

Principal's Message

This week is Walk to School Week. Come and join us for a celebration on Friday Feb 5th 2016 starting at 8:15 am. Walk with your children to school and get rid of those winter blahs. Getting active by walking to school is a great way to get fresh air and activate your mind for learning. Encourage your child to walk to school this week. Live too far away to walk? Park the car a few blocks away and walk the rest of the way. Come early, meet other parents and let your child play with friends at school! Looking forward to seeing you walk to school this week. Get more information from www.saferoutestoschool.ca

Students will be delivering speeches in the next week with the school speech contest on Thursday, Feb 11, 2016. Junior students will start their speech contest at 8:45 am, Intermediate students will start their speech contest at 11:00 am. It is a wonderful time to celebrate with students who have strong presentation skills. On Feb 14th, our school speech winner will have the opportunity to compete at the Legion.

During the month of February, student council continues to build school spirit by having spirit days. See the attached calendar for specific dates and themes.

To support compassion, our positive character education trait for February, we are going to encourage all students and staff to participate in, "Random Acts of Kindness" Week, February 8-12th. During this week, students are asked to do something nice for someone else without a specific reason. An act of kindness can be, holding a door open, including someone in a game, inviting someone into a conversation, walking home with someone new or inviting them to walk with your group. The acts of kindness do not have to include buying them something. Talk it over with your family at dinner, how can you participate in Random Acts of Kindness week?

Elementary Provincial Report Cards:

Report cards will be sent home with all Senior Kindergarten to Grade 8 students on Thursday, February 11, 2016. We ask that parents review these documents with your child(ren). Please celebrate your child's successes, and discuss the "next steps" for improved achievement with your son or daughter.

Please see the Student Comment / Goal form at the bottom of page #3 and the Parent / Guardian Comment form at the bottom of page #4 of the report card. We ask that you and your child(ren) complete these forms and return them to the school as soon as possible. If you would like to schedule an interview with your child's teacher to discuss your child's progress, please indicate this on page #4. A mutually convenient interview time will be scheduled for this meeting.

Kindergarten Registration for 2015-16

Ms. English is looking forward to meeting with parents of Junior and **NEW** Senior Kindergarten students, who will be registering their children for Kindergarten beginning in September of 2016. This registration will be held on Wednesday, February 3rd, 2016. Ms. English will meet with parents anytime between 1:00 and 2:30 p.m. If you have not received a letter informing you about the documents needed (Birth Certificate, Immunization record, proof of address, health card) for Kindergarten Registration, please contact Ms. English at (519) 941-3731, ext 221.

Fluoride Varnish Program (Feb 17 and 18)

The Wellington Dufferin Guelph Health Unit will be at P.M.P.S. on February 17 and 18 in order to administer the second application of dental fluoride for our students. A team of dental hygienists will be at the school on these days to apply the fluoride to the teeth of those students who have returned their permission forms for this program.

Last year over 50% of our student population took part in this initiative. We are hoping to have even greater participation this year. We only have a small number of permission forms returned at this point. Please sign the permission form and send it in to school as soon as possible. If you have any questions about the Fluoride Varnish Program please contact the school (519) 941-3731.

Live Free Campaign

Friday, March 4th is Live Free Day. You can contribute by taking the challenge to Live Free of something you take for granted every day. Live Free is a campaign created by Food and Friends, which raises funds to help eliminate hunger in our school community. During the last 2 weeks of February, bring in a toonie and a box of crackers to help support our PMPS nutrition program.

Online donations are also appreciated <http://bit.do/livefreepmps>

School Council Update

The next School Council meeting will be held on Monday, February 22, 2016, in the school library.

6:45 pm coffee and social,

7:00 pm meeting starts

8:30 pm end of meeting

New parents are always welcome to attend! Babysitting available upon request.

Public input sought for draft policies

The Upper Grand District School Board has adopted a new approach to the development of policies and procedures, important documents that guide the board, staff and activities of our school system. Our goal is to improve policies and procedures at the draft stage, with your help. By providing an opportunity for input from parents, the community and stakeholders we are aiming for greater openness and transparency in our governance.

The first policy, procedures and guidelines to be posted for public consultation are related to "Equity and Inclusive Education". You are invited to review the draft documents and submit online feedback at www.ugdsb.on.ca/policy. The deadline for public input is April 13, 2016. Persons without internet access may call 519-822-4420 ext. 723 to request a printed copy of the draft documents.

