



Ross R. MacKay Public School

35 Trafalgar Road, R.R.# 2
Hillsburgh, ON

Website: <http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/rossrmackay>

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Principal: Ms. T. Armstrong

Office Coordinator: Mrs. E. Schletz (covering for Mrs. C. Eberhardt)

May, 2018

Principal's Message

Dare we say that Spring has finally arrived in Hillsburgh? Staff & students are excited to finally open both the swings and the climber this week.

We know that our School Community will join us in congratulating Sarah Lawson and her husband Kyle on their recent adoption of baby Reid. Mrs. Lawson is currently on leave and we thank Occasional Teacher Michelle MacLellan for so competently filling in over the past few weeks in the Kindergarten classroom. We officially welcome Melissa Haines who has been centrally hired to officially replace Mrs. Lawson. She is currently finishing off a Long Term Occasional position in Shelburne. She will be starting at RRM on Monday, May 7th and be remaining with us until the end of the year.

We also say good-bye and best wishes to Shannon Kennedy, our Child and Youth Worker. She will be starting her Maternity Leave on May 9th. We have not been informed as to who will be her replacement at RRM.

This past month, we have focused on the Character Trait of **Cooperation/Collaboration**. The month of May will be all about **Courage/Taking Risks**. We have selected this character trait because as a staff we believe that students who demonstrate this trait are better learners and citizens. We encourage you to talk to your children about what these words mean at home, school and in the community.

We welcome parents/guardians to join us this month:

- Character Education Assembly on Tuesday, May 1 at 10:00AM
- School Council Meeting on Wednesday, May 9 from 6:30 – 7:30 PM in the Library.
- Indigenous Elder Visits on May 10th (further details later in Newsletter)
- ARTS Night on May 10 from 5:30 – 8:00
- Jump Rope for Heart on May 25

As always, we encourage you to visit our RRM School Website regularly for information and upcoming events at <http://www.ugdsb.ca/rossrmackay/>, to add the **School Messenger App** to your phone and to follow us on our Twitter Account **@RossRMackKayPS**. 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





What is in the future for Ross R. MacKay???

The Upper Grand District School Board's Long Term Accommodation Plan Draft

Final Report will be presented at a public meeting on May 2nd starting at 7 pm at Erin PS in the gymnasium. Parents, guardians and members of the community are invited to come to the meeting to hear the report presentation, share their thoughts and ask questions. For more information, please go to the Board's website at www.ugdsb.ca/ltap.

School Organization for 2018/19

Our tentative enrollment for next year is predicted to be lower than our current population...sitting at just over 80 students. As a result, we have sadly had to declare two staff members surplus to our school - Ruth Thompson and Sarah Lawson (partial).



Our school organization for next year is as follows with only four classrooms (although this remains tentative until the beginning of September).

Junior Kindergarten/Senior Kindergarten
Grade 1/2
Grade 3/4
Grade 5/6

As a result of this tentative organization, students will automatically be placed in the classroom of their grade for next year and there is no need for parents to send in preferences for class/teacher. However, if there is anything related to this organization that you wish to discuss, please connect with Ms. Armstrong.

Parent Involvement Committee welcomed People for Education



This past week, School Council Members Beth Gregory and Iolanda Collins, along with Staff Dawn Donovan and Tracy

Armstrong attended the UGDSB Parent Involvement Committee Evening. P.I.C. welcomed Annie Kidder and Jacqui Strachan from People for Education. They touched on many important aspects about Quality Learning Environments in Schools: Linking Family-School Partnership to Student Achievement.

One aspect outlined the Four Key Things that parents can do to help ensure your children's success.

1. **Have high expectations for your children.** Let your children know that you think it is important that they do well in school. High parental expectations have the greatest impact on student achievement. When parents consistently express belief in their children's potential and tell their kids that they expect them to succeed academically, students do better.
2. **Talk about school!** Talk with your children about what's happening at school-activities, programs and what they are learning. Surprisingly, this has a greater impact on academic achievement than monitoring homework, being at home before or after school for your kids, or limiting the time they are allowed screen time or to go out during the week. According to our kids, we may not be doing such a great job in this area. In student surveys conducted by the Educational Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), less than half of students in Grade 3 report they talk to a parent or guardian 'every day or almost every day' about their school activities. By grade 6, that percentage drops to less than 40%.

