



Gateway Drive Public School
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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome to February! Thanks for your cooperation and support to help us with a smooth transition back to in-person learning. It is crucial to complete the daily COVID screening each morning before your child comes to school at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>. Please ensure you send appropriate clothing to stay warm as the temperature has been well below zero and will continue to be during this month. Also, if you know your child will be away can you please call the school each morning to let us know at 519-824-4300.

Term one Report Cards will be available on the Parent Portal on February 17th. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or the office and we will help you access it online.

This month we will be focusing on learning about how to be resilient as we set goals and reflect upon our first term report card feedback. We will also be focusing on Black Heritage, Black Brilliance, Black Futures Month to ensure we are being inclusive and equitable here at Gateway Drive Public School.

From my family to yours, be well!
Chad Reay

TERM 1 REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be sent home on Thursday, February 17th. How you interpret and respond to your child's report card is important. Listed below are some suggestions to help you read, understand, and celebrate your child's report card.

1. Read the learning skills on the first page of the document first. Celebrate and acknowledge your child's efforts, improvements, and strengths and who they are as a person. Pay particular attention to the comments regarding Strengths, Areas of Need, and Next Steps.
2. Pay attention to the section that deals with "days absent" and "times late." Sometimes this is an area that surprises parents and offers insights into why your child may be struggling.
3. Talk about the report card together and seek your child's opinion about their accomplishments.
4. Look at the grades that your child is getting in areas that he/she is interested in; this could suggest some new areas of interests and talents of your child.
5. Make a plan on how to meet these goals and share in the responsibility of helping support your child achieve these next steps.
6. Request a meeting with your child's teacher if you need clarification, want more information, or need ideas and resources to support your child's learning goals.
7. Remember that the term one report card is a checkpoint. There are five more months of work ahead and a lot can change during that time. Hard work and effort do pay off.

If you have questions or want to meet with a teacher, just call or email them.

SCHOOL COUNCIL CORNER

School Council meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30-7:45 p.m. The next meeting will take place virtually on **Wednesday, March 23rd**. If you have never attended a School Council meeting before, we would love to have you. We love seeing new faces

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

In case of severe winter weather, with poor driving conditions and bus cancellations and delays, please listen for announcements on radio stations 1460 AM CJOY, 106.1 Magic FM, 900 AM CHML, 107.9 FM CJXY (Y108), Oldies 1090 AM, 105.3 Kool FM, News Talk 570 AM, 96.7 FM CHYM, 1150 AM CKOC, 102.9 FM CKLH, 820 AM CHAM and CKCO-TV. Announcements for John McCrae PS are included in **“South Wellington and the City of Guelph.”**

Please note: *If buses do not operate in the morning, they will not operate in the afternoon. If you elect to drive your student to school, you must make arrangements for them to be picked up at the end of the day (please communicate the arrangement with your student, or leave a note in their agenda, prior to drop-off). Likewise, if you choose to keep your “walking” student at home on an inclement weather day, you must notify the office of the student’s absence, otherwise the office will contact you to confirm your student’s absence.*

STUDENT ABSENCES

It is very important that you contact the school to let us know when your student will be absent from school. The Ministry mandates that we must account for every child’s absence (“Safe Arrival Program”), and if we have not heard from you then we must call all contact numbers until we reach someone who can confirm the absence and subsequent safety of the child. Please help us by leaving a message on the “100” mailbox by 8:30 a.m. to let us know if your student will be absent or late. Your cooperation is much appreciated and will help decrease the number of calls the office has to make every morning.

FAMILY DAY

The Upper Grand District School Board will be observing Family Day on Monday, February 21st and our school will be closed. We hope you enjoy the day with your family.

Celebrate National Sweater Day on February 4th!

National Sweater Day is a way to learn about the importance of saving energy and to inspire you to use less energy all winter. Heating accounts for 80% of residential energy use in Canada. 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 taking nearly 700,000 cars off the road! http://www.wwf.ca/events/sweater_day/

National Sweater Day is about thinking 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. It is designed to help raise awareness about renewable energy and change behaviours around energy consumption in Canada. assets.wwf.ca/downloads/nsd_2017_en_school_toolkit.pdf

Ideas for your family to celebrate Sweater Day

- *Turn down your thermostat and wear a sweater on Feb 4th - and every day this winter!*
- *Ask your children to brainstorm with you about ways to save energy at home. Make a pledge to implement as many as you can. For extra ideas go to: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-use-less-electricity-home>*
- *Read a children’s book on conservation such as: *Why Should I Save Energy?* by Jen Green. Encourage lots of questions and find the answers together.*
- *Learn about Green Energy sources. What types of renewable energy are available in Ontario - Wind? Solar? Geothermal?*

Valentine’s Day is just around the corner - use recycled materials to create your cards this year! To learn more about how recycling saves energy go to Alliant Energy Kids:

www.alliantenergykids.com/UsingEnergyWisely/SavingEnergyAtHome

Let’s Talk Mental Health

This month at UGDSB we are bringing our focus onto healthy lifestyles. Sounds easy, right? It may seem like eating well, getting enough sleep and prioritizing our own care and health is easy but for many of us this is not the case. From enhanced stressors that you may be facing during the pandemic and beyond – not everyone has the privilege to prioritize healthy living. Sometimes, just getting food into our fridge, a roof over our heads or some extra time is not an option. As you explore healthy lifestyles I encourage you to consider, also, that there are many who may not have the same opportunities. These are also important conversations to have with your children and youth.

Consider what it is that you can do that will add to your overall health. For some this may be changes in diet, more exercise or sleep. For others this may simply be the ability to find 5 minutes to breathe. It will differ for everyone.

Here are some ideas for conversations and activities at home that you can do during February as we work on the theme of Healthy Lifestyles.

- Talk with your kids about the importance of fresh air. Getting outside – whether it is stepping outside or exercising outside – can be very refreshing and also provide us with that bit of time to move around, reflect on nature, and, when we are able, to step out of our everyday routine. Physical activity can reduce stress, increase energy and confidence, enhance memory and help with sleeping.
- Have everyone in the family keep a log of their eating for a day or two. What do you notice? Use this as an opportunity to discuss the ways in which this may be challenging in your household and/or how the availability of food is not always something everyone “just has”

- Talk to your kids about sleep. Quality of sleep is as important as the number of hours. Try to minimize electronics, caffeine, and sugar at least an hour before bedtime to give your brain time to detox. Try different ways to help you fall asleep like deep breathing, listening to soothing music, etc.

- Water is an important and valuable resource that we can use to enhance our overall health. Keep track of how much you drink daily and then challenge yourself to do a bit more. Drinking enough water daily can aid in better sleeps, and also helps to carry important nutrients to your cells.