Stay Well Month

Reduce the risk of serious infections - proper hand-washing is one of the best ways to avoid getting sick.

Stay home when you are sick and limit contact with others -Children should not be in school with a fever, undiagnosed rashes, vomiting, or diarrhea and should stay at home at least 24 hours following the end of symptoms.

Cover your mouth and nose - when you sneeze or cough; use a tissue or the bend of your elbow.

You can prevent many serious illnesses by keeping immunizations up-to-date for you and your children. Call 1-800-265-7293 for more information.

Self-regulation

Does your child struggle to calm his/her body and mind in order to cope with challenges or solve problems? The ability to be calmly focused and alert can be difficult for many children, as well as adults. The ability to self-regulate may change in different situations and stages of life.

As parents, you can help your child use strategies to calm his/her body and mind by modelling what works for you. For example, when frustrated about being caught in traffic, you may use self-talk and listening to music to help calm the situation. You may say, "This traffic is terrible and I am feeling very frustrated. I know that I can't do anything about the traffic so I am just going to tell myself to relax, this will pass, I can turn on some of my favourite tunes!"

Strategies that may work for your child as calming or focusing strategies include: exercise (e.g. a short run), reading a book, listening to music, talking to someone, self-talk, counting to 20, getting a drink, taking a break, or deep breathing.

Generally speaking, calming the body and mind is necessary before challenges or conflict can be successfully handled.

Resources for Parents -

Book: Zones of Regulation by Leah M. Kuypers

Zones of Regulation <http://andersoncarla.blogspot.ca/2014/08/zones-of-regulation.html>

Relaxation Techniques http://visuals.autism.net/main.php?q2_itemId=138

Today's Parent: Easy Ways to Teach Your Child to Self-

Regulate <http://www.todaysparent.com/kids/preschool/easy-ways-to-teach-your-child-to-self-regulate/>

Responsive Classroom: Teaching Self-Calming

Skills <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/blog/teaching-self-calming-skills>

Video: A story: Staying Calm When Angry <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DnmFfxWjsvs>

Self-Regulation <http://andersoncarla.blogspot.ca/2013/12/self-regulation.html>

Concussion outside of school hours

A concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. It can affect a student's performance in both school work and physical activities. Rest is very important after a concussion because it helps the brain heal. While a child has a suspected or diagnosed concussion, full participation in school academic and physical activities can worsen symptoms and make for a longer recovery period.

In the best interest of your child, parents and guardians are requested to contact the principal when a suspected or diagnosed concussion occurs outside of school hours (i.e. during outdoor play, sports, or a car accident). The principal will work with you to develop a plan for an individualized, gradual return to full participation in school activities. For more information, visit www.ugdsb.on.ca/concussions.

Keeping Our Children and Youth Safe Online

Over the last few years, there has been a significant increase in the number of reported cases of young people involved in self/peer exploitation. This is generally defined as youth creating, sending or sharing sexual images and/or videos with peers via the Internet and/or electronic device. The Board recently purchased a resource for every elementary and secondary school called Self/Peer Exploitation, School and Family Approaches to Intervention and Prevention. The resource was created by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, which is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to promoting safety of all children. Principals and Vice Principals also received an in-service on the guide.

The following two links may assist youth and families who have been impacted by child sexual exploitation:

Cybertip.ca may be used to report child sexual exploitation

NeedHelpNow.ca is a website that offers find some practical information for youth on how to deal with this (for example, how to get pictures removed from the internet, how to deal with peers, how to talk with someone, etc.).

February 10, 2015 is international Safer Internet Day. Please consider using this day to talk to your child(ren) about internet safety. The Canadian Centre for Child Protection also produces several useful resources for parents that may be found using the following links:

https://www.cybertip.ca/pdfs/C3P_SafetySheet_SelfPeerExploitation_en.pdf

https://www.cybertip.ca/pdfs/C3P_SafetySheet_Cyberbullying_en.pdf

Please go to Princess Margaret PS website, in the newsletter section for articles about:

Parents talking about Arts

Preventing Pollution

What parents should know about concussions

Talking About Mental Health – Let's Keep Talking!

Talking About Mental Health – It's February, Let's be Grateful.