3. Help your children develop a positive attitude toward learning and good work habits.

The research shows that the greatest influence you have on your kids' chances for success in school lie in how you influence their attitudes, their sense of personal competence, and their work habits, including persistence, seeking help, and planning. So rather than trying to directly 'teach' your children, focus on helping them handle distractions and crises of confidence, praise them for effort and persistence and demonstrate a positive attitude about school as a whole. Bit by bit, these are the attributes that will build solid foundations for ongoing success.

4. Read together (in any language).

Reading is one of the foundations of all education, and you can make a big difference by reading and talking about books and stories with your children. Reading with children is the best way to turn them on to reading. But this doesn't mean that you should be forcing them to sound out words. Instead of focussing on teaching your children the mechanics of reading, teach them to LOVE reading. Make reading fun and enjoyable. Once again, our kids are telling us that there is room for improvement when it comes to time spent reading together with a parent or guardian 'every day or almost every day'.



Indigenous Elder Visit at RRM!

On May 10, we will be hosting a special First Nations Elder, Jan Sherman, Anishinaabe mother, culture keeper, storyteller, drummer, and spiritual guide has spent the last 25 years of her life helping people remember ancestral earth teachings in relation to our personal spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical journeys on Mother Earth. Jan has gathered knowledge and wisdom from Grandmothers and Aunties from around the world which she

shares to support individual inner peace that she believes will become community and global peace.

Modified Schedule for May 10

First Session: 9:00 - 10:00 - Grade 3/4's

Second Session 10:00 - 11:00 - JK/SK's

11:00 - 11:45 First Break (11:00 – 11:20

Lunch...11:20 – 11:45)

Third Session: 12:00 - 1:00 - Grade 1/2's 1:00 - 1:45 Second Break

Fourth Session 2:00 - 3:00 - Grade 5/6's

The Kindergarten Circle will focus on the earth/plant growth/respect for all creation/the four elements that all living beings need to grow and be healthy. It will include a welcome song, a story "The Earth and I are Friends" (children will participate by holding up picture cards when they hear the word that reflects their picture as I tell the story), dramatization of being a seed/bulb which reinforces the four elements, a drum song "Mother Earth She is Our Home" to the tune of Old Macdonald.

Grades 1/2 looks at celebrations and different elements that help the children make connections to their own cultural celebrations. They will hear a story, drum, dance and play a game.

Grade 3/4 is focused on the Seven Grandmother/Grandfather Teachings (love, respect, honesty, humility, bravery, truth and wisdom) shared through traditional storytelling, helping build a Seven Grandmothers Wheel, drumming and singing,

Grade 5/6 is focused on the Medicine Wheel Teachings/Worldview that I follow as an Anishinaabe woman. The students help create the Wheel as we talk and they will do some drumming to reinforce concepts discussed.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to join us on this special day.



Children's Mental Health Matters!

Talking about Mental Health - May 7-11 is Child and Youth

Mental Health and Well-being Week!

Child and Youth Mental Health and Well-being Week is about promoting mental wellness, increasing awareness of child and youth mental health, decreasing stigma and understanding that support is available. Let's improve everyone's mental health and well-being!

The theme for Child and Youth Mental Health and Well-being at UGDSB is: Have a **SUPER** Week!

Social Connections
Understanding Emotions
Personal Health
Empathy
Resilience

Each day of the week will focus on a different aspect of Mental Health and Well Being. The schools will be provided with resources and activities related to each day's theme.

As a parent, you can increase the Mental Health and Well-being of your children, youth and family too! Here are some suggestions:

- **Monday May 7 -Social Connection** - ``Don't be shy. Just say hi!``
 - Say Hi to 3 people that you do not know. Perform a random act of kindness.
- **Tuesday May 8 – Understanding Emotions** – “Sad, glad, happy, mad – just be you”
 - Right now, stop and reflect on how you are feeling. Take a couple of moments as a family to do some deep breathing.
<http://youth.anxietybc.com/how-do-it>
Now, how are you feeling?
- **Wednesday May 9 – Personal Health** - “Healthy Self. Heal-ty self”.
 - **Wear green today to support Mental Health Awareness.**

- Did you know that how our bodies feel affects how good we are feeling? Three of the best things you can do to improve your mood is to exercise, sleep well and eat well. Go for a walk, or play a game, get outside, turn off the devices an hour before bed and eat fresh food! The more you do to help your body feel good, the better you will feel!

