

JANUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

Welcome Back!

We hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday. We want to thank all of our families for their continued support, and we wish each of you all the very best in 2016!

A few important reminders as we begin the New Year. Student safety is our primary concern at GVDPS. Visitors are most welcome during the school day; however, we ask that all visitors report to the main office upon their arrival, and to sign in if necessary.

Professional Development at Grand Valley

January 22, 2016 will be a Professional Development Day for all elementary schools in the Upper Grand District School Board. Please note there is no school for students this day. Our staff will be working all day on student assessment and evaluations.

JK/SK Registration

Eligible students for the Junior Kindergarten Program must be four years of age on or before December 31, 2016 and students must be five years of age on or before December 31, 2015 to register for Senior Kindergarten. Registration will take place the week of ***February 1st to 5th 2016***. Students currently in JK will automatically be registered for Senior Kindergarten. Parents will need proof of residence, their child's Birth Certificate and Immunization records for registration. We look forward to meeting you!

Report Cards

In December, you received a Progress Report Card that emphasized learning skills and work habits, along with an update on language arts, mathematics and various other subjects. On ***Thursday, February 11th***, the Term 1 report card will go home. The term 2 report card will go home in June.

Morning Supervision

Parents are reminded that teachers are not on duty until 8:15 in the morning. We ask that students not arrive prior to this time as there is no one on the yard to supervise them. All students are reminded to enter the school through their assigned doors off of the playground at bell time.

School Eco Team

Our School Eco Team helps improve our commitment to greening our school. The team completed a one-day waste audit of all waste (garbage and recycling) within our school. The results demonstrated that most of our disposable waste comes from food packaging in lunches. While we have developed compost and recycling programs, we have a lot of cross contamination, which means we need to learn about and monitor which items belong in which containers. The Eco Team will set school wide energy conservation goals along with ongoing waste minimization goals and develop an action plan for improvement and begin its implementation in January.

Grade 8 Graduation Photo Day

On Thursday, January 28th, 2016, Edge Imaging will be at the school to take Graduation portraits of our Grade 8 students. Students are asked to wear a white shirt or blouse with a collar. The boys are also asked to wear a tie.

K.I.D.S

On Wednesday, December 2nd, the grade 6's from Mr. Dowdall's class celebrated with a K.I.D.S. graduation. K.I.D.S. stands for Knowledge, Issues, Decisions and Supports. This program replaces the D.A.R.E. program and is designed to give our students the knowledge and skills needed to make good decisions related to drug abuse and the use of social media. A special thank you goes out to Officer Paul Nancekivell for teaching the program and Mr. and Mrs. Butler from Silverdale Motors for sponsoring this valuable Grade 6 program. Congratulations to all of the Grade Sixes.

Christmas Concert – Thanks!

We had a very successful Christmas Concert here at the school on Wednesday, December 16th. Thank you to those of you who were able to join us for this special day. A special thanks to all the teachers involved for their efforts preparing the children.

Winter Safety

Please remind your child(ren) to stay off the roads as they walk to and from school each day and that the safest place to cross Main St. (if required) is with our Crossing Guard at the crosswalk.

The icy weather makes it difficult for cars and trucks to stop quickly. Bus students, in particular, are reminded to stay off the snow banks and the roads as they wait for their bus to arrive each morning.

Indoor Shoes

Please remember to send indoor shoes with your child. In the event of a fire, students are able to exit the building more quickly if they have indoor shoes on their feet.

CONCERN Food Bank

Through a donation of a nonperishable food item as their admission into the Christmas Dance, our students from Grades 6, 7 and 8 generously helped this vital community support at a significant time of the year.

Attendance and Punctuality

It is well known that regular attendance and punctuality are essential for students to succeed in school. When students are habitually absent, they miss valuable instruction, learning experiences and discussions that happen on a day-to-day basis that cannot be replicated. Being late for school can be just as detrimental as missing an entire day since core subjects such as language arts and math are often taught first thing in the morning each day. Please help us to ensure the best possible instruction for our students by making sure they are here and on time each day.

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.

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

Hot Lunch and No Bus Days

Please remember that if a “No-Bus” day falls on a Hot Lunch day (Thursdays), pizza will NOT be delivered to the school. You will need to send a lunch with your child if they attend school that day. The Hot Lunch Day will be rescheduled for a later date and a reminder will be sent home. Thank you for your understanding!

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 fundraiser. Dates this year will be Monday, May 30th - Wednesday, June 1st. The clothing is scheduled to be picked up at noon on June 2nd. 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, February 1st, 2016, at 6:30pm.**

Talking About Mental Health January 2016- Apps for Mental Health

Today it seems like there's an app for almost everything! Apps can be useful for helping us to learn and practice new skills. Interactive apps can help children and youth learn about how to identify feelings, how to relax, and even about navigating social situations. Check out some of the apps below and learn together with your child. Apps are not a substitute for talking with a professional, so be sure to contact your local mental health agency if you or your child needs support.

Touch and Learn – Emotions (Free)

- Encourages children to look at body language and facial expressions to help them identify feelings
- <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/touch-and-learn-emotions/id451685022?mt=8>

Mind Shift (Free)

- An app designed to help youth cope with anxiety
- <http://www.anxietybc.com/resources/mindshift-app>

Smiling Mind (Free)

- An app that guides children and youth through simple, calming meditations
- <http://smilingmind.com.au/>

Relaxing Sounds of Nature (Free)

- Listen to the calming sounds of nature
- <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/free-relaxing-sounds-nature/id345747251?mt=8>

Zen Space (Free)

- Relax by raking sand and creating a tranquil space
- <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/zen-space/id371463710?mt=8>

Zen View (Free)

- Relax by listening to rain and watching water swirl
- <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/zenview/id499881701?mt=8>

3 Minute Mindfulness (One strategy is free. Full app is \$4.59)

- Learn simple deep breathing strategies
- <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/3-minute-mindfulness-breathing/id982502810?mt=8>

I Know How You Feel (“Lite” version is free. Full version is \$11.99)

- Children learn how to identify feelings in specific situations
- Children learn about appropriate empathic responses
- <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/i-know-how-you-feel/id960352272?mt=8>

Kailey Thompson, MSW, Specialized Mental Health Interventionist compiled and tested out the Apps.

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