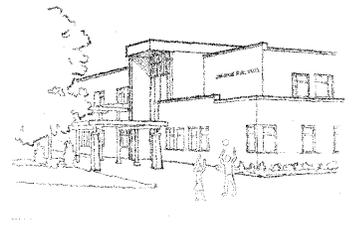


# École John McCrae

## NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2016

189 Water Street, Guelph, Ontario N1G 1B3  
Phone: 519-824-0028 Fax: 519-824-7067 Website: [www.ugdsb.on.ca/jmc/](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/jmc/)



Principal: Leslie Newman

Vice Principal: Olivier Cutz

Office Co-ordinator: Kathy Lambkin

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### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

What a beautiful month September has been! Our students have enjoyed almost every day outside in the warm sunshine. Throughout the month, we have managed to pack a lot into each and every day (Open House, Kindergarten Meet-n-Greet, Opening a brand new kindergarten classroom) as well as make some changes to staff. Things are starting to settle down and we are on our way to another great year. The biggest news staff wise is that Mme Higgins moved from teaching grade four to kindergarten and M Black took over the grade four classroom. We have hired M Black's replacement (Jenzaia Campbell) and are very lucky as she has been doing this job since the second week of school. Mlle Clune who was with us last year, has been hired to teach one day per week. The sad news for us is that Mlle McGregor (who has been teaching one of our kindergarten classes) will be leaving John McCrae to work at a school in Palmerston. We wish her all the best and have already started the process to replace her.

As always, one of our main goals will be to continue to help our students build on their French language skills and literacy and numeracy achievements. Throughout the year (daily, in fact) we review our motto "**The World Awaits Us**". We work very hard to help our students understand that they are not only an important part of the John McCrae community, but also an important part of a larger, more global community. One of our first endeavors as a school community is our Thanksgiving food drive which started last week and ends this Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup>. Please help us by sending in food.

We hope that if you are interested in joining School Council that you know that you are most welcome. We meet in the school library from 6:30-7:45p.m every second Tuesday of the month. We have a group of parents that will make you feel most welcome and who might put you to work! Participating in School Council will help you to keep up to date with everything happening at John McCrae. The next meeting is on Tuesday, October 11.

Thanksgiving is this weekend. We have had a beautiful fall and we have so much to be thankful for. I do hope that you are able to enjoy some time with family or friends. Personally, I am looking forward (and thankful) to having my children home for a short period of time and spending time with them and with my husband. **Happy October!**

*Leslie Newman*

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### FIRST NATION, METIS, INUIT SELF-IDENTIFICATION

If your child is a member of a First Nation, the Métis or the Inuit, then please consider having him or her self-identify. Self-identification helps in several ways:

1. Students will have access to more culturally relevant programming and opportunities for unique cultural and academic experiences.
2. The school system will have an opportunity to focus efforts and resources, as well as an increased awareness of the diverse needs of indigenous families.
3. The school community will have an opportunity for building relationships to increase student success and well being.

Share your pride in your heritage! Please come to the office (or have your child do so) to get a card that can be filled in and submitted if you wish to self-identify.

*Data will be protected and governed by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

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### FIRE SAFETY AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS

We are planning to have three fire drills within the next week or so and, we will continue to practice our fire safety and lockdown procedures. If you happen to be visiting during these drills we would ask that you follow the same procedures as the students and staff (exit the building immediately upon hearing the alarm).

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## CURRICULUM NEWSLETTERS

Be sure and look for grade and subject specific newsletters which will be posted on our website by the end of the month. Just click on the link to read about what your child is learning about at school this term, what teaching strategies the teachers are using and how students are being assessed. It's just one click of the button to get the answer to, "What did you do in school today?"

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## PA DAY

Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup> will be a Professional Activity Day. There will no school that day.

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## TERRY FOX WALK

Special thanks to all who helped in organizing our annual Terry Fox Run which, due to rain, was run on Monday October 3. We had a wonderful time walking for Terry! Thanks to the many parents who volunteered to line the walking/running route and count money. As always, it was a great success. Donation totals will available in next month's newsletter.

