



PRINCESS MARGARET PUBLIC SCHOOL

51 Wellington St., Orangeville, ON, L9W 2L6 519-941-3731

Learning to Live and Living to Learn

2017 - 2018

Newsletter #4

December 4, 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE

December is here! For Mrs. Mckenzie and I, this is our first December working at Princess Margaret Public School and, we both agree, what an amazing school community and staff we have the pleasure of working with! While we are only a few days into December, we continue to experience the sense of community and welcoming atmosphere that we have come to know at Princess Margaret P.S. as staff and students prepare for the winter holidays. For those who were able to join us, we had a fabulous day this past Saturday at the annual Christmas Craft Fair put on by the School Council and school staff. In addition to the Craft Fair, the Students' Council has a number of festive events planned throughout the month of December to get us into the winter holiday spirit! The teachers have also been hard at work planning a number of experiences for our students throughout December – the Junior and Intermediate students will be seeing the movie, *Wonder*, December 7th after having read the book in class and Primary classes are heading to Primrose Public School to see the production, *Annie*, later this month as well.

In addition to a number of events planned for the month of December, you may also hear your child(ren) talking about “Number Talks” and/or using hand signals now and then to express when they agree with something you have said. Number Talks is a teaching strategy many of our teachers throughout the UGDSB are using to assist students in their ability to explain their mathematical thinking, as well as building their mental math strategies. While Number Talks are being explored in all grades throughout the school, our Primary students are especially familiar with the hand signals to express if they are thinking about an answer, if they have an answer and a strategy, if they agree with someone else’s answer and/or if they have more than one strategy to solve the problem presented to the class. When spending time together this holiday, see if your child(ren) can explain the hand signals to you and how they use them when problem-solving during a Number Talk at school.



From all the staff at Princess Margaret Public School, we wish each of you a safe and restful holiday season with family and friends. We look forward to seeing everyone back at school on Tuesday, January 8th, 2018!

Shannon Spike
Principal

STAFFING UPDATES

We are pleased to share that we have recently completed hiring for current positions at the school. For those with students in Kindergarten, Mrs. Schlee's Grade 2 class, as well as in Mrs. Landry's Grade 4/5 class, you may start to hear Mr. Clost's name more frequently when talking to your child(ren) about their day. We are happy to have Mr. Clost as a part of the Princess Margaret team in the following positions:

- Grade 2 with Mrs. Schlee (Mr. Clost will be in Grade 2 on Day 2s)
- Library (Day 5s) working with Mr. White's, Mrs. Flear's and Mrs. Webb's classes
- Planning time coverage for Mrs. Landry (Day 5s)
- Grade 6 – 8 Drama (Day 1 mornings)

SUPPLY LUNCH SUPERVISORS NEEDED

The school is looking for occasional Lunch Supervisors to cover Nutrition Breaks when our regular Lunch Supervisors are unable to make it to school due to illness, etc. If you are interested in being on our Emergency Lunch Supervisor Supply List, please let Jodi know in the office. This is a paid position. Potential hours are:

10:30 – 11:10am and/or 12:40 – 1:20pm

STUDENTS' COUNCIL DECEMBER SPIRIT DAY EVENTS

- Dec. 1 - Green and Red Day
- Dec. 8 - PJ day and read a story book to class
- Dec. 15 - Ornament Day (wear ornaments)
- Dec. 18 - Dress up as a Character Day (i.e. Santa, Reindeer...)
- Dec. 19 - Bells day (wearing Christmas bells)
- Dec. 20 - Present Day (dress up as a present)
- Dec. 21 - Christmas Sweater Day
- Dec. 22 - Christmas Hat day



DECEMBER CELEBRATIONS IN CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD

Here is a list of a small number of traditions celebrated around the world in December 2017:

- December 3 - 24: Advent - **Christian**
- December 6: Saint Nicholas Day - **Christian**
- December 8: Bodhi Day (Rohatsu) - **Buddhist**
- December 13 - 20: Hanukkah - **Jewish**
- December 16-25: Posadas Navidenas - **Hispanic Christian**
- December 21 Solstice
 - Yule - **Christian**
 - Yule - **Wicca/Pagan** Northern hemisphere
 - Litha - **Wicca/Pagan** Southern hemisphere
- December 24: Christmas Eve - **Christian**

- December 25: Christmas - **Christian**
 - Feast of the Nativity - **Orthodox Christian**
- December 26: Zarathosht Diso (Death of Prophet Zarathushtra) – **Zoroastrian**
 - Kwanzaa (celebration of African heritage) (December 26 – January 1)

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

Thank you to everyone who came out to support our annual Christmas Craft Fair! Through the School Council's Silent Auction, and Students' Council run Café and Bake Sale, we raised close to \$5000 to support school initiatives and events. We appreciate all the hard work and dedication that went into the event, as well as the donations provided to support the Silent Auction and Bake Sale. Thank you also to our vendors for their participation and to local community shops for their donations. We look forward to seeing everyone next year for the 2018 Christmas Craft Fair!

SPIRIT WEAR/NEW SCHOOL LOGO

Princess Margaret P.S. is happy to share are new school logo! With the release of our Spirit Wear early December, we look forward to seeing many staff and students wearing our school colours and logo throughout the school and community. For those interested, we will be offering another opportunity to order PMPS Spirit Wear later January/early February 2018. Stay tuned to your child's agenda and the school website for more information at that time.



SCHOOL COUNCIL NEEDS YOU!!

We would like to invite everyone to attend Princess Margaret P.S.'s School Council meetings. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month starting at 6:30 p.m. (dates to be announced). All meetings are open to anyone in the community and we welcome you to attend as many or few as you like. School Council meetings involve the discussion of any issues that may come up involving the school, as well as an opportunity to keep up-to-date on current events in the school, including planned guest speakers and trips. School Council also works on fundraising and determining how that money can be spent to support the school, students and families. Stay tuned to the school website/calendar for more information on the first meeting of this school year!

Next meeting: Thursday, December 7th @ 6:30pm in the Library.

PLEASE SIGN-IN AT THE OFFICE

Occasionally parents, guardians or caregivers find it necessary to come to the school to pick their child(ren) up early or to bring items and messages for their child. We ask that all parents, guardians and caregivers check in at the office rather than proceeding to the child's classroom. Our Office Coordinator, Mrs. McKenzie, will contact the appropriate teacher. The child can then be sent to the office to be dismissed from the office or come to the office for a message or item. It is extremely important that all parents follow this procedure. If a child is being picked up early, parents should wait in the office while the child collects belongings, homework etc. Parents should not go to his/her child's classroom during instructional time to pick up the child. We appreciate your cooperation with this very important matter.

WALK TO SCHOOL

Please encourage your child(ren) to walk to school. The fresh air and physical activity help activate the brain and body so they can learn even better at school. Not only is walking good for the body and brain but it is also great to walk to school with a friend. Spending time walking and talking is a great way to socialize before school. By encouraging your child to walk to school, you will be helping them develop their brains, body, social life and helping alleviate parking congestion at the school at the same time.

DRESSING FOR THE WEATHER

With the temperatures going up and down recently, it is important to dress your child as appropriately as possible. We encourage all students to wear hats, mitts/gloves and a warm coat, with some layered clothing underneath. We are outside each day for 20 minutes of recess each nutrition break, getting fresh air and playing with school friends. If your child is in a primary grade, it might be a good idea to put an extra pair of mitts/gloves in his/her backpack for those days when he/she plays in the wet snow. We want all students to enjoy the fresh air and opportunity to play with others while being comfortably dressed for all types of weather. Thanks for your continued support.