- **Thursday May 10 – Empathy** - “Be somebody who makes everybody feel like a somebody”.
 - When in doubt – be kind. Try seeing something from another person's perspective today.
- **Friday May 11 – Resilience** - “If Plan A doesn't work, the alphabet has 25 more letters!”.
 - Mental Health and Well-being means coping with the ups and downs of day to day life. Building more resilient thoughts and skills can really help. Children and youth can also find support by seeking help from caring adults. Take time now to talk with child or youth about who those caring adults are in their lives.

For more information about Mental Health and Well-being and interactive activities with your children and youth:

Mind your Mind (online)

www.mindyourmind.ca/Interactives

Fun, interactive options for de-stressing for youth.

Smiling Mind (Free App) smilingmind.com.au/

An app that guides you through simple, calming meditations.

GoNoodle (Free App)

<https://www.gonoodle.com/>

Fun interactive body and mind breaks for kids.

At the end of the week, talk with your child/youth about the things that made them feel more connected, emotionally aware, healthy, empowered and resilient and continue to do those things every day!

Most of all... have a SUPER week!

Jenny Marino is the Mental Health and Addiction Lead for Upper Grand District School Board



Dufferin Parent Support Network.

DPSN’s mission is to encourage, educate and support parents of

school-aged children by providing opportunities to build positive parenting skills and healthy community connections. They have a number of workshops each month that support parents/guardians. Below is just one example.

Drop the Worry Ball

Parenting in the Age of Entitlement

with Dr. Alex Russell

Thursday, May 17, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

Westside Secondary School, 300 Alder Street

Free! Donations appreciated

www.dpsn.ca info@dpsn.ca



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 welcome 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.

Free to Play

The Children’s Foundation of Guelph and Wellington’s Free to Play Program can help low-income families pay for their children’s recreational activities, such as sports, camps and the arts. Up to \$400 per child per year is available for youth from birth through to 18 years who live in Guelph or Wellington County and fall below the low-income cut off. Applying is easy and confidential. Go to: <https://www.childrensfoundation.org/what-we-do/free-to-play> or email freetoplay@childrensfoundation.org or call 519-826-9551, ext 23.



FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

"To listen well is as powerful a means of communication and influence as to talk well."

— John Marshall

In education we strive to teach our students how to become effective communicators so that they are successful in their future endeavours whether in English, French or any other language. Oral communication skills in French including listening, speaking, and interacting, are not unlike oral communication skills in your first language. However, oral communication in French does require attention to a different sound system, new vocabulary and at times an understanding of contexts or cultures that may differ from those of your first language.

How do educators teach oral communication in a second language to a diverse group of students that are at different stages in their oral language development?

Teachers know that the acquisition of oral language typically follows a developmental sequence. They understand that students need to hear the language repeatedly before they will begin to speak it. When students enter immersion or core programs they typically do not have an oral foundation in French. This foundation is created through an emphasis on listening and speaking in authentic contexts to build vocabulary and learn various forms of the language so that students can understand and convey meaning. Hearing and using high frequency words and expressions, learning vocabulary in context, building phonemic awareness, creating environments rich in talk, as well as engaging students in listening activities are all strategies used by teachers to support students in becoming confident oral communicators.

Teachers also support students by modelling effective oral communication, guiding students through oral communication activities, and providing many opportunities for students to practice oral language. As students enter immersion and core French programs they are beginners in the language and diverse in the skills they bring to school. Teachers provide high structure and meet students at their developmental stage to best support and move students forward in their language learning.

How can parents support student oral communication at home when they don't speak French?

One way to do this is to speak with and listen to your child in their first language. In the Ontario Ministry of Education document "Supporting your Child's Success in French Immersion and Extended French - A Parent Guide" it states "Helping your child develop a broad vocabulary in English, or the language you speak at home, has added benefits. It helps develop thinking skills, teaches your child to communicate with precision and provides more opportunities to make connections with French."

Research also shows that oral communication skills are transferable across languages. For example, understanding how to vary volume, pace and vocabulary to suit a purpose and an audience is a skill that is transferable to French.



Environmental Activities to help celebrate our planet



**May 22nd is
International Biodiversity
Day!**

*It is vital to teach our children to
respect and take care of the
environment.*

- *Join a community group and help to remove invasive plants from your local environment.*
- *Get out into the world and enjoy all the different types of life your local area offers. Even your street or a local park can have an amazing variety of life you've never noticed, from insects, birds, chipmunks, to trees and flowers.*
- *Consider planting a pollinator garden in your yard (or in a flowerpot) to help save the bees and butterflies from declining.*

Celebrate Biological Diversity Day on May 22nd!