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## THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE

Thanksgiving is a time for giving and here at JMC we would like to give to those in need in our community. Mme Siversky and Mme Katsaounis/Mme Proude's Grade 6 and Kindergarten classes will be running the **Thanksgiving Food Drive** this year. We will be collecting non-perishable items for the **Chalmers Community Services Centre** here in Guelph. Please think about donating to the food drive which runs from **Monday, September 26th to Friday, October 7th**. Let's fill up our bins so that everyone in Guelph can have a happier and healthier start to the autumn season. Merci beaucoup!

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## SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETINGS

**Next School Council Meeting** - Please join us for the next School Council meeting on Tuesday, **October 11th** from **6:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.** in the school library. This meeting will be focused on discussing events / activities that School Council will be holding throughout the year. If you require childcare, please contact Mme Newman at [leslie.newman@ugdsb.on.ca](mailto:leslie.newman@ugdsb.on.ca) before Friday, Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>.

School Council meetings run from 6:45-8:00 p.m. Mark your calendar for future dates of School Council meetings:

- November 8, 2016
  - December 13, 2016
  - January 10, 2017
  - February 13, 2017 – Nutrition, Physical Literacy and Mental Wellness Workshops followed by meeting
  - March 14, 2017
  - April 11, 2017 – Nutrition, Physical Literacy and Mental Wellness Workshops followed by meeting
  - May 9, 2017
  - June 13, 2017
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## ART IMAGE

What is ART Image? ART Image is an art education program that is funded by School Council and delivered to grade 1-6 classes by parent volunteers. The program fits with the provincial curriculum and the children love it!

We are seeking "ART Image" volunteers for the 2016-2017 school year! Most classes still require more volunteers and many are without any. **You do not need any previous art experience to be a volunteer!** ART Image guidebooks contain well-researched lesson plans that provide step-by-step teaching instructions. Each lesson includes a fun art activity. Volunteers often work in teams. Experienced volunteers can help new volunteers learn more about the program.

If you would like to volunteer or have questions please contact your ART Image coordinators: Deanna Kruger & Amy Schuster, [artimagecoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:artimagecoordinator@gmail.com)

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## PICKING UP AND DROPPING OFF STUDENTS

Thank you for diligently using the sign-in and sign-out procedures and wearing visitors badges when at John McCrae. Please also note the additional safety procedures we have in place at McCrae.

1. No matter what the reason (even dropping off a child), we ask that every visitor and volunteer check into the office and obtain a visitor badge.

2. When leaving the school, all visitors and volunteers must sign out and return their visitor badge to the office.
3. At the beginning or end of the day all parents are asked to drop-off and pick up their Grades 1-8 children at the side library doors. **We would really appreciate if you did not come into the school, but rather, help them to become independent by allowing them to go into the school and hang up their own bags.**
4. Parents picking their children up during the day need to report to the office. Their children will be called down to meet them.
5. Any parents visiting the playground need to check into the office and obtain a visitor badge. They will also be asked to identify themselves to the staff on yard duty.

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## **DRIVING AND PARKING**

It's always busy at our school during the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times! We continue to be a growing community with a number of buses picking up our students. The parking lot is closed to parent vehicles for student drop-off and pick-up from 8:20-8:35am and 3:05-3:20pm. Please help keep our school community safe by following the instructions of our street/parking patrollers and not asking them to move pylons.

Please consider having your child walk home from school or part way home where a less busy pick-up point can be arranged. Parking along many of the arterial streets is currently permitted by the City of Guelph as long as you obey the no parking signs posted, remain one meter from a private driveway and are nine meters from a stop sign. We ask that you watch for our street patrols, follow their directives, and always keep our emergency routes open for the safety of all our students, staff and families.

Thank you so much to our street patrols for being on time and at their post every day. Thanks also, to the parents and students who are patient and follow the direction of our safety patrols as they do their job in keeping our students safe. We know that sometimes you have to wait quite a while to cross the street, but we appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

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## **MEDIC ALERT BRACELETS**

Safeguarding your child's health is a priority. The Canadian Medic-Alert Foundation has created a *No Child Without* program aiming to provide students, from age 4 until 14, with the 24 hour protection of MedicAlert emergency information services, at no cost. For more information and/or to enroll your child, please contact MedicAlert at:

**Call:** 1-877-282-5378 (Toll free)

**Online:** [www.nochildwithout.ca](http://www.nochildwithout.ca)

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## **CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY & PROGRAM**

The Upper Grand District School Board places a high priority on the safety of our students. The Child Abuse Prevention Policy is evidence of our commitment to this priority. The following is a quote from the policy:

