there are any changes in your child's information such as your

work numbers and emergency contact numbers. This is really important should we need to contact you during the day. Also, this is a reminder to please call the school attendance line to notify the office if your child will be late or absent.



Grade 7 & 8 Parents' and Students' Information Night for the 2019-2020 school year

Grade 7 & 8 students and their parents are invited to learn more about the great opportunities **Erin District High School** has to offer - from academics to sports, music and art. Learn more about our English and French Immersion Programs and the registration process on **Tuesday, January 15, 2019** for the 2019-20 school year. **7:00 TO 8:30 P.M.** in the Theatre.

For parents of **French Immersion** students, specific information about our F.I. program will begin at **6:30 P.M.** in the Cafeteria.

Please check our website <http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/edhs/> in the event of inclement weather.