



# Laurelwoods Elementary School Newsletter

**Mental Health & Education Week – May 6 to May 10, 2024**

## Principal News

After a great deal of rain on the weekend we are looking forward to seeing some May flowers! Please make sure that your child is coming to school dressed for the variable spring temperatures; layers are best. Our yard and forest can be muddy. Outdoor shoes, preferably ones that are waterproof, are necessary. An extra change of clothes tucked in the backpack can come in handy in the event that your child has a slip and fall at recess.

May and June are very busy months. We have lots of events planned. Please take some time to read the school newsletter and classroom memos carefully to ensure you are aware of events and endeavor to make any necessary payments on or before the listed deadlines.

Sincerely,

Lori Shilvock  
Principal

## IMPORTANT DATES

May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Empowerment Day grades 5-8
May 6 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup>	Mental Health and Education Week
May 6 <sup>th</sup>	YMCA Presentation Grades 6-8
May 6 <sup>th</sup>	School Council presentation at GVDPS – 6:00 pm
May 8 <sup>th</sup>	Theatre Orangeville at Laurelwoods Grades 1-8
May 9 <sup>th</sup>	Fluoride Varnish Grades JK, SK, 2, 4, 7
May 10 <sup>th</sup>	Wellness Expo! Grades 6-8
May 14 <sup>th</sup> - 15 <sup>th</sup>	Dairy Education Presentations
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Class Photo Day
	International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Victoria Day Holiday – no school for students
May 21 <sup>st</sup> - 24 <sup>th</sup>	Guelph Grotto Climbing Wall
May 28 <sup>th</sup> - 30 <sup>th</sup>	Grade 6 EQAO
May 31 <sup>st</sup>	CAA Bus Patrol Trip to Guelph
June 3 <sup>rd</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup>	Grade 3 EQAO

## EQAO

Students in grades three and six will participate in the provincial Education Quality Assurance Office's (EQAO) annual standardized assessment of mathematics and language skills. Testing will occur during the morning blocks. Please avoid scheduling appointments to allow students the opportunity to participate in this assessment. The grade 6 students will write EQAO from May 28<sup>th</sup> -31<sup>st</sup> and the grade 3 students will write June 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> .

## Wellness Works!

UGDSB's May theme is Empathy.

*Empathy is "feeling with people" Doctor Brene Brown*



## Empowerment Day

Students in grades 5-8 will travel to Guelph on May 2nd to participate in Empowerment Day! Empowerment Day was initiated and developed by two very passionate students from the Drayton Heights Student Council in 2014. Elora Public Schools' Students Create Change has decided to continue this annual event and is welcoming students from all over UGDSB to Guelph on May 2nd. World-renowned motivational speakers, presenters, and performers are brought together to share inspiring messages with our youth on various topics relevant today. Through this experience we hope students gain the message that they can make a positive difference in their communities, and beyond.

## Mental Health & Education Week May 6-10, 2024



At UGDSB we are, as always, recognizing Mental Health and Education Week collectively. We are excited to announce UGDSB's 2023-2024 Mental Health and Education Week Theme: **5 Days of Wellness - Celebrating Mental Health & Education Week at UGDSB**. Each day this week will have a different focus. Monday is What is Wellness?, Tuesday is The Language of Wellness,

Wednesday is The Science of Wellness, Thursday is The Connection to Nature and Friday is The Practice of Wellness. Classes and divisions will be doing daily activities to highlight the daily theme. We hope that your children enjoy the week.

We will kick start the week with a presentation by Katie Spears on Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup> on Stigma & Mental Health.

### **Stigma, Mental Health Presentation**

Although there are effective treatment options for people experiencing mental health issues, substance use disorder and gambling-related problems, stigma serves as a barrier to help-seeking, forcing individuals to suffer in silence. This presentation defines stigma (self, social and structural), and the four stages of stigmatization referred to as cycle of stigma (labelling, stereotypes, separation, discrimination), provides tools to recognize stigma as well as strategies to reduce it (i.e. practicing non-judgmental language, listening, and asking questions rather than assuming, including rather than excluding, etc.). This workshop dispels myths and provides factual knowledge and awareness to support a compassionate approach to reducing stigma and facilitating an open dialogue. It will also share support services available in the community regarding mental health and problem gambling.

