

# École John McCrae

## NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2019

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Principal: Leslie Newman

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### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It sure is cold outside (but not actually that cold)! I was on the phone last week, telling my daughter how frigid it was here in Guelph (-17) and how miserable we all were. She listened politely and then she told me that she was just about to walk to school (in North Bay) and the weather was -45 degrees. She said that she had her hat, mittens, and boots and was prepared for the day. The difference in what we both perceived as being cold reminded me that perspective is important. Speaking for myself, I sometimes default to thinking that things are harder than they really are. I have to take a step back and remind myself that I (and we as a whole at John McCrae) are really lucky; our school is filled with really amazing students and staff. I have to remember that just because we may have to stay inside for a day or two is not reason to complain!

2019 has started off well. Students are hard at work and seem to be enjoying this time where they are focused on academics. Sports teams are well under way (junior volleyball and intermediate basketball). Every morning and evening, there are students practicing in the gym. The band continues to meet once a week and I am always impressed that so many of our students are here for the 7:30am start. The Rainbow Club meets weekly and I was really happy to join in on their last meeting and hear about the many good things that they are doing.

I hope many of you were able to join us on Thursday night for our annual movie night. We had a great turnout and students and parents seemed to enjoy the movie. Thank you to Jeff and all of the wonderful volunteers for all the hard work and preparation you put into the evening.

Term one report cards come home in about three weeks (February 20). If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher.

*Leslie Newman*

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### TERM 1 REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be sent home on Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. How you interpret and respond to your child's report card is important. Listed below are some suggestions to help you read, understand, and celebrate your child's report card.

1. Read the learning skills on the first page of the document first. Celebrate and acknowledge your child's efforts, improvements, and strengths and who they are as a person. Pay particular attention to the comments regarding Strengths, Areas of Need, and Next Steps.
2. Pay attention to the section that deals with "days absent" and "times late." Sometimes this is an area that surprises parents and offers insights into why your child may be struggling.
3. Talk about the report card together and seek your child's opinion about their accomplishments.
4. Look at the grades that your child is getting in areas that he/she is interested in; this could suggest some new areas of interests and talents of your child.
5. Set some goals with your child in areas that you both agree would benefit from improvement. Look for key phrases like "organizational skills", "focusing", "non-completion of work", and "lack of preparation" to track down what is going wrong in a particular subject area.
6. Make a plan on how to meet these goals and share in the responsibility of helping support your child achieve these next steps.
7. Request a meeting with your child's teacher if you need clarification, want more information, or need ideas and resources to support your child's learning goals.
8. Remember that the term one report card is a checkpoint. There are five more months of work ahead and a lot can change during that time. Hard work and effort do pay off.

If you have questions or want to meet with a teacher, just call or email them.

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## SCHOOL COUNCIL CORNER

\*School Council meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month in the school library. The next meeting will take place on **Tuesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-7:45pm.** Please join us! If you would like to be on the School Council mailing list, please write to [johnmccraeschoolcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:johnmccraeschoolcouncil@gmail.com)

\*Thanks to everyone who attended School Council's annual Movie Night! Not only did the event bring us together as a community, but we also raised some money for future environmental programs. We wish to extend a big thanks to our hard-working volunteers for all their efforts!

\*Parents Reaching Out Event – Tuesday, April 9 from 6:30-8:00p.m. We will have an evening workshop where parents will be invited to gain a better understanding of online safety. More information will follow, but please save the date.

\*Family Fun Night – We are looking forward to this year's event. Mark your calendar for Thursday, June 6! Lots of help will be needed, so please watch for more details about how you can help out.

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## INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

In case of severe winter weather, with poor driving conditions and bus cancellations and delays, please listen for announcements on radio stations 1460 AM CJOY, 106.1 Magic FM, 900 AM CHML, 107.9 FM CJXY (Y108), Oldies 1090 AM, 105.3 Kool FM, News Talk 570 AM, 96.7 FM CHYM, 1150 AM CKOC, 102.9 FM CKLH, 820 AM CHAM and CKCO-TV. Announcements for John McCrae PS are included in "**South Wellington and the City of Guelph.**"

**Please note:** *If buses do not operate in the morning, they will not operate in the afternoon. If you elect to drive your student to school, you must make arrangements for them to be picked up at the end of the day (please communicate the arrangement with your student, or leave a note in their agenda, prior to drop-off). Likewise, if you choose to keep your "walking" student at home on an inclement weather day, you must notify the office (Attendance line #100) of the student's absence, otherwise the office will contact you to confirm your student's absence.*

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## GRADE 8 GRAD PHOTOS

Get those smiles ready! Lifetouch will be taking our Grade 8 Grad Photos on Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>.

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## 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 2019-2020 school year, please notify the office as soon as possible.

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## COLD & FLU SEASON

Winter is far from over and so are the illnesses and contagious bugs that come with it! If your child has flu-like symptoms, cold, coughs, fever, or rashes, 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.

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## FAMILY DAY

The Upper Grand District School Board will be observing Family Day on Monday, February 18<sup>th</sup> and our school will be closed. We hope you enjoy the day with your family.

