

# École John McCrae School

## NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2019

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Principal: Leslie Newman

Vice Principal: Chad Reay

Office Co-ordinator: Kathy Lambkin

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### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Every March, I am filled with sense of happiness. I can't help it! Lately, when I arrive at work in the morning or leave at night, it's light outside! What a difference that makes to how you feel and to your energy level. I am always grateful that we have almost made it through another winter (although I appreciate it too) and can now look forward to flowers, sunshine, and warmth! January and February were certainly challenging as far as the weather goes. As always though, our students and staff stepped up to the challenge and made the best of indoor recesses, tarmac only play time, and snow days.

This past week, we spent time as a school focussing on what "Random Acts of Kindness" meant and how we might go about participating in such a thing. Classes created challenges for themselves, M Reay or I read books to students (Have You Filled a Bucket Today) and students worked really hard just to be extra kind to each other. We also encouraged everyone to wear pink on Thursday so that we could participate in National **Pink Day**. Thursday April 11 is the International **Day of Pink** and we will be participating in that as well. Both of these days are to support Bullying Awareness and Prevention. Having our students completing random acts of kindness seemed to work well with this.

With the severe weather, we ended up having to cancel February's School Council Meeting. Because there is a lot going on in the next few months, we will be meeting on Tuesday March 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30p.m. We hope you can join us.

Spring Break is one week away. Some of you will be going away and many of us will be staying around and enjoying the time off. Whatever you do, stay safe and enjoy some extra time with your children. We will see you back at school on Monday, March 18.

Sincerely,

*Leslie Newman, Principal*

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### LOST AND FOUND

Our lost and found bins are overflowing. Items will be organized and 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 Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup> will be donated.

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### SCHOOL COUNCIL CORNER

\*Although we did not have one scheduled, we will have a School Council Meeting this month. Please join us on Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-7:45pm in the school library. Please contact Mme Newman if you require childcare ([leslie.newman@ugdsb.on.ca](mailto:leslie.newman@ugdsb.on.ca))

\*For April's meeting, please join us as we hear from a guest speaker on the topic of online safety. Join us on Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. Everyone is welcome!

\*If you would like to be on the School Council mailing list, please write to [johnmccraeschoolcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:johnmccraeschoolcouncil@gmail.com).

\*Family Fun Night – Mark your calendar. Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup> for this year's event. Lots of help needed! More details to follow.

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### GUELPH STORM STUDENT DAY

The Guelph Storm is offering discounted tickets on Student Day, Friday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, for their game versus Saginaw Spirit at 7:30p.m. You can access this discount 3 ways: 1) pick and pay for your student day seats online at [www.guelphstorm.com](http://www.guelphstorm.com) and visit "Ticket Page" for Friday, March 8. Enter offer code "STUDENT" for savings; 2) call the box office at 519-837-9690 to pick and pay for your seats by phone; 3) or pick up a voucher from the school office and present it in person at the box office. Discounted seats are subject to availability so please be sure to get them early!

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## **MARCH BREAK**

Please remember that spring break for our students is from Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup> to Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.

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## **SYRUP IN THE CITY**

Join us for John McCrae's 3rd maple syrup festival - Syrup in the City - experiential fun for the whole family! Saturday, March 30, 10 am – 1 pm. Hosted by John McCrae with the support of TRANSITION GUELPH & the CELP Headwaters Program. Come see a tree tapping and sap boiling demonstration, try pioneer log sawing, taste some sap, watch a puppet show, play animal hide & seek BINGO, get a book from the Bookmobile, take a selfie with Flappy the flapjack, and enjoy a pancake breakfast. By donation.

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## **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.

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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. Please note: If your student is currently in JK and your family is moving between now and August 31<sup>st</sup>, please contact the school right away.

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## **GRAD PHOTO RE-TAKES**

Grade 8 graduation photos have been rescheduled for Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> (due to the bus cancellation day on February 13). Please make every effort to have your student present that morning, as Lifetouch does NOT return to do re-takes. Grad photo re-takes only take place at Lifetouch's Kitchener office.

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## **DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME**

Please remember that we turn our clocks forward one hour on Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>.

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## **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 2019**. If your child has some exceptional circumstances that require consideration when doing class placements, please email Mme Newman directly, [leslie.newman@ugdsb.on.ca](mailto: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.

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## **TALKING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH – RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS**

Did you know that there are scientifically proven benefits of being kind? That's right. Just the act of being kind has been shown to stimulate the same part of the brain as those who receive an act of kindness. The simple act of kindness can:

- Reduce the stress hormone cortisol
- Increase sense of positive mood and satisfaction
- Help with physical health including lowering blood pressure
- Increase sense of happiness
- Increase feelings of "calm"
- Improve the mood of somebody simply witnessing the act of kindness

Kindness is also something that is TEACHABLE. Dr. Ritchie Davidson of the University of Wisconsin states that: "It's kind of like weight training, we found that people can actually build up their compassion 'muscle' and respond to others' suffering with care and a desire to help."

As a family, you can:

- Make a conscious effort to recognize and say something kind about each other or someone else
- Give everyone in the family sticky notes to leave kindness notes to each other around the house
- Challenge everyone to do a random act of kindness every day for a week and have dinner time discussion about what everybody did that day

- Make an effort to identify and appreciate kindness that has been received

The weather may not be “playing nice” with us here in Southern Ontario these last weeks but we can still give our brain and our mental health a winter “boost”! So go out and notice kindness, receive kindness and give kindness this month.

Jenny Marino, Mental Health Lead

Follow me on Instagram @ugdsb\_mental\_health

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### **ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS – Celebrate “Earth Day” – April 22nd - <https://earthday.ca/about/>**

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.

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.

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.