- Definition of gambling and stigma
- Dispelling misconceptions about mental health issues
- Unpacking judgmental attitudes and behaviors
- Stages of stigmatization
- Exploring the repercussions of labeling
- Strategies to reduce stigma
- Continuum of participation in risky behaviors, and when to seek help
- Information about support services

On Friday afternoon students in grades 6-8 will participate in a **Mental Wellness Expo!**

The afternoon will be divided into four 30 minutes sections.

12:00 - 12:30

12:35 - 1:05

1:10 - 1:55 Lunch/ Recess

2:00 - 2:30

2:35 - 3:05

Prior to Friday each student will indicate which sessions they wish to participate in. They will rotate through the centers. A description of the activity and an introduction to the presenter is below.

### **Station #1 Practicing Self-Care**

Meghan Mills is a Mental Health Educator from the Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington. Ms. Mills will present an engaging session on the power of Mindfulness and Gratitude. Discover how these tools can make a real difference in managing stress, improving relationships with friends and family, and boosting overall mental well-being. She will dive into gratitude journaling and enjoy some mindful meditation together.

### **Station #2 Art Therapy**

Tiffany McCabe is a Registered Social Worker, with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers. Tiffany believes in the healing power of art for people of all ages.

Tiffany enjoys working with adults, teens, and children. She welcomes anyone who is needing support around grief, depression, anxiety, or trauma. Tiffany specifically enjoys working with other professionals in the helping field (nurses, and social workers). She works from a strength-based lens and loves watching clients have "aha" moments, and witnessing people build on their confidence, resources, and strengths.

### **Session #3 Yoga**

Kimberly Van Ryn has been a Child and youth worker (3-year diploma from Humber many moons ago!) for over 20 years. She has a BA in Human Services and was certified for yoga instructor through the studio she attended at the time. The program was accredited by the Canadian Yoga Association. Since then, she has attended the University of Buffalo to become certified as a Trauma Informed Practitioner and through that work has become a trauma informed yoga teacher. She is the founder of Branching Out Support Services Inc. here in Orangeville. This little support service connects and does life with people that have neuro diversities. They serve all ages but are primarily known for group and 1:1 supports for adults with brain differences. they also have a growing education and advocacy service that is training professionals about neuro diversity, trauma, navigating systems and more.

### **Session #4 Dance!**

Jonathan Neville From Dance Orangeville will lead a 30-minute dance session for each group exposing students to line dance, freestyle solo dance, and group dance (dancing in a circle). "I would say that dancing isn't only about having fun - fun might happen, but dancing can be just a way of being wholly present with whatever you're feeling." Jonathan Neville

### **Session #5 Ukuleles**

Our own Ms. Lovett will be leading sessions of playing the ukulele! This will allow students to build upon the skills they have been developing throughout the year. Scientific research has begun to explore why music appears to have such a strong effect on health and wellness, particularly mental health, where sounds can serve as a conduit to lift someone's mood, help them reflect and reduce stress, anxiety and depression, improve your memory, manage pain, sleep better, improve motivation, improve mood, improve endurance and performance. Music can also support mental wellness as it provides a way of connecting with others and being creative.

### **Session #6**

Mike Soden from the Orangeville Tennis Club will be here to promote racquet sports. Being physically active can help you feel stronger and better able to do day-to-day activities. In addition, being active also helps you feel better mentally and emotionally and can improve your overall quality of life. Mike Soden from the Orangeville Tennis Club is a tennis professional association-certified pro, he will lead four 30-minute introductory sessions for students.

Here are some of the benefits many people experience from physical activity.

