



# Ross R. MacKay Public School

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**Principal:** Ms. T. Armstrong  
**Office Coordinator:** Mrs. C. Eberhardt

December, 2017

## Principal's Message

Thanks to all parents/guardians who spent time with your children looking at Progress Reports that were sent home this past month and for attending the interviews we offered to discuss your child's strengths, areas of needs and next steps. We hope that you have discussed both learning skills/work habits and academic progress with your children. It is important to determine goals to work on over the next several weeks until First Term Reports are written and shared at the end of January. Our goal is to always keep improving.

This past month, we have focussed on the Character Trait of **Compassion**. The month of November will be all about **Honesty**. We encourage you to talk to your children about what these words mean at home, school and in the community.

Speaking of Compassion, we would like to offer opportunities for students to 'give instead of get' during the month of December. We will be collecting food items for the Food Bank as well as hats, mittens and scarves to be donated to families in need. Donations will be given to East Wellington Community Services.

Families often wish to give staff gifts at this time of year. We appreciate this generosity, however, please know the best gifts for teachers are words of gratitude from both parents/guardians and students or donations of books/learning materials to the classroom or Library.

We welcome parents/guardians to join us this month for the following:

- **Character Education Assembly**  
*Friday, December 1st @ 11:30am*
- **School Council Meeting**  
*Wednesday, December 6th @6:30pm*
- **Erin Band**  
*Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>*

As the holiday season approaches, we often find ourselves reflecting on how blessed we are to live in a peaceful country with so many riches that we often take for granted. We hope to see most families at our Holiday Concert on Thursday, December 14 (Dress Rehearsal at 9:15 AM and Evening Performance at 6:30 PM). Further information will be sent home about this event. We are also still seeking Craft Vendors for the evening as well.

As always, we encourage you to visit our RRM School Website regularly for information updates - <http://www.ugdsb.ca/rossrmackay/>, to add the **School Messenger App** to your phone and to follow us on our Twitter Account **@RossRMackayPS**. Our School Council invites you to follow their Facebook Page **Ross R. MacKay Public School - by School Council**

As parents/guardians, you are our partners in ensuring the success and happiness of your children. Please feel free to email, call or set up a meeting if you have questions, concerns, suggestions or compliments!

Yours in education,

*Ms. Tracy Armstrong*

[tracy.armstrong@ugdsb.on.ca](mailto:tracy.armstrong@ugdsb.on.ca)

(519) 855-4957 x223



# The Recipe for Creating a Life-Long Reader is Wonderfully Simple



## 1. READ

Make books, magazines & reading part of your children's lives right from the start by setting aside regular time to read to and with your children, from infancy to adolescence.

## 2. LEAD THE WAY

Make regular visits to your local library and bookstore to help your children find the best possible reading material.



## 3. SET AN EXAMPLE

When children see adults enjoying a good book or reading material, they get a VERY important message...you never outgrow books as a life-long reader.



### How can you be a partner in your child's learning?

1. Check your child's back-pack & Agenda on a daily basis.
2. Be sure you have signed up to receive regular communication from the school.
3. Support the Home Reading Programs we have in place for each classroom.
4. Talk to your child about school.
5. Help them develop good work habits/learning s



## Math Tips for Parents

- don't do it for them.
- Talk about math careers and possibilities.
- Have high expectations.

## Be a math role model

Children learn by imitating the people around them. Imitating a parent's positive attitude about education helps children develop healthy academic skills.

- Talk out loud as you do everyday tasks. Talking out loud allows children to hear how you think and helps them develop important skills for "thinking things out" and solving problems.
- Do informal math together. On rainy days, family evenings and vacation time, play math games such as *Dino Math Tracks*, *Dominoes* or *Connect Four*. Show your child that math is fun!
- Parents worry about the amount of time that children spend on the computer and the quality of online content, but many educational web-based games, such as *Mathfrog* and *Calculation Nation*, encourage mathematical skills.
- Watch educational television programs like *The Prime Radicals* on TVO or *Cyberchase* on PBS. These programs also have websites with activities to do together, including game apps, math crafts and songs.
- Grocery stores are a great source of math lessons. For example, you can talk aloud about how to weigh fruit on a scale or how to estimate the total cost of groceries as you fill your cart.