*The United Nations has proclaimed May 22
The International Day for Biological Diversity to
increase understanding and awareness of
biodiversity issues.*

*Biodiversity simply means: 'A wide range of
life'" Some of the things we do are harmful, so
we need to learn more about how to protect all
the different types of life on our planet.*

Ideas for your family to celebrate Biodiversity Day!

- *Visit farmers markets in your local area to try new types of produce. Whether you incorporate heirloom tomatoes into your cooking, or try one of the rainbow of colors of carrots, biodiversity can bring a great new experience to your table.*
- *View photos of endangered species on the Internet with your child and discuss the reasons why these animals are threatened and why they should be protected.*

Adapted from:

<https://www.daysoftheyear.com/days/international-day-for-biological-diversity/>



International Day for
Biological Diversity

**Celebrate the diversity of our natural
world every day!**

<https://www.cbd.int/>

Ross R. MacKay is now recycling Lunch Kits. Any brand and size of lunch kit packaging including the lunch kit plastic trays, the lunch kit plastic film and all the inside plastic packaging and wrappers.



CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

We'd love to celebrate customs and traditions from all around the world!

If you have a suggestion or idea, please contact your child's teacher or Ms. Armstrong. If you are willing to come in and share ideas with us, we would love to hear from you.

Days of Significance

May 2018

May 1	Beltane	Wicca/Pagan
May 1	Nisfu Shaban	Islam
May 2	Twelfth Day of Ridvan	Baha'i
May 3	Vaisakhi Puja (Buddha's Birthday)	Buddhism
May 10	Ascension Day	Christianity Eastern Orthodox and Western
May 15	International Day of Families	United Nations
May 16- June 14	Ramadan	Islam
May	International Day Against	Grassroots LGBTQ

17	Homophobia and Transphobia	
May 20	Pentecost	Christianity
May 20	Shavuot	Judaism
May 21	Queen Victoria Day	Public Holiday
May 24	Declaration of the Ba'b	Baha'i
May 25	African Liberation Day	Rastafarian
May 27	Pentecost (J)	Christianity
May 29	The Ascension of Baha'u'llah	Baha'i
May 29	Tibetan Buddha's Enlightenment (Saga Dawa)	Buddhism
May 29	Wesak or Vesak (Buddha's Birthday)	Buddhism/Tibetan
May 31	World No Tobacco Day	World Health Organization



Feedback welcome on draft board policies!

The Upper Grand District School Board is welcoming public input on draft policies.

Currently under review is:

Policy 501 – Out of Area and Out of District Attendance

It is important for students, staff, school councils and parents to understand when and how applications for out of area and out of district attendance are considered while the board continues to maintain viable programs in all schools.

You are invited to review the draft documents and submit online feedback at www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy. **The deadline for public input is May 24, 2018** at 4 p.m. EST. Persons without internet access may call 519-822-4420 (or toll-free 1-800-321-4025) ext. 723 to request a printed copy of the draft documents

Food and Friends....Children's Foundation

*We would welcome feedback from students/parents about the Food & Friends student nutrition program in our **school/agency**. This can be regarding menu items, successes or challenges with the program, for example. We would be happy to hear a story about how the program has affected your child/youth.*

<http://www.childrensfoundation.org/downloads/positioning-statement.jpg>

Coming Soon - Wellington County Library presents the 2018

TD

Summer Reading Club

The Wellington County Library is busy with its move to the new location so there are not a lot of activities to promote during the month of May! However...we do have one to promote that is coming up this summer.

Wellington County Library is proud to participate in the national TD Summer Reading Club. Through books, programs, and conversations, participants will dive into areas that fascinate them, dabble in others for new inspiration, and discover that their passions have the potential to transform them, their friends, and their world.

Studies have shown that school-aged children lose much of their reading ability over the summer months if they do not continue to read. As we approach the end of the school year, we would appreciate your support in promoting our summer programmes, which are designed to help children maintain and enhance their reading level for the next school year.

The TD Summer Reading Club information as well as information about many other awesome opportunities is available on their website at www.wellington.ca/Library



Join us and play to make a difference.

Golf with us on Tuesday, May 15th.

Registration includes lunch and dinner, 18 holes with a cart, great game prizes, an attractive silent auction and raffle, and the opportunity to empower local children and youth.

[CLICK HERE to register your foursome.](#)