Decreases in:

- Anger
- Anxiety (worry and fear)
- Confusion
- Depression (you will likely be better at preventing, reducing, and managing depression)
- Headaches
- Stress and tension (you will likely be able to cope better with stress)

Increases in:

- Assertiveness (being able to ask for what you need and make decisions)
- Confidence and feeling able to do things

- Emotional stability (less troubled by life's challenges and disappointments)
- Independence
- Memory
- Having a positive mood
- Perception (better at noticing what is going on around you)
- Positive body image (feeling good about the way you look)
- Feeling of well-being
- Self-worth and self-esteem (feeling good about the way you see yourself)

## **Theatre Orangeville at Laurelwoods**

Theatre Orangeville will be traveling to Laurelwoods to perform the play: Boys Girls and Other Mythological Creatures. The play is about:

Young Simon who is on a quest to battle a fearsome dragon, with the aid of his friend Abby. Along the way, Simon's older brother resists the pair's magical world and shares his discomfort with Simon dressing up to transform into his 'true self'. This playful and moving story explores the search for a place to be ourselves safely, fully express who we are without judgment, and to find out what we are made of with the support of our friends and family.

The content of the play has Curriculum relevance: Drama, Language Arts, Bullying, Gender and Social Studies, and Character Education.

## **Dairy Education Program**

This month all students in grades JK-8 will have an opportunity to attend a Dairy Education Presentation. These 30-45 minute presentations connect to the Ontario Curriculum and utilize a variety of teaching tools to engage students.

## **Grotto Climbing Wall**

We are so excited to host the Guelph Grotto Climbing Wall from May 21<sup>st</sup> -24<sup>th</sup>! All classes JK-8 will get to have three experiences organized by the Grotto staff. Permission slips were sent home several weeks ago. Please make sure your child's permission slip has been returned to the school. We would like to thank the School Council for their generous donation towards supplementing the cost of this experience. We have asked families to pay \$5.00 per student for this experience. If you have not already made your payment, please do so as soon as possible.

## **School Safety Drills**

As a reminder, each year our school must conduct drills to ensure staff and students are prepared in the event of a real emergency. In recent weeks we conducted the last of our drills.

For the school year:

- Three (3) fire drills in the fall and three (3) fire drills in the spring
- Two (2) lockdown drills
- One (1) tornado drill
- One (1) bomb threat drill

All drills are conducted in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of our students. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.



## School Organization for the 2024-2025 School Year

We are continuing to work through the staffing process with the Board and will soon be able to begin creating next year's class list. A question that often comes up is how does staff decide which class to place my child in?

Answer: When school staff draft class lists, a variety of factors are taken into consideration. Some of them are as follows:

- Total number of students (must meet Ministry and contractual guidelines)
- Balance of female/male students
- Learning needs and styles of students
- Special Education considerations
- Formation of interactive learning groups
- Peer dynamics

If parents/guardians wish to make a request for a particular class, it must be supported by specific and detailed reasons. Our final deadline for requests to be emailed to the school is Friday, May 31st, 2024 email address: [karen.gardhouse@ugdsb.on.ca](mailto:karen.gardhouse@ugdsb.on.ca)

The request must specify the reason for the request. We will make every effort to honour parent requests, but please realize that we cannot guarantee that requests will be met, due to the number of variables involved in student placement.

## Attendance

Just a reminder to guardians when their children are away to call into the office in the morning to let us know. Due to safety protocol, we call each family to check in when a student is away. Guardians calling in ahead of time speeds this process up and allows us to know all our students are safe. Being on time for school and attending school regularly plays a critical role in any child's academic and social success at school.

## Calendar 2024 - 2025

The Ministry of Education has a pending approved Upper Grand District School Board school year calendars for the 2024-2025 school year. It is proposed that students start the year on Wednesday Sept. 4, 2024. For the Winter Break, classes will run until Friday Dec. 20, 2024, and return after the holidays on Monday Jan. 6, 2025. March Break will be from Monday March 10, 2025, through to Friday March 14, 2025. The last day of school for students will fall on June 26<sup>th</sup> for elementary students. The approved calendars will be posted on the board website under [School Year Calendars](#).

## Moving

If you know you will be moving over the summer and not returning to Laurelwoods Elementary School, please inform the office. This helps us to plan classes for the fall.



