

École John McCrae School

NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2017

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Spring is almost here! It's hard to believe that it will arrive in a few weeks. Having said that spring is still on the horizon, I imagine that the clothes that have gone home recently covered in mud have led you to believe that spring has already begun. I'm sure that students will be in for a shock when the cold weather appears again!

We are well into term two and are as busy as ever. During the month of February we focused on kindness. Morning announcements reminded students that taking a moment to say thank you, show appreciation, or to be kind can go a long way. This morning, one of our grade eight students suggested that we, "Throw kindness around like confetti". What a great idea! Our assembly on Friday February 24th helped our students recognize and appreciate the ability everyone has to be kind and helpful to others. In March, we will focus on honesty.

March Break is fast approaching. Before each holiday, we try to put the lost and found clothing out on tables in the front hall. Although we emptied two huge bins in December, they are once again full to the top. Please stop by between March 2th and March 7th and take a look for lost clothing. On March 8th, it will be packed up and given away.

We would like to remind you to keep April 11th open for our second Health Habits Night. The last one was excellent and we would love to see even more people out. In April 27th, we will be celebrating our annual Night Among the Stars. This year however, we will also be having an Open House beforehand. Stay tuned for more details.

We hope our students enjoy their Spring Break and come back ready for the final stretch of the school year!

Leslie Newman

LOST AND FOUND

Our lost and found bins are overflowing once again. Items have been organized and are on display in the front hallway. Please stop by and check for any items that may belong to your student(s). Anything left at the end of the day on Tuesday, March 7th will be donated to the "Open Closet Event," that makes clothes available for free distribution to those in need.

SCHOOL COUNCIL CORNER

*Please join us for the next School Council Meeting on Tuesday, March 7 at 6:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. (in the school library). We were not going to have a meeting in March, but January's meeting was cancelled. Everyone is welcome! If you require childcare for the meeting, please contact Mme Newman at leslie.newman@ugdsb.on.ca by Friday, March 3rd. If you would like to be on the School Council mailing list, please write to johnmccraeschoolcouncil@gmail.com.

*Family Fun Night – After the resounding success of last year's Family Fun Night, many of us are looking forward to June 8th for this year's event. Lots of help is needed! Please contact Brenda MacDonald, brendamacd@gmail.com, if you can help in any way!

*Thanks to everyone who attended School Council's Speaker Series on "Nutrition and Physical Literacy." It was a wonderful and informative event. A special thanks also goes out to our guests, Ishan Ingra and Dr. Jenna Arts, who taught us so much.

COLD & FLU SEASON

Winter is not over and so are the illnesses and contagious bugs that come with it! If your child has flu-like symptoms, cold, cough, sore throat, or a rash, please keep them home to rest and recuperate before returning to school. When our students come to school ill they do not work well and they pass on their illnesses to others. When we are sick, we all feel better at home in a warm bed with our favorite things.

MARCH BREAK

Please remember that spring break for our students is from Monday, March 13th to Friday, March 17th.

MOVING IN? MOVING OUT?

If you are planning a move to another school this summer, or know of someone moving into our school area for the 2017-2018 school year, please notify the office as soon as possible.

SCHOOL CASH ONLINE

86% of our school population is registered to use this convenient and secure online payment method! Not everyone, however, is using the system on a regular basis. Please make use of School Cash Online to pay for school trips, pizza and milk, and so much more. We would love to eliminate paper altogether as we strive to be a more eco-friendly school. Let's see 100% of John McCrae families signing up and USING this method of payment! You will receive email notifications when items are available to purchase, and reminder emails before an item expires. Please visit www.ugdsb.on.ca/jmc and follow the prompts through the following link to sign up:



GRAD PHOTO RE-TAKES

Grade 8 graduation photos were taken on February 15th and photo proofs were sent home on February 28th. Please submit your order no later than March 9th. Likewise, you may place your picture order directly at www.mylifetouch.ca. If you wish to have the photo re-taken, you must call Lifetouch directly and schedule an appointment for a re-take in their Kitchener office on Monday, March 20th. Photo re-takes are not done at the school. Please call Lifetouch: (519) 744-1146, ext. 2

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

Please remember that we turn our clocks forward one hour on Sunday, March 12th.

CLASS PLACEMENT REQUESTS

In the past, we have received a number of class placement requests for the coming school year. This can make class building very difficult and sometimes hinder the process significantly. Due to our ever changing school population and the fact that our grade 7 and 8 students are on rotary, **we will not be taking any class placement requests for September 2017**. If your child has some exceptional circumstances that require consideration when doing class placements, please email Mme Newman directly, leslie.newman@ugdsb.on.ca. Please know that when placing your child in a class, we consider their ability, personality, friendships, learning style, and behaviour. Class building is a lengthy process that is given a great deal of thought by the staff. Thank you for recognizing that we do our very best for each and every student.

SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

During the week of Feb. 29 - March 4, students in grades 4-12 will be completing a School Climate Survey. The purpose of this survey is to determine whether or not our students feel that their school provides a safe and inclusive learning environment. The survey asks general questions about how the student is feeling at school, as well as specific questions about bullying. Staff and parents are also being asked to complete a climate survey about their school. Parents can use the following link to access the survey, or the survey can be accessed through our school website.

https://uoguelph.eu.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_87VAOCZ4TdwN52Z

SYRUP IN THE CITY

Come to John McCrae's first ever maple syrup festival - Syrup in the City - experiential fun for the whole family! Saturday, April 1, 10 am – 1 pm. Hosted by John McCrae with the support of TRANSITION GUELPH's Urban Sugaring project & the CELP Headwaters Program. Come see a tree tapping demonstration, sap boiling demonstration, try pioneer log sawing, taste some sap, dance a sap dance, watch a puppet show, play animal hide & seek BINGO and enjoy a pancake breakfast.

VISION HEALTH

If you suspect that your child is struggling with vision issues, there are several things that you can do. First, book an eye exam with an optometrist. Basic OHIP coverage for eye exams, is available free of charge, for children from birth to age 19. Speak with your child's teacher regarding your concerns and encourage your child to clearly express to the teacher the difficulties they are having (Are they having trouble seeing things on the board? Are they having trouble copying information? Are they having trouble seeing the information in novels/textbooks/notebooks etc.?) There are a number of accommodations that can be made to quickly address potential problems, including seating closer to the board or larger print on computers or photocopies. You can also discuss with the classroom teacher or SERT the possibility of making a referral to one of the Vision Itinerant Teachers who provide support to your school.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS – EARTH HOUR

Join the global Movement! **Celebrate Earth Hour on March 25th at 8:30pm.** Earth Hour's mission is uniting people to protect the planet by raising awareness of about climate change and encouraging positive action. "Earth Hour was famously started as a lights-off event in Sydney, Australia in 2007. Since then it has grown to engage more than 172 countries and territories worldwide. Earth Hour is more than an event. It is a movement that has achieved massive environmental impact, including legislation changes by harnessing the power of the crowd."

Click [here](#) to see a short video clip of Earth Hour's story around the world and click [here](#) for highlights of 2015

Earth Hour belongs to you. Celebrate your commitment to the planet with your friends, family, community or at work - in your own way. A simple event can be just turning off all non-essential lights on March 25th from 8:30-9:30 pm. For one hour, focus on your commitment to our planet. To celebrate, you can:

- *prepare a candle lit dinner,*
- *talk to your neighbours, or invite people over*
- *stargaze, or go camping in your backyard*
- *play board games, or charades*
- *host a concert, or a sing-a-long*
- *create or join your own community event*
- *have an Earth Hour every month*

The possibilities are endless!

Quotes and information taken from: <https://www.earthhour.org/>

YOUR CHILD'S HEARING IS IMPORTANT

Seventy-five percent of a child's day is spent listening; listening to complex language, directions and instructions which need to be comprehended. Being able to hear peers is important for developing social skills and friendships. That is why it is important that any hearing difficulty be discovered as soon as possible because even mild hearing loss can put a child at risk for academic and communication difficulties. **Audiologists** are experts who assess hearing sensitivity and functioning that provides a window into the language/listening parts of the brain. Since listening is a critical learning skill, test results can be helpful in planning a program of intervention. Students who wear hearing aids, cochlear implants, or use personal FM systems should routinely visit an Audiologist to have their equipment checked. If you suspect your child has difficulty with hearing or attention, it is recommended that you have your child tested by an **Audiologist**. To find an Audiologist in your community, visit the website of the College of Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario (www.CASLPO.com) and click on "Find an Audiologist" and search for Private Practice.

At UGDSB you can call 519-941-6191 ext. 231 for information.

FEEDBACK WELCOME ON DRAFT POLICIES

The Upper Grand District School Board is welcoming public input on draft policies. Currently under review is the **First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Self-Identification** Policy 500. You are invited to review the draft documents and submit online feedback at www.ugdsb.on.ca/policy. **he deadline for public input is April 13, 2017** at 4 p.m. EST. Persons without internet access may call 519-822-4420 (or toll-free 1-800-321-4025) ext. 723 to request a printed copy of the draft documents.