

JOHN BLACK PUBLIC SCHOOL

Principal: Kathy Gossling Spears
Office Coordinator: Sheri MacKenzie
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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 2020

Welcome to John Black. I am excited to be here for my third year and working with such fantastic staff, students and school community. I know we are all looking forward to a great school year, and this certainly has been an unprecedented one. Thanks to all of our staff for working so hard to prepare their classrooms and other spaces within the school to make them safe and welcoming for everyone. Things may look different physically in the building but we are all here to support each other and have a great year of learning. If you haven't had a chance yet please check out this video created by Mr. Swan that shows you what we have done to prepare our school for staff and students both inside and outside. We take everyone's safety seriously.

<https://www.ugdsb.ca/jblack/2020/09/09/check-out-our-welcome-to-john-black-video/>

I am pleased to welcome our new staff members to the John Black team. As you can see on the following page we have several new staff members and we are excited to have them join our team this year. We also have some staff who have temporarily moved to the online learning school but are still attached to John Black in the future as things may change.

We would like to send a special welcome to our new Kindergarten students who begin school this year. We wish them lots of success, learning and fun here at John Black. We also welcome the many new students starting in September to the John Black School community. You are going to love it here.

The Custodial Staff, under the supervision of Troy Baker, deserve a big thank you in getting all the classrooms cleaned and ready for the first day. They have put many hours in during the summer to make sure things are shiny and clean.

A reminder that, once again, classes may change after the second week. This is to ensure that all classes in the province meet Ministry of Education parameters for maximum class size. Any changes to our organization will be implemented during the week of September 21st. You will be informed by the school if this affects your child(ren). No matter what class your child is in, we are committed to making sure that this is a fantastic year of learning.

Please continue to follow us on the school website, Twitter and the school Facebook page

Kathy Gossling-Spears
Principal



2020 – 2021 STAFF

Please keep in mind this is a tentative list of teachers and classes and that changes still may occur due to reorganization.

Kindergarten –Alison Negrave and Nancy Richardson

Grade One/Two– Kimberley Lehman

Grade Two/Three–Stephanie Klaver-Croezen

Grade Three/Four– Tammy Nollert

Grade Four–To Be Hired/ Jessica Cowperthwaite LTO

Grade Five – Terra Matheson-Peck

Grade Five/Six- Tracey Mooney

Grade Six - Sarah-Jane Olszewski

Grade Six/Seven -Denise Skerritt

Grade Seven-Stewart Hirst

Grade Seven/Eight - Patrick Shannon

Grade Eight- Luke Kordupel

Grade Eight- Brandon Eyer

Teacher/Librarian – Jason Swan

Planning Teachers – Jason Swan, Josh Cranston

French Teachers –Abbygale Breckles, James McLeod

Resource Teacher – Shari Roberts, Jason Swan, TBH

Educational Assistants –Tracy Haley, Jennifer Metzloff

Child and Youth Counsellor-Mark Lyons

Office Coordinator – Sheri MacKenzie

Custodian – Troy Baker



SCHOOL HOURS

8:50	School Entry
8:50 - 10:30	Instructional Time
10:30 - 11:15	1 st Break
11:15 - 12:55	Instructional Time
12:55 - 1:40	2 nd Break
1:40 - 3:20	Instructional Time
3:20	Dismissal



SAFE ARRIVAL

During the school day, your child's safety is of utmost importance to us. It is **IMPERATIVE** that you call the office before 8:50 a.m. if your child is going to be absent or late to school. For your convenience, we also have voice-mail which allows you to contact the school at any time during the night or over the weekend. The school phone number is 519-843-2665 extension 100. When you call please note your child's name, teacher and reason for absence.



If a child is absent and we have not heard from a parent or guardian we will attempt to contact a parent or guardian to ensure your child is safe. If a parent cannot be reached we will contact the emergency contacts you have provided.

It is very important that you let the office know if there is any change in personal information: home or work number, emergency contact, address changes and changes in custody agreements.

If your child is late arriving at school he/she you must call the office so someone can let your child into the school. Please remember parents are not allowed into the building, unless for emergencies.

If your child's dismissal procedure is going to change in any way, any day, please send a message to your child's teacher using Google Classroom. You can also call and leave a message at the office.

Supervision of our students begins at 8:34 a.m. Children cannot be in the school and will not be supervised outside of the school prior to this time. Students who are walkers must leave school immediately at 3:20 p.m. as supervision is only provided for bus students after this time.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Please remember that all student medication must be stored and administered from the office. In order to give your child any medication we must have the appropriate form completed and signed by you. Forms must be updated each school year. Please contact Ms. MacKenzie in the office for forms.