Upper Grand Mobile App

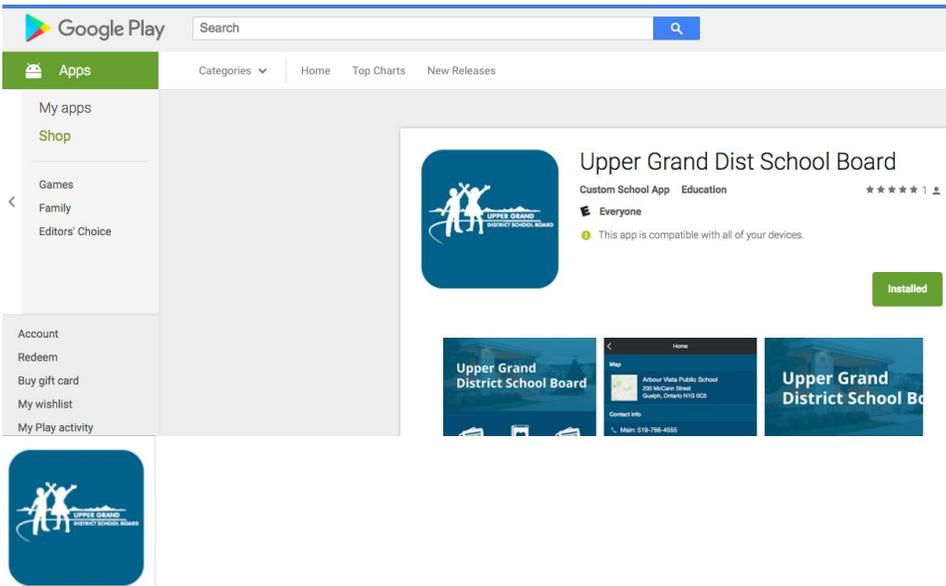
The Upper Grand District School Board is committed to parent engagement and ensuring strong lines of communication between home and school. We are pleased to introduce our new School Messenger Parent Application that will be launched during the 2017 / 2018 school year.

The Upper Grand Mobile App allows parents to receive communications from their school(s) immediately on their mobile device. The Upper Grand Mobile App is free and available in both Android and iOS. Use the search term "Upper Grand" in either the iTunes store or Google Play.

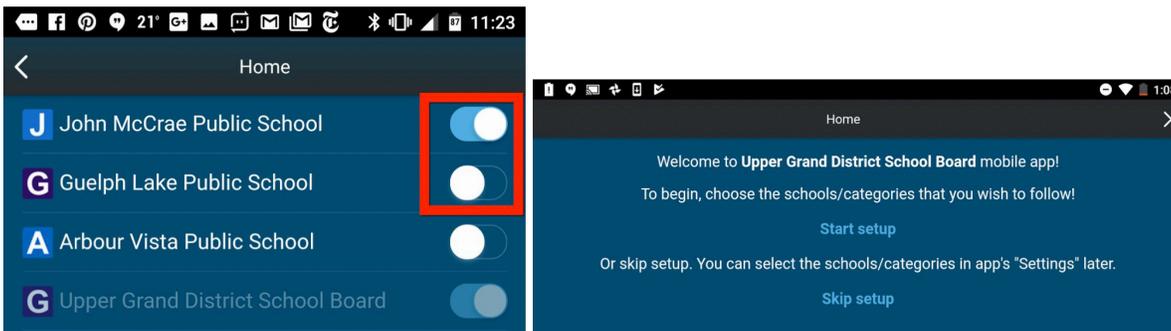
iOS App - <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/upper-grand-dist-school-board/id1242445465?mt=8>

Android - In the Google Play store search for Upper Grand
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.relianceco.cma.uppergrand&hl=en>

Once installed, your app should appear as an icon on your phone.



Click on the app to open. The first time you open the Upper Grand Mobile App you will need to click on the Start setup link to see a list of schools. You may select more than one school. To select a school, slide the button to the right.



Once you have selected your school(s) use the arrow in the top left corner to return to the home screen. Select the News and Calendar icons to get the latest information. The Transportation icon will update you on bus cancellations.

Thank you for the role you play in supporting our schools and students. We hope this new communication tool will be useful for you and your family!



Monthly environmental activities to help celebrate our planet

December 10th is HUMAN RIGHTS Day!

