

DECEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

Happy Holidays

It is difficult to imagine that the end of the calendar year is so close at hand. On behalf of the entire staff, we would like to wish each of you a very safe and restful holiday season, and all of the very best in the New Year! We look forward to an exciting year ahead for our school community! Thank you for the tremendous support you have shown our staff and our students. The School will be closed from Monday, December 21st, 2015 until Friday, January 1st, 2016 for the Christmas Holidays. The first day of class for students in the New Year will be Monday, January 4th, 2016.

Mr. Pink and the Staff at GVDPS

Update on Elementary Progress Reports and Interviews

We know that elementary school families have questions about their children's November Progress Reports. The newly ratified Provincial Agreement outlines that elementary teachers will complete progress reports. We will be following the guidelines for reporting used in the past. Any Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that have not already been sent home will be included with the Progress Reports. Parents can expect Progress Reports to be sent home on Friday, December 11, 2015.

The **November 27th PA day** will go forward as a professional development day dedicated to staff learning. In the past, this day has been used for conferencing with teachers and parents/guardians. However, as part of the Provincial Agreement, parent-teacher interviews remain at the discretion of the teacher and will be initiated if the teacher has a concern about a student's progress.

As always, parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher if they have any questions or concerns about their child's progress. Teachers remain committed to ongoing communication with individual parents/guardians regarding student progress and development.

For more information on the vote to ratify the central agreement, [visit the board's website](#), or contact:

Heather Loney

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Revised Code of Conduct Now on Our Web Page

We are required to review and update our School Code of Conduct every 3 years. This task is now complete and the revised document is available on our web page. If you would like a paper copy, please let Mrs. Sevensco know and we will send one home with your child. The big ideas from this document for students are that Grand Valley Gators are:

- Respectful
- Cooperative
- Responsible
- Assertive
- Non-physical problem solvers

Follow Us on Twitter

For the latest updates on school events and news you can now follow us on Twitter: @GrandvalleyDPS

Remembrance Day Assembly

Classes participated in a Remembrance Day service on November 11th. The choir performed 2 songs under the direction of Madame Bryan and Mrs. Kocher. Several Intermediate students read poems marking this important day in our Nation's history. Students from Mrs. O'Gorman's and Mr. Dowdall's class had the honour of attending the local Remembrance Day Ceremony at the cenotaph in Grand Valley. Our school was well represented with student readers and members of the Air Cadets in attendance.

Christmas Concert

Students will once again be participating in our annual Christmas Concert. It will be held on Wednesday, December 16th beginning at 8:45 a.m. Families are welcome to watch during this special occasion. Your child's teacher will let you know more about what his/her class is doing for the concert. We hope you can join us!

Christmas Gifts

At this festive time of year, many families in our community, as well as those abroad, struggle to put food on their tables and to provide the necessities of life. As such, staff members are suggesting that, in lieu of a Christmas gift, families consider making a donation to one of the following: a charity of your choice, CONCERN, or the Upper Grand Learning Foundation. For those who are not aware of it, the Upper Grand Learning Foundation enables parents to make donations directly to the school and receive a charitable gift tax receipt.

If interested please check out the following website: <http://uppergrandlearningfoundation.com/contribute.html>

Bundle Up!

Please make sure that your children are dressed adequately for outside play. We go outside at both Nutritional Breaks every day except for days with extreme cold. Your help in ensuring students have appropriate winter clothing is greatly appreciated.

Cold and Illness

It is easy to pass on colds and flu in a school environment. Children, who do not feel well, do not learn well. If students are well enough to be at school, then the expectation is that they go outside for recess. Unfortunately, we do not have staff on duty inside during recess times.

Please remember to call the school and report your child's illness/lateness each day they are away or will be late. You can access our Attendance Line from 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 a.m. at 519-928-2172 x 100.

Bus Cancellations

During times of inclement weather, there are a number of ways to obtain information regarding bus cancellations and/or school closures for both bus and town students:

1. RADIO STATIONS

1460 AM CJOY	106.1 Magic FM
680 AM CFTR	99.1 FM CBC
A Channel or CKCO-TV	News Talk 570 AM
96.7 FM CHYM	98.1 FM CHFI

2. BOARD WEBSITE - www.ugdsb.on.ca and click on the yellow school bus on the right hand side.

3. Twitter -Follow us on Twitter for the latest bus cancellation info @GrandvalleyDPS. or, Student Transportation Services @stwdsts.