Children requiring medication such as EPI-PENS for life-threatening medical conditions are required to carry this medication with them at all times. We suggest a fanny pack. Additional EPI-PENS may be kept in the office. If your child has a life-threatening condition, please call the school for more information and set up a "Life Threatening Plan of Care" as soon as possible.

SCHOOL SECURITY AND SAFETY

Please note that only essential visitors are permitted into the school. Parents are only allowed into the school for emergencies. Please see our Welcome to the 2020-2021 post on our website for more specific information on how the school day runs and what safety measures have been put in place.

<https://www.ugdsb.ca/jblack/2020/08/28/welcome-to-the-2020-2021-school-year-at-john-black/>

NEWSLETTERS AND COMMUNICATION



John Black Public School Community



@JohnBlackPS



Upper Grand
District School Board

We have many different ways of sharing information with our school community. For the school year **the newsletter will be available online at <http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/jblack>**. If you would like to receive an email letting you know when future newsletters have been posted as well as receive other electronic communication from the school please sign up on our website (bottom toolbar/ subscribe to email notifications) or at <http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/CASL>.

Our Facebook is a closed group and moderated by our School Council as well as the Principal. You can request to join the group "John Black Public School Community" by answering the security questions.

Please contact the office if you do not have access to the newsletter online so that we can provide you with a paper copy.



Children's
FOUNDATION
OF GUELPH AND WELLINGTON

Food & Friends Program
DUFFERIN • WELLINGTON • GUELPH

It's Smile Cookie Week!

Buy a Smile Cookie, help support the Children's Foundation's Food & Friends program.

100% of proceeds from each #SmileCookie help support local charities.

Buy your Smile Cookies from September 14-20. Your full dollar will help to support our programs in Elora, Fergus, Guelph, Arthur, Mt. Forest, Harriston and Shelburne.



Thank-you for your support!

Students with Life-Threatening Medical Conditions

UGDSB Policy 518: Students with Life-Threatening Medical Conditions, outlines the roles and responsibilities for all in the educational community to support students with possible life-threatening medical conditions. The prevalent medical conditions covered under this policy are Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Diabetes and Epilepsy/Seizure Disorders. If your child has one of these, or any other life-threatening medical condition, please visit: www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy (and look for Policy 518) or contact the school as soon as possible. We will work with you to develop a Plan of Care to support your child. <https://www.ugdsb.ca/jblack/2020/09/07/students-with-life-threatening-medical-conditions/>

Life-Threatening Allergies

We have children in our school with potential life-threatening allergies (called anaphylaxis) to various foods and other materials. Anaphylaxis is a medical condition that can cause death within minutes. In recent years, anaphylaxis has increased dramatically among students. Although this may not affect your child's class directly, we are letting you know so that you are aware that we aim to create an allergy safe environment at our school. If your child is in a classroom with an anaphylactic child, or your child has anaphylaxis, you will be informed by the classroom teacher. Our school has procedures in place for the prevention and management of anaphylactic reactions. If your child has health concerns of any kind, please tell your child's teacher or the office and we will take the necessary health protection steps. Thank you for your understanding in ensuring an allergy-safe environment for all of our students.

Smoke and Vape-Free School Environment

The Upper Grand DSB provides a smoke and vape-free environment for its students, staff and others while on school Board property and at school events. Under our policy, all forms of tobacco, and any processed form of tobacco that may be smoked, inhaled or chewed is included. Additionally, all forms of e-cigarettes are also covered under this policy.

Smudging is the tradition of using sacred smoke from sacred medicines (e.g., tobacco and sage) that forms part of indigenous culture and spirituality. Smudging is allowed in schools under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Participation by staff and students is optional in a smudging ceremony.

SCHOOL COUNCIL CORNER

School Council wants you! Have you ever considered joining John Black's School Council? Our monthly meetings are a great way to learn about what's happening at John Black. You can expect to discuss school events and receive an update from the Principal. Even a small commitment goes a long way.



Please consider joining and show your support for John Black PS!

If you'd like to receive School Council meeting agendas and minutes, find out about events or requests for help and other information, please forward your name and email address to sc.johnblack@ugdsb.on.ca

Thank you for your ongoing support, we hope to see you (virtually) at a meeting!

School Emergency Response Training and Annual Drills

Below is some information regarding emergency drills that we will be conducting this school year.

The safety and well-being of our students is our highest priority. Although we hope that an incident that requires response from emergency personnel will never occur in our school, we must be prepared to respond quickly and effectively in case it does.

Each year our school must conduct drills to ensure staff and students are prepared in the event of a real emergency.