# Welcome to Kindergarten

We're getting ready to welcome our newest group of little learners to the school! Kindergarten registration for the 2018-19 school year takes place from January 9 to 19, 2018. **New this year:** all Junior and Senior Kindergarten students new to the UGDSB must pre-register online. (SK students who are attending a UGDSB school for JK do not need to pre-register online). Pre-registering online between Jan. 9-19 will save families time by allowing you to fill out important forms and documentation when it's convenient for you.

Once you've pre-registered online, parents/guardians must go into their child's home school before the Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> deadline, in order to drop off documentation and complete their registration. Please note that all parents hoping to register their child for JK French Immersion must complete their registration document verification by Jan. 19 at 4 p.m.

For more information on how to register and the JK French Immersion selection process, please visit [www.ugdsb.ca/jkregistration](http://www.ugdsb.ca/jkregistration).



## “Ready Set Go” is BACK!!

RSG is a program designed for children who are enrolled to attend

Junior Kindergarten at this school in September 2017.

This free program is ideal for all children but especially for those who are anxious about starting school or separating from their parents/guardians.

To register your child in the Ready Set Go program, **you must first register him/her for Junior Kindergarten** in the school they will attend and then you must call Angela Mathers at East Wellington Community, 519-833-9696

## Wanted – Volunteers & Paid Positions



Volunteers are always a valuable resource in the school. We appreciate the many, many hours that parents and volunteers provide in order to support our students and to assist with the events that are offered at the school. If you wish to volunteer on a regular basis, we ask that you connect with your child's teacher first. You will be asked to complete and sign a Volunteer & Confidentiality Form which we will keep on file. We also ask that all volunteers report to the office to sign in upon arrival, pick up a volunteer badge and to sign out when leaving the building.

This year, we are looking for specific volunteers who would be willing to come in for an hour per week to assist with our new Home Reading Cart and Library Organization. If interested, please email Ms. Armstrong.

We are also always on the lookout for back-up **Nutrition Break Supervisors** (supervising both the eating and the outdoor activity time), **Emergency Occasional Teachers** (to teach classes if a regular Occasional Teacher is unavailable) and **Emergency Occasional Educational Assistants** (to fill in if a regular Occasional E.A. is unavailable). Please check in the office if you are interested and available for such paid positions. Qualifications for Emergency Staff are not necessary but an up-to-date police check and resume will be requested.



- Students who learn more than one language increase their chances of finding a job.
- Have greater career flexibility and earn a higher than average salary.
- Students that learn French are able to transfer literacy skills from one language to another.
- Students that learn French perform better overall in their other subjects.
- Learning French promotes the understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures.

## **The Benefits of French as a Second Language**

*By Madame Bonney*

The benefits of learning French can last a lifetime. The UGDSB believes that when students learn French, one of Canada's official languages, they are better able to develop the knowledge, skills and perspectives they need to participate fully as citizens of the world.

Parents often ask why their child needs to learn French. Here is the simple answer. In today's 21st century world, learning just one language is not enough!

Did you know?

- 200 million people, from 40 different countries, and all five continents speak French.
- French is the third most used language on the Internet.

Here are some helpful websites to help you and your child succeed in French:

- 1) <http://www.audiodfrench.com>
- 2) <http://www.on.cpf.ca>
- 3) <http://www.aupetitsmains.net>
- 4) <http://www.momes.net>
- 5) <http://www.digitaldialects.com>  
(Click on French games)



## Talking About Mental Health December 2017 – Taking Care of Ourselves/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 Food Bank 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!





## 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/>

**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 Eco justice 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*



## Winter safety: Advice for parents and kids

Winter is a great season for outdoor activities, such as sledding and skating. Cold weather, ice, and snow can be fun but also dangerous for children. The following tips will help parents and children enjoy winter activities safely. Check out this website for additional safety tips.



[http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/winter\\_safety](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/winter_safety)

## Zones of Regulation

At RRM, our students are learning about the **Zones of Regulation** as part of learning about self-regulation. The ability to be calmly focused and alert can be difficult for many children, as well as adults. The ability may change in different situations and stages in life. Generally, speaking, calming the body and mind is necessary before challenges or conflict can be successfully handled.

