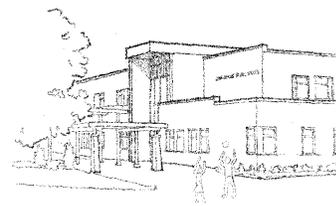


École John McCrae School

NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2018

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Principal: Leslie Newman

Vice Principal: Olivier Cutz

Office Co-ordinator: Kathy Lambkin

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

We hope our students and their families enjoyed either a restful or an active March Break. Despite the month of March passing by quickly it was filled with many enriching experiences. Some of our young students had the opportunity to learn about Birds of Prey from a presentation by Wild Ontario. Additionally, our grade 8 students visited the Holocaust Museum, our Character Education assembly focused on "the truth," and Earth Hour was observed on March 23rd. Of particular significance was our very popular Syrup in the City collaborative event. Through the incredible organization and collaboration between John McCrae's librarian, Beth McEwen, CCVI's CELP Headwaters' program, and Transition Guelph, our school and magnificent maple bush was transformed into a sap-filled celebration of the gift of "sweet water" with lots of fun, food, arts, and learning for all. It was heartwarming to see families eating pancakes in the gym, dancing to the music of the Funky Mamas and taking in all the learning about maple syrup. Thank you to all organizers, sponsors, students, staff, parent volunteers, and to our community for coming out.

April will be another exciting month here at John McCrae. Please save the date for Tuesday, April 10th at 6:30 pm and register for our **Parents Reaching Out Event** on the school website. Come out to hear University of Waterloo professor and Critical Media Lab director Marcel O'Gorman speak on the topic of "Technology and Its Impact on Youth: A Discussion on Digital Addiction and How to Start Unplugging." Please note that this workshop will be for adults only. There will also be lots happening for our students such as the board level Chess Tournament, Skills Canada Competition, River Run performances, SHARK Swim for grade 3 students, Jump Rope Kick Off Assembly, Focus on Nature for our Grade 6 students, the UGEMTA Music festival, and our Character Education Assembly. April 26th and 27th are our Administrative Assistants and Custodial Appreciation Days and April 28 is a Professional Activity Day where our teachers will be building capacity and school effectiveness through professional learning.

Once again, we thank you for supporting the learning happening at John McCrae in all the ways that you do and please know that our doors are always open should you have any questions or concerns.

Leslie Newman and Oliver Cutz

SCHOOL COUNCIL CORNER

Parents Reaching Out: John McCrae Parent Council is pleased to share with parents an evening of education and awareness on the topic of "**Technology and Its Impact on Youth: A Discussion on Digital Addiction and How to Start Unplugging**". Please join us on April 10th at 6:30 p.m. This workshop will be for ADULTS ONLY; child care will NOT be available at this event.

Our guest speaker, Marcel O'Gorman, is University Research Chair and Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Waterloo. He is also Director of Critical Media Lab, located in Downtown Kitchener. Critical Media Lab researchers, students, and artistic collaborators create objects-to-think-with that reflect the impacts of technology on society and the human conditions. See the link to Marcel's Webpage on Digital Abstinence. If you have not signed up already, please do so on our School Website.

Due to the guest speaker, there will be NO School Council Meeting on April 10. Our next meeting will be held on May 8th at 6:30pm.

Family Fun Night – After the resounding success of last year's Family Fun Night, many of us are looking forward to June 5th (please note the change due to the election) for this year's event. Lots of help is needed! Please contact Brenda MacDonald, brendamacd@gmail.com if you can help in any way!

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 2018-2019 school year, please notify the office as soon as possible.

KINDERGARTEN LEARNING FAIR

As we head into spring at John McCrae, we are already awaiting the arrival of our new junior kindergarten students. To help them and their families get to know us better, and learn about what it is like to go to kindergarten, we will be hosting a Kindergarten Learning Fair. At this evening event, you and your children will have an opportunity to meet our staff, talk to community members who support our students, and have a tour of the school and classrooms. This year our Junior Kindergarten Learning Fair will be held on Thursday, May 24th from 5:30-6:30 pm. Be sure and mark the date!

SEEKING KINDERGARTEN DONATIONS

The John McCrae Kindergarten Team is seeking donations for our outdoor play area. We would gratefully accept donations of the following (unbroken) items:

- outdoor play houses
- outdoor play structure
- plastic kitchens
- plastic animals
- small baseball gloves
- car tires

Donations can be brought to the main office, kindergarten classes, or the kindergarten yard for larger items. If you have other items that you think we may like, please email Mme Johnson: margie.johnson@ugdsb.on.ca or speak to any of the Kindergarten teachers. Thank you in advance for your donations!