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## ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS - Celebrate National Sweater Day on February 7th!

We will be participating in National Sweater Day which is a way to learn about the importance of saving energy and to inspire you to use less energy all winter. Heating accounts for 80% of residential energy use in Canada. If all Canadians lowered their thermostats by just 2 degrees Celsius this winter, it would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 4 megatons – that's equivalent to taking nearly 700,000 cars off the road!

[http://www.wwf.ca/events/sweater\\_day/0](http://www.wwf.ca/events/sweater_day/0)

National Sweater Day is about thinking differently about how we use energy, where our energy comes from and how we can play an important role in fighting climate change by using energy wisely. It is designed to help raise awareness about renewable energy and change behaviours around energy consumption in Canada. [assets.wwf.ca/downloads/nsd\\_2017\\_en\\_school\\_toolkit.pdf](http://assets.wwf.ca/downloads/nsd_2017_en_school_toolkit.pdf)

## Ideas for your family to celebrate Sweater Day

- Turn down your thermostat and wear a sweater on Feb 7<sup>th</sup> - and every day this winter!

- Ask your children to brainstorm with you about ways to save energy at home. Make a pledge to implement as many as you can. For extra ideas go to: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-use-less-electricity-home>
- Read a children's book on conservation such as: *Why Should I Save Energy?* by Jen Green. Encourage lots of questions and find the answers together.
- Learn about Green Energy sources. What types of renewable energy are available in Ontario - Wind? Solar? Geothermal?
- Valentine's Day is just around the corner - use recycled materials to create your cards this year! To learn more about how recycling saves energy go to Alliant Energy Kids: [www.alliantenergykids.com/UsingEnergyWisely/SavingEnergyAtHome](http://www.alliantenergykids.com/UsingEnergyWisely/SavingEnergyAtHome)

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## ENGAGING YOUR CHILD IN SCIENCE AT HOME

As parents we have the wonderful opportunity and responsibility for nurturing our children's growth. Parents play a key role in the physical, emotional, and intellectual development of their child. As parents we can usually find time to read a story to our children, thereby instilling a love of literature, but we are often at a loss as to how to instill a love and appreciation for Science. Science encourages problem solving skills, curiosity and questioning, creative and critical thinking, observational skills, and reinforces both literacy and math skills...and it's FUN! Here are some ideas for fostering Scientific skills in your children.

**1-See science everywhere.** Parents can take opportunities to ask "What would happen if ...?" questions or present brainteasers to encourage children to be curious and seek out answers. Children need to know that science isn't just a subject, but it is a way of understanding the world around us.

**2-Lead family discussions on science-related topics.** Dinnertime might be an ideal time for your family to have discussions about news stories that are science based, like space shuttle missions, severe weather conditions, or new medical breakthroughs. Over time, children will develop a better understanding of science and how it affects many facets of our lives. Movies and TV shows with science-related storylines are also great topics for discussion.

**3-Encourage girls and boys equally.** Many girls are left out of challenging activities simply because of their gender. Be aware that both girls and boys need to be encouraged and exposed to a variety of subjects at a very early age.

**4-Do science together.** Children, especially elementary-age children, learn better by investigating and experimenting. Simple investigations done together in the home can bolster what your child is learning in the classroom. Check with your child's teacher on what your child is currently learning in class and what activities you can explore at home.

**5-Connect science with a family vacation.** Family vacations are a great way to explore science. It could be a hiking trip where you explore nature or a discussion on tides during a beach vacation.

## 6-Show excitement for Science!

"NSTA Science Matters: Tips for Busy Parents - National Science ...." <http://www.nsta.org/sciencematters/tips.aspx>.

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## PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS – IMMUNIZATIONS

In Ontario, the *Immunization of School Pupils Act* requires that all students attending school be fully immunized or have a valid exemption on file. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) has recently mailed immunization notices to elementary students with incomplete vaccine records. To avoid suspension, please update your child's immunization record by **March 15, 2019**.

If the student has already received the immunization(s), report them using one of these methods:

- Online: View and report immunizations at [www.immunizewdg.ca](http://www.immunizewdg.ca). Sign-in using your Ontario Health Card Number or the Ontario Immunization ID (provided on your Immunization Notice if received by mail from WDGPH).
- Email: Send a copy of the record to [vaccine.records@wdgpublichealth.ca](mailto:vaccine.records@wdgpublichealth.ca)
- Call: 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4396

If the student needs the immunization(s) do one of the following:

- Make an appointment with student's health care provider, bring the notice from WDGPH with you, and follow up by reporting the immunization(s) to WDGPH.
- Call 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4134 to make an immunization appointment at WDGPH.

If the student is not being immunized for medical or conscience/religious reasons:

- Access the appropriate exemption form at [www.wdgpublichealth.ca/your-kids/vaccination](http://www.wdgpublichealth.ca/your-kids/vaccination)

For the Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief Exemptions a parent/guardian must also complete an immunization education session at WDGPH. For an appointment call 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4134.