*“Every citizen in the community shares a responsibility for our children. School officials and teachers share this collective community responsibility for creating safe and nurturing environments for children. Under the Child and Family Services Act, this responsibility includes the legal requirement to report to the local Children’s Aid Society any suspected child abuse or other situations where a child may be in need of protection. Teachers and other Board employees have a special opportunity to know and understand children during their most influential years of development. They are in a unique position to be able to see early signs of maltreatment, and to know or hear about the abuse and neglect that is often suffered by children.”*

As required in the Policy, we will be teaching age-appropriate lessons to help our students identify abuse and protect themselves from abusive situations. The goal is to provide children with the tools they need to keep themselves safe. The lessons cover a broad range of safety issues including bullying, stranger danger and abuse by a known and trusted adult.

These lessons will occur this fall. For grades 1, 3 and 5, the lessons will be team taught by our Child and Youth Counselor and classroom teachers. There is no formal program in grades 2, 4 and 6, although the safety concepts are reviewed by classroom teachers informally. Students in grades 7 and 8 will also participate in a Red Cross program presented by the school’s Child & Youth Counselor entitled **“It’s Not Your Fault”**. These two hour presentations will occur in homeroom classes.

We encourage you to discuss with your child at home, the concepts taught in the Child Abuse Prevention Curriculum.

For more information regarding the Child Abuse Prevention Policy and/or Programs please contact Mme Newman or Mme Longtin, our Child and Youth Counselor.

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### **PETS**

Please understand that due to safety reasons **no pets of any kind are allowed at school or on school property without permission.** Teachers may give permission for pets to be brought to school as part of a special display or project, although they must be consulted first. Some children are highly allergic to certain animals, while others are sometimes fearful of them due to prior experiences. While walking your dog or playing in the playground with your children, please encourage all who use our school and city walks and grounds to be sure and scoop whatever is left behind! We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

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### **KIDS HELP LINE**

Students and parents should be aware of the toll-free help line that is available 24/7 for students of all ages. This line provides anonymous, confidential, and non-judgmental support from professional counsellors. The phone number is 1-800-668-6868. Their web site is: [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca). We will be displaying posters in the school throughout the year to remind our students of this service.

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### **ASTHMA FRIENDLY SCHOOLS POLICY**

Asthma is a very common chronic lung disease that can make it hard to breathe. The Upper Grand District School Board adopted a new policy in June 2016 to provide support for students with Asthma. If your child has asthma, the policy requires an Asthma Management Plan (AMP) to be completed by parents, a child's doctor and the principal of the school. A copy of this plan is available on the Board's website under Policy 516. Parents are requested to complete the AMP and return it to the school as soon as possible at the beginning of the school year. Authorization for the collection of this information is in the Education Act. The purpose is to collect and share medical information and to administer proper medical care in the event of an emergency or life-threatening situation. Users of this information may be principals, teachers, support staff, volunteers, bus operators and drivers. This form will be kept for a minimum period of one calendar year. Contact person concerning this collection is the school principal.

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### **SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

The Upper Grand DSB provides a smoke-free environment for its students, staff, and others while on school Board property, in accordance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. This policy refers to all forms of tobacco, and any processed form of tobacco that may be smoked, inhaled or chewed, including e-cigarettes.

Smudging is the tradition of using sacred smoke from sacred medicines (e.g., tobacco and sage) that forms part of the indigenous culture and spirituality. Smudging is allowed in schools under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Parents will be informed using the school's usual forms of communication when smudging is going to occur in our school. Participation by staff and students is optional in a smudging ceremony.

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### **LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES**

We have children in our school with potential life-threatening allergies to various foods and other materials called anaphylaxis. This is a medical condition that causes a severe reaction to food or other materials, and 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 may refrain from sending foods to the school that contain peanuts and nuts. 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 contacted by the classroom teacher.

Our school has procedures in place to help manage 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.

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### **INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs)**

Individual Education Plans, or IEPs, are developed by schools when assessments show that a student needs special education programming and/or services. The development of the IEP should be a collaborative process that includes parents and the student (if possible). During the development phase, schools are required to seek feedback through consultation with parents.

This is your opportunity to discuss and share information with the classroom teacher and/or special education teacher regarding your child's education. If your child had an IEP last year, you will see a copy of this working document come home by October 18.