MAD SCIENCE

The “Mad Science” after school program is returning to our school. This six week program for students in grades 1-6, “World of Wowology,” takes place on Thursdays from 3:10-4:10 pm from April 26 to May 31. Watch for a flyer coming home soon! Cost is \$79 + HST. Register ONLINE at www.register.madscience.org/hamilton NO LATER THAN TUESDAY, APRIL 17TH, or call 905-335-6746, ext. 23. All registrations must be completed through Mad Science. Registrations will NOT be accepted at the school.

CHESS CLUB

12 of our best chess players will participate in the Board-wide chess tournament in Aberfoyle on Thursday, April 5th. Best of luck to the participants.

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 2018**. 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.

EXTENDED ABSENCES

Please remember that if you are taking an extended vacation that will mean an absence of 15 or more consecutive days, you must contact the school office to ensure the proper paperwork is completed. Thank you for your cooperation.

TALKING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH - April 2018 Spring Clean Your Mental Health!

It's Spring! Flowers blooming, birds chirping, sun shining. There is nothing quite like it. Often we “Spring Clean” our homes – tuck winter away, clean out the cobwebs and get ready for summer. Spring is a time of renewal. Why not use this momentum for a mental health renewal?

Let the sun shine in ...

Try and “spring clean” your emotional and mental spaces this month. Get rid of emotional debris that is no longer serving you. Here are some ideas to help get you started on your mental health Spring Clean. Focus on things that make you happy and give you a clear, fresh state of mind

Start a Journal Writing can help articulate your thoughts, clear your emotional space and help put things into perspective. Try having a family journal time where once a week everyone journals/records their thoughts and feelings. This can help clear your

mind of clutter and also get things out of your mind and onto paper. Don't worry about punctuation or spelling – it's just for you.

Be Aware of Your Thoughts Sometimes we don't even notice the negative things we say to ourselves. Try to notice your thoughts and reframe thoughts into kindness. Instead of “We never have time to sit down as a family for dinner” try “When we sit down as a family for dinner it is such a treat”. We are careful of how we speak to others but often not so careful about how we speak to ourselves. Practice your own self compassion this month.

Enhance Your Physical Health Physical wellness is a big part of maintaining mental well-being. Exercise, sleep, and eating well all contribute to positive well-being. Try replacing soda or coffee with herbal tea. Try going for a nature walk or scavenger hunt with the family. Yoga, Pilates, and mediation can also enhance both your emotional and physical well-being.

Remember, each day is fresh start – just like Spring. Have a great April!

Jenny Marino, Mental Health and Addictions Lead
Upper Grand District School Board

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS – April 22 is EARTH DAY!

“Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.” -Albert Einstein

Founded in 1990, Earth Day Canada inspires people of all ages across the country to connect with nature and build resilient communities as well as foster an intrinsically motivated, enduring commitment to stewardship and conservation.

<https://earthday.ca/about/>

Earth Day 2018 Theme: End Plastic Pollution

From poisoning and injuring marine life to disrupting human hormones, from littering our beaches and landscapes to clogging our waste streams and landfills, the exponential growth of plastics is now threatening the survival of our planet. Earth Day 2018 is dedicated to providing the information and inspiration needed to fundamentally change human attitude and behavior about plastics. <https://earthday.org>

Ideas for your family to celebrate Earth Day:

- **Get involved with Earth Day 2018's Theme** <https://www.earthday.org/yourjourney2018/>
Download your Plastic Pollution Primer to learn more about this problem and act to help **End Plastic Pollution!**
- **Spend a day outside.** In the garden with your family, plant vegetables, trees or native flowers and attract native animals and pollinators. Or join a local community event to help clean your neighbourhood or restore local plant life.
- **Make commitments to cut down on your energy usage as well as waste.** Turn lights off, power down electrical devices, turn down your thermostat and only do full loads of laundry and dishes. Always bring cloth bags when shopping, refuse to buy over packaged products, and lug a mug instead of using non-recyclable coffee cups.
- **Learn more about the environment and the effects of global warming.** Encourage awareness and promote the Reduce, Reuse and Recycle way of life.

Remember that every day is Earth Day! Don't restrict yourself to just one day a year. Make environmental actions and caring about the planet a habit - on Earth Day and every day.



Shady backyard? Looking for a plot of land to grow vegetables?
Not enough space in your home garden. Poor soil at home?
Join our garden community!

PLOTS AVAILABLE for the 2018 Season

Contact the Garden Co-ordinator at
[**johnmccraecommunitygarden@gmail.com**](mailto:johnmccraecommunitygarden@gmail.com)