Being grateful is a simple thing that we can do every day, but it has a powerful effect on our positive mental health.

Being grateful increases positive feelings, makes us more stress resistant and increases our sense of self-worth.

Here are some simple grateful exercises that you can do with your family:

1. Every night at dinner each person in the family says three things they are grateful for that day.
2. Make a February gratitude jar, every day each family member writes down one thing they are grateful for and at the end of the month, open the jar and read all the things you are grateful for.
3. Leave sticky notes for each family member to thank them for something you appreciate about them. Each family member has a different day of the week that they are in charge of making the thank you notes.
4. Think about volunteering and include your children and youth. There are lots of opportunities at your school or in your neighbourhood to help others.
5. Have fun together as a family. Play a game, watch a movie, eat a meal, go for a walk, read a book together. Be grateful for time together and creating new, happy memories.

Wishing everyone a great and grateful February.

*Dr. Lynn Woodford, Psychologist, is the Mental Health and Addiction Lead for Upper Grand District School Board
Follow me on twitter: @drlynnwoodford*

Monthly Environmental Newsletter Inserts



February's Environmental Theme: ENERGY CONSERVATION



Because many of our energy sources cause pollution and damage our Earth, energy conservation is about finding ways to reduce or eliminate unnecessary energy usage. We all know to turn off the lights when not in the room, turn down the heating or cooling and buy energy efficient appliances. But do you know about Energy Vampires? Energy Vampires are electronics that use energy even when you think they are turned off. Many "Vampires" have LED lights, clocks or digital displays that are powered continually. Cell phone chargers, TVs, DVD players and gaming devices all draw current even when not in use. We can unplug these or plug them into smart power strips that stop idle energy currents.

But what about the future? What types of energy can we use that are renewable energy sources that don't damage the planet? Let's put solar energy to work! When it is sunny outside, let your laundry dry on a clothesline. Or open the curtains in the winter and let the sun heat your home naturally.

Or, let's be Eco-Smart in our choices. Design new houses that are angled to use the maximum warmth and light from the sun's rays in the winter and have a roof overhang designed to decrease sun penetration in the summer. Install lights that only turn on by using a sensor that monitors brightness. Plant trees to strategically provide shade. In your community, ask local governments to support more solar panels and more wind turbines in Ontario. We can use these great ideas ourselves to slow down Global Warming and keep our planet healthy.

Slogan of the month: Conserve our energy - we are using more of it than you think!

Physical Activity Can Make You Smarter?

Yep! It's true!

We have heard a lot about how exercise is important for children to remain healthy but research from Harvard Medical School (and many other studies) has shown that children do better in school if they get plenty of exercise. As it turns out, exercise has a positive influence on concentration, memory, behaviour, sequencing, and making priorities.

According to one study in the Journal of Pediatrics, "school-age youth should participate daily in 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity that is developmentally appropriate, enjoyable, and involves a variety of activities". But other studies have found that even 20 minutes of activity such as walking can increase brain functioning.

There are so many fun physical activities to do in the winter, tobogganing, skating, snow-shoeing, hockey. Why not build a snow man, a snow fort or make snow angels? Whatever you and your family decide it is important for children to exercise every day, the more, the better.

It's good for the brain and the body!

(Information adapted from Journal of Pediatrics, Edutopia, Everydayhealth.com and Globe and Mail online)

February

2016

Princess Margaret Public School

Learning to Live * Living to learn

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
CHARACTER TRAIT: COMPASSION		Groundhog day Gr ½ Theater trip Skating gr 3-6 Cross Country Skiing 7/8	Kindergarten Registrations 1-2:30 pm Crazy Hat Day Cross Country Skiing 5+6	Cross Country Skiing 3/4,4/5	Pizza Day	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Random Acts of Kindness Week to support compassion character trait.		Skating gr 3-6 Keep Kids Safe on the Internet Day		Report Cards come home Cross country skiing for gr. 7/8	Pizza Day, Red, Pink, White Day, Intermediate Dance in the PM.	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Valentine's Day National Flag Day	Family Day No school for students	Skating gr 3-6	2nd Application Fluoride Varnish Backwards Spirit Day	2nd Application Fluoride Varnish Cross country skiing for gr. 5/6	Pizza Day	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	School Council Meeting 6:45 – 8:00 pm.	Skating gr 3-6	Pink Shirt Day	Cross country skiing for gr. 4/5	Pizza Day	Remember to wear your PMPS Mustangs school clothing or school colours every Friday
28	29	March 1				
		Graduation Pictures				