The following drills will be reviewed this year:

- fire drill
- lockdown drill
- tornado drill
- bomb threat drill



For each of these drills, there is an education component to explain why they are necessary. Discussion of these drills is conducted in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of our students.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Reminder for Parents/Guardians: Accidents happen – be prepared with Student Accident Insurance

Parents/Guardians are responsible for expenses related to student injuries on and off school premises during school activities. Accidents can and do happen and the costs involved might not be fully covered by Provincial Health Care or employer group insurance plans.

The Upper Grand District School Board is empowered under The Education Act to offer Accident and Life Insurance for students.

Information will be sent home with respect to Student Accident Insurance offered by Old Republic Insurance Company of Canada.

You should receive:

1. The Director's letter.
2. An InsureMyKids information pamphlet.

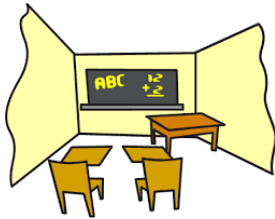
Old Republic offers a variety of options, including family rates and multi-year plans, at affordable prices. The cost must be paid by parents/guardians.

Subscription is directly through Old Republic by mail or online. Questions should be directed to Old Republic at 1-800-463-5437 or www.insuremykids.com.

For today's active children, especially those who participate in field trips, co-curricular and other school activities outside the school day, Student Accident Insurance is valuable.

Combined Grade (Split Grade) Classrooms

Combined classes group children from two or more consecutive grades into one classroom. Schools combine classes for a variety of reasons to meet the learning needs of students and to balance class sizes. All classrooms are created with students who have a range of skills and abilities. As in same-grade classrooms, teachers, in combined grades, use a variety of strategies to ensure that the grade appropriate curriculum expectations are covered.



Combined classrooms are very common in schools today and they are neither better nor worse than single-grade classes. Studies have proven that students in combined grades do just as well academically as students in single-grade classrooms. The academic research on combined classrooms has outlined the benefits that students gain while in combined classes. These benefits include learning to work individually and as part of a team, development of leadership skills, development of decision-making skills, self-motivation, and responsibility.

Student placement is carefully considered by school staff every year. Individual student needs, as well as class dynamics, are balanced to create school classrooms. When placing students in classrooms, the principal and all teachers take into consideration many different factors which include: the number of students, the number of boys and girls, student learning styles, academic strengths and needs, learning skills, work habits, and social and emotional strengths and needs. Whether the students are in an older or younger grade in a combined classroom, they will be challenged at their own academic level.

For further information about combined classrooms, please consult the following information that has been developed by the Ministry of Education:

- An Introduction to Combined Grades <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/combinedClassrooms/combinedClassrooms.pdf>
- Combine Grades <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/combined.pdf>

No Parking

A “No Parking” sign means just that – no parking. Parents are encouraged to find an area near the school where they can park if they need to leave their vehicles to drop off students. You may use these areas to pull over and let a student out safely, however, you should not exit your vehicle at any time. Be mindful that you can still receive a ticket if you’re near your car or in your car waiting; blocking other parents from using a quick drop off space still means you’re parked.



No Stopping

“No Stopping” signs means you may not use that space to stop and drop off a student, no matter how quick you are. When you stop in a “No Stopping” zone, you impact the safety of others. Instead, find a place where you can park safely, or use designated Kiss and Ride zones for quick drop offs.

Be a Good Neighbour

Please be mindful of other neighbours in the area. Be courteous and don't block driveways. The convenience to park closely for you, no matter how quick you are, is not worth the inconvenience of someone else not being able to leave their home.

If you have to drive a student to school and park, ask around to see if other parents would allow you to park in a driveway nearby to walk.

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

As we continue to welcome students back into our schools and focus on new protocols to help keep students and staff safe, the Upper Grand District School Board has notified schools that school-organized fundraising will be paused at this time.

The board recognizes that fundraising is a big part of school culture, however at this time, the board would like focus on efforts to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in our schools, and to that end limit the number of occasions where funds and goods are changing hands. There may still be some events that schools participate in, but without the fundraising component. The annual Terry Fox Run is one example of this. While individual classroom teachers may choose to take students out on the yard for a socially distanced walk/run, the school will not be collecting funds. Parents may, however, donate directly to the foundation online.

The UGDSB knows that there are many people in our families and communities who are in need and will work with schools and our community partners to continue to support those in need through community partnerships and direct support. The board also encourages families and students who are interested in supporting a cause to support them directly rather than through their school at this time.

The board will continue to revisit this decision and make adjustments accordingly, but for the time being we thank everyone for their understanding that school-organized fundraisers will be on hold.

Thank you.