When the IEP is sent home, you will also receive a booklet titled, *Parents' Guide to the Individual Education Plan*. This booklet is a resource to help parents understand how an IEP is developed, what is included in an IEP, and how an IEP supports your child. It also includes definitions and explanations to help parents understand some of the language that is part of an IEP, such as accommodations and modifications.

If your child has an IEP, you should have received a Parent/Guardian IEP Questionnaire. Your input helps provide us with information to plan for your child.

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## TALKING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH – PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH

Helping kids grow up mentally healthy is an important part of parenting. Here are a few things that CHEO (<http://www.cheo.on.ca/en/Promoting-Mental-Health-parents>) suggests you can do to support good mental health in your children and youth.

1. **Put your device down** - When you are with your children and youth, show them that they are more important than your electronic device. Lead by example: **put your own devices aside and spend face-to-face time with your kids**.
2. **Listen when they're upset** - When children and youth are upset, they just want you to listen and understand how they're feeling. Try not to jump in with advice or reassurance. **Listen is spelled with the same letters as Silent**.
3. **Focus on their strengths** - Support your children and youth's self-esteem by helping them to see their own strengths. **Show that you see and appreciate kindness, empathy and trying hard**, and not just achievements like good grades. For example, "That was kind of you to think of your brother" or "You worked so hard on that and you didn't give up!"

Have a mentally healthy October!

*Dr. Lynn Woodford is the Mental Health Lead for the Upper Grand District School Board.  
Follow me on Twitter @drlynnwoodford.*

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## CHANGING OUR BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES ABOUT MATH

*"Myth of the Math Person"* – Most people believe that math is one of those subjects that you either "get" or you "don't get." This way of thinking cannot be further from the truth; there is no such thing as a math person. Everyone can achieve in any subject with hard work, perseverance, and someone to guide them. The key to shattering this myth is developing a growth mindset in our teachers and students, and a math classroom where students are challenged by engaging problems and supported in their learning.

*"The Evolving Classroom"* – The reason so many people think math is the most difficult is the inaccessible way it is often taught.<sup>1</sup> When we were math students our math teachers often taught us tips, tricks, and recipes for solving math problems. In the math classes of old there was only one correct solution. We could get the answer if we memorized and followed the teacher's procedure, but if someone asked us the "why" behind our formula, most of us wouldn't be able to answer.

Today, teachers are striving for students to have a solid grasp of the "why" behind each solution. This often means that students are encouraged to share a variety of methods and strategies to solve a single problem. By sharing different strategies, teachers can help students see the common thread that connects each solution, thus deepening their understanding of the concept being taught. The teacher's role is no longer to teach procedures, but to help students make connections and understand the mathematical concepts behind the solutions.

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## GROWTH MINDSET HOMEWORK HEALTH TIPS

Let your child struggle with math problems.

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- See if they have the perseverance to work through their struggles. We need to break the math myth that we need fast answers to be good at math.

Never let your child hear you say: “I was never good at math.”

- Research studies have shown when parents tell their children they were not good at math, their child’s achievement is immediately affected.

Ask your child if they can solve a math problem in another way.

- This shows that your child has multiple strategies at their fingertips and they are flexible with their math thinking.

Ask your child to explain the reasoning behind their response.

- “Why did you (add/ subtract/ multiply/ divide)?”
- “What does your drawing represent?”

## **Online Resources**

### **Parents’ Beliefs about Math Change Their Children’s Achievement - <https://goo.gl/psL33d>**

“We now know that the messages we give students can change their performance dramatically, and that students need to know that the adults in their lives believe in them.”

### **TL Talk: The Gift of Failure – Interview with Jessica Lahey - <https://goo.gl/oo7xFc>**

“Jessica is the author of the New York Times bestselling book, *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed*.”

### **How to Learn Math: for Students - <https://goo.gl/OCywaf>**

“How to Learn Math is a free self-paced class for learners of all levels of mathematics. It combines really important information on the brain and learning with new evidence on the best ways to approach and learn math effectively.”

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## **GRADE 7 AND 8 STUDENTS – FUNDRAISING**

Please return your *Fresh From the Farm* orders by Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup>. Remember – the money you raise will go into your school bank account for your Grade 8 year-end trip.