INQUIRY

HOW TO SUPPORT INQUIRY AT HOME

Now-a-days "knowing stuff" is no longer enough. Any resourceful student with an iPad could sit in front of the TV and Google all the questions to Alex Trebek's responses on Jeopardy, and get them correct. We are moving away from simply "knowing content," to being able to apply knowledge in interesting, creative, and critical ways. To accomplish this, students and teachers need to ask the right questions. Asking the right questions is what inquiry is all about.

Children are great at asking questions. They are naturally curious, and are constantly asking questions to make sense of their world.



Instead of just telling your child the answer, try one of these strategies. First, you can get them to look up the answer. This will help them develop the ability to solve their own problems. Or, you can ask them "What do you think?" This will give you insight into what they already know, and then you can ask them more questions to guide them to an answer.

An inquiry-based approach is seen throughout the Ontario Curriculum. Students learn best when they are formulating their own questions and working towards solutions through discussion with their peers.

A closed-question:

These are questions with a specific answer. Here are two examples:

Why do some stars twinkle?

What colours mix to make purple?

Closed-questions are great questions for your child to look-up in a book, or google.

An open-question:

These are questions that could be answered in many ways. Here is an example:

How can we best support the Syrian refugees?

Open-questions are great questions for you to explore with your child. Discuss with them what they already know, and help them form their own answer.

TIPS FOR INQUIRY AT HOME



- Resist providing the answer
- Resist giving a procedure (math)
- Ask questions to clarify their thinking
- Ask your child to explain the reasons behind their answer

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Noisy Toys

Parents may think that noise is a problem they need not worry about until their child reaches the teenage years. Not so. Some toys are so loud that they can cause hearing damage in children. Some toy sirens and squeaky rubber toys can emit sounds of 90 dB, as loud as a lawn mower. Workers would have to wear ear protection for similarly noisy sounds on the job.

The danger with noisy toys is greater than the 90-dB level implies. When held directly to the ear, as children often do, a noisy toy actually exposes the ear to as much as 120 dB of sound, the equivalent of a jet plane taking off. Noise at this level is painful and can result in permanent hearing loss.

Toys that pose a noise danger include cap guns, talking dolls, vehicles with horns and sirens, walkie-talkies, musical instruments, and toys with cranks. Parents who have normal hearing need to inspect toys for noise danger.

Before purchasing a new toy, listen to it. If the toy sounds loud, don't buy it.

Examine toys you already have at home. Remove the batteries or discard the toys if they are too noisy and pose a potential danger to hearing. Some parents place heavy duct tape over the speakers on noisy toys.

[The Sight and Hearing Association](#) publishes a list of the noisiest toys each November for your information.

Special Education and Special Olympics

This is an exciting year for Special Olympics!! It is our 15th annual Special Olympics Track and Field Day! This year our track meet will be Wednesday May 18th, raindate Thursday May 19th.

As well, Guelph is hosting the Provincial Special Olympics Spring Games with over 1000 Special Olympic athletes will be attending.

In collaboration with Special Olympics Ontario, there will be a PepRally to celebrate the 15th year and build momentum for the Spring Games. Please save Tuesday April 12th for the PepRally at the University of Guelph Fieldhouse!

We are inviting all the students who participate in the track and field day and their peer coaches to come to the interactive PepRally! There will be a 'paint the town RED' campaign by Special Olympics Ontario.

Each School in the UGDSB and the WCDSB will be given the chance to 'adopt an athlete' from the Provincial Spring games and add to the 'RED' campaign. Packages will be sent to each school with RED wrist bands for every student with the OPTIONAL suggestion to donate a toonie.

Here is our Special Olympics Timeline

JANUARY: Adopt an athlete and paint the town RED packages will be sent to each school.

APRIL 12th: The interactive PepRally to promote our Track meet and build momentum for the Provincial Spring games will be held at the U of G Fieldhouse.
(all track meet athletes and their peer coaches are invited)

MAY 18th (Raindate May 19th): Our annual Special Olympics Track and Field Day

MAY 26 to 28: Provincial Spring games in Guelph