### The ZONES of Regulation®

			
<b>BLUE ZONE</b>	<b>GREEN ZONE</b>	<b>YELLOW ZONE</b>	<b>RED ZONE</b>
Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	Mad/Angry Mean Terrified Yelling/Hitting Out of Control

### What are The Zones of Regulation?

The Zones is a systematic, cognitive behavior approach used to teach self-regulation by categorizing all the different ways we feel and states of alertness we experience into four concrete zones. The Zones curriculum provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of, and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, managing their sensory needs, and improving their ability to problem solve conflicts.

By addressing underlying deficits in emotional and sensory regulation, executive functions, and social cognition, the curriculum is designed to help move students toward independent regulation. The Zones of Regulation incorporates Social

Thinking® ([www.socialthinking.com](http://www.socialthinking.com)) concepts and numerous visuals to teach students to identify their feelings/level of alertness, understand how their behavior impacts those around them, and learn what tools they can use to manage their feelings and states.

## The Four Zones: Our Feelings & States Determine Our Zone

The **Red Zone** is used to describe extremely heightened states of alertness and intense emotions. A person may be elated or experiencing anger, rage, explosive behavior, devastation, or terror when in the Red Zone.

The **Yellow Zone** is also used to describe a heightened state of alertness and elevated emotions; however, one has some control when they are in the Yellow Zone. A person may be experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness, the wiggles, or nervousness when in the Yellow Zone.

The **Green Zone** is used to describe a calm state of alertness. A person may be described as happy, focused, content, or ready to learn when in the Green Zone. This is the zone where optimal learning occurs.

The **Blue Zone** is used to describe low states of alertness and down feelings, such as when one feels sad, tired, sick, or bored.

The Zones can be compared to traffic signs. When given a green light or in the Green Zone, one is “good to go”. A yellow sign means be aware or take caution, which applies to the Yellow Zone. A red light or stop sign means stop, and when one is in the Red Zone, this often is the case. The Blue Zone can be compared to the rest area signs where one goes to rest or re-energize. All of the zones are expected at one time or another, but the curriculum focuses on teaching students how to manage their Zone based on the environment and people around them. For example, when playing on the playground or in an active/competitive game, no one would think twice about one being in the Yellow Zone but that would not be same in the library.

As parents/guardians, you can help use strategies to calm their body mind by modelling what works for you. For example, when frustrated about being stuck 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!"

Does your child struggle to calm their body and mind in order to cope with challenges or solve problems???

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

## Bullying & Conflict Resolution

We take all incidents of bullying seriously. If your child is the victim of bullying or sees bullying behaviour at school, please encourage your child to speak with someone at school or use our board's online reporting too. REPORT BULLYING gives students and parents 24/7 access for reporting bullying. You don't have to identify yourself – just your school – and your message gets sent directly to Ms. Armstrong for follow-up. You'll find the Report Bullying button on our school's website.



### Conflict vs. Bullying:

Is conflict the same as bullying? People may sometimes confuse conflict with bullying but they are different. Conflict occurs between two or more people who have a disagreement, a difference of opinion or different views. Conflict between students does not always mean it's

bullying. Children learn at a young age to understand that others can have a different perspective than their own, but developing the ability to gain perspective takes time and the process continues into early adulthood (and sometimes beyond). In conflict, each person feels comfortable expressing his or her views, and there is no power imbalance. Each person feels able to state their viewpoint. How people deal with conflict can make it positive or negative. Conflict becomes negative when an individual behaves aggressively by saying or doing hurtful things. Then the conflict is an aggressive interaction. Conflict only becomes bullying when it is repeated over and over again and there is a power imbalance. Over time, a pattern of behaviour may emerge where the person who behaves aggressively in the conflict may continue or even make it worse. The person who is the recipient of the aggressive conflict may feel less and less able to express their view and feel more and more powerless. That is when negative conflict may turn into bullying. School staff will respond to bullying and conflict differently. For example, in the case of a conflict, a school staff member may try to have the students come together to tell their side of the story and help them resolve the situation together. In the case of bullying, a principal will implement progressive discipline, which may lead to suspension.

