



# Ross R. MacKay Public School

35 Trafalgar Road, R.R.# 2  
Hillsburgh, ON N0B 1Z0

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

Phone: (519) 855-4957

Fax: (519) 855-6901

**Principal:** Ms. T. Armstrong

**Office Coordinator:** Mrs. C. Eberhardt

March, 2019

## Principal's Message

What a winter! Between System Shut-down Days (a record four this year) and No-Bus Days, we've had a lot of interruption to our usual routine. Let's hope that famous groundhog Wiarton Willie is right and that Spring really is just around the corner.

This past month, we have focused on the Character Trait of **Perseverance**. The month of March will be all about **Self-Regulation**. We have selected this character trait because, as a staff, we believe that students who demonstrate this trait are better learners, as well as improved school and global citizens. We encourage you to talk to your children about what these traits mean at home, school and in the community. Further detail about self-regulation is in this newsletter.

Please note that we have updated our **School Improvement Plan** and it is now posted on our Website for you to take a look at. We've also posted a **Math Bulletin about Number Talks**, created by our Board's Program Department, to help parents/guardians understand a little more about the way we currently teach math.

Some of our students seem to be having trouble entertaining themselves on the yard and end up rough-housing or even fighting. If you have an extra ball or two kicking around your house, please send them in with your child for the class Sports Bin. Having some additional equipment might help with this challenge.

We welcome parents/guardians to join us this month:

- Character Education Assembly on Monday, March 4th at 2:45 PM.,
- 'Tentative' re-scheduled Eco-school Winter Walk Day on the Cataract Trail on March 5 at 2:45 – 3:15
- School Council Meeting on March 20 at 6: 30PM

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 which is **@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](mailto:tracy.armstrong@ugdsb.on.ca)



Oral health is an important part of your child's health, self-esteem and sense of well-being.

Did you know that children should start seeing a dentist around age one? Once they begin visiting the dentist, it's important to continue to go regularly.

If you can't afford to pay for dental care for your children (ages 0-17), we have programs that can help. To learn more about our dental programs please call our Dental Line at 1-800-265-7293 ext. 2661. We can:

- Answer any questions or concerns you have about dental and oral health
- Help you find out if your children qualify for free dental care
- Help enroll your child in our dental programs



Dufferin Parent Support Network is a network of parents and community agencies who provide education, resources, and support for parents of school-aged children. Check out what they offer by visiting the following website or emailing them directly.  
[www.dpsn.ca](http://www.dpsn.ca) [info@dpsn.ca](mailto:info@dpsn.ca)

## Talking About Mental Health: Random Acts of Kindness

Did you know that there are scientifically proven benefits of being kind! That's right. Just the act of being kind has been shown to stimulate the same part of the brain as those who receive an act of kindness. The simple act of kindness can:

- Reduce the stress hormone cortisol
- Increase sense of positive mood and satisfaction
- Help with physical health including lowering blood pressure
- Increase sense of happiness
- Increase feelings of "calm"
- Improve the mood of somebody simply witnessing the act of kindness

Kindness is also something that is TEACHABLE.

Dr. Ritchie Davidson of the University of Wisconsin states that: *"It's kind of like weight training, we found that people can actually build up their compassion 'muscle' and respond to others' suffering with care and a desire to help."*

As a family, you can:

- Make a conscious effort to recognize and say something kind about each other or someone else
- Give everyone in the family sticky notes to leave kindness notes to each other around the house
- Challenge everyone to do a random act of kindness every day for a week and have dinner time discussion about what everybody did that day
- Make an effort to identify and appreciate kindness that has been received

The weather may not be "playing nice" with us here in Southern Ontario these last weeks but we can still give our brain and our mental health a winter "boost"! So go out and notice kindness, receive kindness and give kindness this month.

## Self-Regulation

Self regulation is a term that we hear a great deal in schools



today. Self regulation is the ability to tolerate sensations, situations, and distress and form appropriate responses. Simply stated, it is the ability to control emotions, thinking, behaviour, and motor actions in different situations. In children, self-regulation matures just like other developmental processes. Children get older and learn to think before they act. Being aware of our own physical well-being and changes in how we are feeling is one of the reasons behind introducing Zones of Regulation as well as yoga & meditation in our classrooms.