## Grade 8 Graduation

Graduation night is Monday, June 24th. Our graduation theme is "Oscar Night ". Pictures begin at 6:30 pm outside, with the ceremony beginning at 7:00 pm. Following the ceremony there will be refreshments served for students and their guests.

## Ice Dawgs

We will be selling Ice Dawgs on cookie days in May and June. These are chocolate chip / vanilla ice cream sandwiches and are on sale for \$2 each on Wednesdays. Preorder using cash online or send a twoonie with your child.

## School Council

Laurelwoods School Council would like to thank everyone who supported our grilled cheese lunch fundraiser. We sold over 100 sandwiches, and the students loved them.

We are excited to be co-hosting another wonderful presentation from the Family Transition Place, **Bullying: Changing The Lens on Monday May 6th, at Grand Valley Public School from 6:00-7:30pm**. This presentation will focus on examining bullying as a relationship issue. Workshop activities and discussion will address the following:

Explore the definition and the different types of bullying.

Understand how bullying and unhealthy relationships are linked.

How to promote healthy school relationships.

Examine the impacts of unhealthy relationships.

Look at the avenues students and parents can take to deal with unhealthy relationships.

We hope to see you there!

Spring Fling is quickly approaching on **Thursday, June 6th from 4:00-7:00pm!** School Council will be discussing and voting on the plans and funding for the event this Thursday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30pm. We are excited for what we have planned, and we hope you and your students are as well! We will be sending out the volunteer signup on Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup> to help organize parents who would like to lend a hand in making this year's Spring Fling a success.

### Upcoming School Council Meetings:

May 2nd at 6:30pm

June 6th - Meeting will be rescheduled, date TBD.

All School Council Meetings are held in the Laurelwoods School Library as well as virtually.

## News from the LLC

**Forest of Reading: OUR VOTES ARE IN!**

For the past few months, students and staff have been participating in the Forest of Reading program. Our first-place winners include: "Benny the Bananasaurus Rex" voted by K-2 students; "The Skull" voted by Gr.3-4 students; and it was a final tie between "Apartment 713" and "The Boy Who Woke the Sun" voted by Gr.5-6 students. Thanks to all who participated in the Canada-wide reading program and thank you once again to our School Council for sponsoring the program!

## Book Fair

Our **second** Scholastic Book Fair of the 2023/24 school year is happening right now! From April 29th to May 3rd students can view and purchase a variety of items on sale during school hours. All purchases help us to earn rewards for the school, enabling us to buy new books and other learning tools. Thanks in advance for all your support!





# Free Parenting Workshops Online

## EARLY MAY 2024



### Connection Conversations:

#### Approaching Drug Use Conversations With Your Child

**May 02, 2024, 7:00-8:00pm + 1/2 hour Q&A**

Are you wondering how to start talking to your kids about substance use? Are you worried that your approach will shut down the conversation before it even starts? This workshop will provide invaluable insights and practical strategies to empower parents in addressing drug use with their children.

Registration Required: <https://bit.ly/3VGj75P>



### Recognizing and Supporting Your Child's Special Needs

**May 08, 2024, 7:00-8:00pm + 1/2 hour Q&A**

Do you wonder if your child might have special needs and abilities? Has your child been recently assessed? This workshop can help you navigate the system. We'll discuss the behaviours that might indicate a special need, the process of assessment and various options, as well as an overview of different developmental and mental health diagnoses. In addition, we'll look at the different services and supports available.

Registration Required: <https://bit.ly/3U33nby>



### Piggy Banks to Prosperity: Teaching Kids Smart Money Moves

**May 15, 2024, 7:00-8:00pm + 1/2 hour Q&A**

Do you want to help your children develop smart money habits? We'll explore fun and interactive ways to introduce personal finance concepts to kids of all ages. Learn about budgeting, saving, and making smart spending choices through games and activities. Join us to learn how to help your child build a strong foundation for their future!

Registration Required: <https://bit.ly/3xuxEHT>

For more information or to register, please contact



[info@dpsn.ca](mailto:info@dpsn.ca)



519-940-8678

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