Before you speak:

**THINK**

**T** = Is it True?

**H** = Is it Helpful?

**I** = Is it Inspiring?

**N** = Is it Necessary?

**K** = Is it Kind?



## Council's Corner

The month of November was a very rewarding one for School Council as we were able to release

some much-needed funds to the school. Every dollar we raise in our fundraisers goes toward the students and we were very excited to be able to provide the following:

**Library Books/Maker Space Items – \$400.00**

**Gym Equipment - \$400.00**

**French/Planning Resources - \$300.00**

**Special Education/Reading Resources - \$400.00**

**Classroom Accounts - \$200.00 per class**

Our next fundraiser is in conjunction with the staff at our RRM's Holiday Concert. School Council "elves" will be on hand to sell popcorn and hot chocolate for the performance and we will also be selling tickets on our first ever 50/50 draw! We could all use a little more cash before the holidays so please remember to purchase some tickets and try your luck. 50 percent of the money received will go to the school and 50 percent could go in your pocket, it's a holiday win-win!

We have been fortunate to receive some Parent Involvement grants for this school year and we are planning some wonderful **free** events for parents and children of RRM. This year, our focus is on literacy and math skills so please watch for information on some great family nights we have planned for the New Year.

As everyone knows, we said goodbye to our Breakfast Club program this year. With a lack of student need and a lack of volunteers, we decided to replace the program and ensure that healthy food was available to all children in the school, at all times. Unfortunately, this has put a real strain on our office staff as kids are coming up to the office and kitchen looking for food. In an effort to control the situation better, we will be instituting classroom snack bins in January of 2018. A fresh bin will be prepared each morning for each classroom. The snack bin will contain fresh fruit and 1 other healthy item. Children will be

encouraged by their teachers to take what they need in a stigma-free environment. Snack bins will only be available when a teacher is present in the classroom and will be available all day. This will eliminate the need for kids coming out of the classroom in search of a snack and we can better monitor how many children are using the program.

For any parents who wish to join us, our next Council meeting is on Wednesday, December, 6th at 6:30 pm.

Thank you for your continued support and Happy Holidays from all of us on School Council!



## ROOTS of EMPATHY



### **Ross R MacKay's Roots of Empathy Family**

Mrs. Lawson and Mrs. Kelso's kindergarten class would like to welcome the Snoek family.

Hilary, Ryan and baby Madden are our Roots of Empathy Family for 2017-2018.

Mom Hilary and baby Madden will be visiting our class once a month. Our class will be following baby Madden's growth and celebrating her milestones, learning to recognize emotion in others, and how to show compassion and empathy.

Empathy is the ability to identify with another person's feelings.





With the holidays quickly approaching, why not give a gift with special meaning? This year, instead of purchasing a gift, honour your teacher with a donation to the Children's Foundation's Food & Friends program. The Children's Foundation would be pleased to provide the individual(s) with a card to notify them that you have made the donation in honour of them for this holiday season. Go to [Children's Foundation Donation Link](#) to make your donation today. Thank you for bringing healthy food to hungry minds!

### **Bus Snacks for Students:**



Many of our students are accessing our Snack Program at the end of the day while they are waiting for their bus. We

would really appreciate, where possible, that families send along a bus snack specifically for that time (a piece of fruit, granola bar etc...) so that our snack program funding is not depleted too quickly. You are also welcome to make a donation (money or food items) if you would like to support this worthy program.



## Hillsburgh Branch, Wellington County Library

98B Trafalgar Rd. Hillsburgh  
519.855.4010  
[www.wellington.ca/library](http://www.wellington.ca/library)



**Make-and-Take: Night before Christmas (All Ages)**  
Create a "Night before Christmas" button using our button maker. Drop in.  
Saturday, December 23, during branch hours

**Holiday Scavenger Hunt (All Ages)**  
"Run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man!" The Gingerbread Man is hiding in the library. Drop in and help us find him.  
Saturday, December 23 - Saturday, January 6, during branch hours

**Winter Make-and-Take (All Ages)**  
Get crafty at the library and create a winter decoration to celebrate the season. Drop in.  
Saturday, December 30 - Saturday, January 6, during branch hours



## **FOOD & TOILETRIES DRIVE AND HAT & MITTEN TREE**

**In support of East Wellington Community Services**

**DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> – 20<sup>TH</sup>**

**Non-Perishable Foods  
Toiletry Items  
Hats, Mittens & Scarves**

**THANKS IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR GENEROUSITY.**



# Ross R. MacKay Holiday Concert

Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
6:30pm – 8:00pm

*Be sure to mark your calendars  
Bring the Family*

## Grade 6 Fundraiser

Vendor Tables at  
the Holiday Concert  
Day available

\$25.00 per table

OPEN for sales  
6:30pm – 8:00pm