4. Subscription Services for Bus Delays and Cancellations- receive this information from Student Transportation Service via email. To subscribe go to: <https://www.findmyschool.ca/subscriptions/login.aspx> and follow the instructions.

School Council

Bag 2 School Fundraiser

Back by Popular Demand! We will be hosting a Bag 2 School Used Clothing Drive in the Spring! When cleaning out closets bag up anything that is in good condition and save it for the spring fund raiser. Dates this year will May 30th to June 16th. Any questions, please contact the school or Susan Stevenson 519-928-9883. Last year together we brought in 1 ton of used clothing raising \$200. Let's try to beat that number!!

- *Help the environment by reducing landfill waste while promoting the 3 R's, especially Re-use*
- *Support affordable second-hand clothing markets, in both North America and abroad*

Partners in Education

Parents play a vital role in the development and education of their children and in the success of schools.

Parent involvement includes a range of activities from good parenting, helping with homework, serving on school councils and board or provincial committees, communicating and meeting with teachers, and volunteering in the classroom or on school trips.

Good schools are better where there is a stronger connection with parents as part of the learning environment. School councils focus on engaging parents and fostering parental involvement within their school community as a key factor in assisting with student achievement.

Where does your role as a parent fit into this partnership?

Join other parents at the next school council meeting and be a more active partner in your child's / children's success at school.

Our next School Council will be on Monday, December 7th, 2015 at 6:30pm.

Talking About Mental Health – December 2015, 31 Days of Taking Care of Ourselves

In December, as the days get shorter and colder, we all need to take some time to do something good for ourselves. Taking a little time each day to take care of ourselves makes so much difference to keeping in good mental health. You may choose to do some activities on your own or with your family or with a friend. Try one or a few or try them all. Enjoy!

December 1 : One Minute – Take deep breaths, in and out, for one minute.

December 2 : Two Minutes – Smile at yourself in the mirror.

December 3 : Three Minutes – Listen to a favourite song.

December 4 : Four Minutes – Eat some fresh fruit.

December 5 : Five Minutes – Light a candle and quietly watch the flame.

December 6 : Six Minutes – Sit quietly for six minutes.

December 7 : Seven Minutes – Enjoy the taste of a holiday snack.

December 8 : Eight Minutes – Spend fun time with someone who is a person or pet .

December 9 : Nine Minutes – Think of the best things that happened this week.

December 10 : Ten Minutes – Take some time out with a cup of tea. Sip slowly and enjoy.

December 11 : Eleven Minutes – Sing along with your favourite songs.

December 12 : Twelve Minutes – Send an email to a friend setting up a time to meet up during the holidays.

December 13 : Thirteen Minutes – Draw, paint or doodle.

December 14 : Fourteen Minutes – Go outside and breathe in the cool, crisp air.

December 15 : Fifteen Minutes – Read a favourite story.

December 16 : Sixteen Minutes – Call or skype with someone.

December 17 : Seventeen Minutes – Do something active: dance, walk, run, skip, play.

December 18 : Eighteen Minutes – Make a cup of hot chocolate and pay attention to the flavor and warmth as you sip– add marshmallows if desired.

December 19 : Nineteen Minutes – Help someone else out who needs some extra help in the holidays.

December 20 : Twenty Minutes – Watch the sunset on the shortest day of the year.

December 21 : Twenty One Minutes – Enjoy the holiday decorations in your neighbourhood.

December 22 : Twenty Two Minutes – Reflect on traditions you have enjoyed or currently enjoy.

December 23 : Twenty Three Minutes – Make your favourite meal and enjoy every bite.

December 24 : Twenty Four Minutes – Enjoy a bubble bath or extra long shower.

December 25 : Twenty Five Minutes – Take a walk to appreciate nature and being outside.

December 26 : Twenty Six Minutes – Take a nap, lie down and take a rest.

December 27 : Twenty Seven Minutes - Watch your favourite TV show that makes you laugh.

December 28 : Twenty Eight Minutes – Spend time with friends or family.

December 29 : Twenty Nine Minutes – Go to the library and take out a new book, CD or DVD.

December 30 : Thirty Minutes – Take some time to do a hobby or something you enjoy that you have not done for a while.

December 31 : Thirty One Minutes – Make a list of all the things you were grateful for this year.

*7Dr. Lynn Woodford, Psychologist, is the Mental Health and Addiction Lead for Upper Grand District School Board
Follow me on twitter: @drlynnwoodford*