“For to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects & enhances the freedom of others”
- Nelson Mandela

Celebrate Human Rights Day on December 10th!

Human Rights Day calls on everyone to stand up for someone's rights. It starts with each of us. Step forward and defend the rights of someone whose voice is not being heard. Recognize that human rights include the right for all of us to have access to clean water, unpolluted air and healthy food.

<http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/>



<http://calendarholidays.xyz/holiday/168/human-rights-day>

Simple yet meaningful ways for your family to celebrate the rights and responsibilities that we all share as human beings!

- **Learn about how children live in other parts of the world.**
- **Read the book: We Are All Born Free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pictures** by Amnesty International.
- **Read the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights.** Decide if there is a cause your family wants to support, or an Ecojustice action you want to take on.
- **Talk to someone you know who is from another country.** Where are they from? What was their life like there? What language did they speak? Did they go to school? What do they miss? What do they like about their new country?
- **Start a tradition of doing a family service project on Human Rights Day.** There are many opportunities to volunteer, such as preparing and serving meals at a local homeless shelter or simply gathering enough to put together a bunch of care packages of simple needs and necessities. <https://humanrightswarrior.com>

“For the bigger picture we can (and should) do what we can to fight injustice. But on a smaller scale, in the day-to-day, practicing kindness can help knit a web of compassion to give humanity a boost of resilience” by Melissa Breyer

TALKING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Talking About Mental Health December 2017 – Taking Care of Ourselves and Our Families

As we head through December and towards the holidays, it is important to be aware that this can be a very exciting time of year, but for some it is also a difficult time of year. Here are some tips and resources to make sure that you and your family have a safe and mentally healthy holiday season.

Self-care

What you do to support or take care of yourself? What do your children/youth do?

It is important to look after yourselves:

- exercise
- sleep well
- eat well
- reach out to and spend time with family & friends
- reading, writing
- music, art
- spend time with pets
- spend time outside

Stay connected

- Have dinner together as a family, no phones or devices
- Plan a family outing to a friend’s or a park or a local event
- Have friends or family over for a game night
- Have a family movie or game night
- Take a few moments each day as a family to say what you are all grateful for
- Volunteer at the foodbank or other community organization as a family

Signs to look for that someone is struggling

- *Sometimes it’s hard to tell that someone is suffering. Here are some signs that someone is struggling.*
- not coming to school or work
- not engaging with friends or family
- not participating in activities that they used to enjoy
- withdrawing
- feeling hopeless

- increase use of drugs or alcohol
- changes in behaviour
- anger/irritability

Getting help

If you, your child/youth or someone you know is struggling, it is important to know where to reach out for help.

Who would you talk to if you were distressed, overwhelmed or struggling? Take a moment to make a list of at least 3 people or resources you would reach out to.

Who would your child/youth talk to if they were upset, overwhelmed or struggling? Take a moment to sit down with your child/youth and ask them who they would talk to. Put the kidshelpphone and HERE247 or DCAFS number in their phones (see below).

All children and youth need caring adults in their lives to talk to about their feelings. Parents/guardians can be some of those caring adults, but it is important for the children/youth to have other caring adults in their lives such as:

Family members, friends of the family
 School staff (teachers, guidance counsellors, principals, child and youth counsellors, social workers, librarian, custodial staff)
 Coaches, instructors
 Spiritual or religious community
 Community members (police, family doctors, librarians, etc.)

Who you can call for mental health support:

- Here 24/7 (for crisis and support with mental health or addiction concerns in Guelph/Wellington) <http://here247.ca/> 1.844.437.3247
- Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS) (for crisis and mental health supports for children/youth in Dufferin) <https://dcafs.on.ca/> 519 941 1530
- Kids Help Phone <https://kidshelpphone.ca/> 1 800 668 6868
- Your family physician or family health team

Have a mentally healthy holiday season!

Dr. Lynn Woodford is the Mental Health Lead for Upper Grand District School Board

Follow me on twitter: @drlynnwoodford