It makes sense that children who are able to respond appropriately in different situations tend to have more success in many areas of life, both academically and socially. Where our thinking has shifted over the last few years is in understanding that self-regulation can be explicitly taught and fostered in children, helping them to feel better equipped and capable when faced with everyday challenges.

How can you help your child develop self-regulation? Here are some suggested activities, mostly taken from an article written by Ida Rose Florez.

- Start early—children develop the foundation skills for self-regulation from birth to 5 years old
- Model proper behaviours—this allows children to observe how to choose an appropriate response in different situations
- Provide hints and cues by verbally and/or physically pointing out important aspects of an academic or physical activity
- Provide verbal or physical cues to help children such as “let’s stay calm” or allowing a child to go to a quiet area to relax
- Look for times when adult support can be withdrawn so that children can learn to be independent in their responses
- Play games that require start and stop skills such as: Red Light-Green Light, Freeze Dance, Simon Says, etc.
- Dance activities where the child needs to move to the rhythm
- Play any games that require turn-taking. Children learn that it’s OK to lose
- When involved in an activity, talk with your child about how they feel doing that activity, and praise your child’s development of a skill, not just an award

For other resources on self-regulation:

<http://www.zonesofregulation.com/index.html>

<https://self-reg.ca/>

<https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/>

“Children acquire the **ABILITY**  
to **SELF-REGULATE**  
by first being **REGULATED** .”  
~Stuart Shanker

## 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.



## Council's Corner

Hello, RRM families.

Winter has certainly been making itself felt lately and this resulted in the postponement of our Free Family Arts Night until a date in the Spring.

School Council is meeting on Wednesday, March 20 at 6:30 in the library to discuss a new date in the spring. All are welcome to attend!

School Council would like to thank all of our families that have continued to support our school lunch programs with the purchase of hot lunch for your students. Council would also like to thank our volunteers who help to organize and distribute lunches to the students. Without them, this initiative would not be possible.

Thank you to Beth Gregory, Angie Jansa and Rob Winkler. If you would like to volunteer or know an RRM Hawk grandparent who would like to help out, please contact [RRMlunchandmilk@outlook.com](mailto:RRMlunchandmilk@outlook.com).

For spring, Council will continue with our pizza and hotdog lunch programs and we will offer a spring pancake lunch on Thursday, April 18th. More details will follow but you can mark your calendars now. Students can enjoy a warm lunch and celebrate the warmer spring weather together!



## Local Library - Hillsburgh Branch

98B Trafalgar Rd. Hillsburgh, ON

519.855.4010 [www.wellington.ca/library](http://www.wellington.ca/library)

### Babytime (0 - 12 months)

Introduce your baby to the library and a love of books through finger plays, songs, rhymes and stories. Please register.

Tuesdays, March 5 - 12, 1:30 - 2:30 pm

### Story Time (5 years and under)

Our Story Times are created to help your child get ready for reading. Share stories, songs, rhymes, and activities aimed at developing your child's early literacy skills.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to participate.

Ask staff for details. Please register.

Tuesdays, March 19 - 26, 10:30 - 11:00 am

Wednesdays, March 20 - 27, 10:30 - 11:00 am

### Hooks and Needles (Adults)

Bring your own project and join others for an afternoon of knitting and crocheting. Please register.

Wednesdays, March 13 and 27, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

**Wild Ontario (All Ages):** Birds in the library? Yes! Get up-close and learn fascinating facts about the raptors of Wild Ontario. Friday, March 15, 10:30 - 11:30 am

### Make and Take Scavenger Hunt (Grades JK – 6)

Follow the clues hidden in the children's area to find the pieces needed to make a craft. March 1 - 30, during branch hours

### 3D Printer Certification Course (All Ages)

Interested in using our 3D printer? Register for this one-hour course and get your certification. You will then be able to reserve the printer and create! Children 13 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Please register.

Friday, March 8, 10:30 - 11:30 am

Tuesday, March 19, 2:00 - 3:00 pm

Wednesday, March 27, 6:30 - 7:30 pm

### Carnegie Café: Short Film Series (Adults)

Join us for our short film series featuring the Kanopy library resource. This month we'll be watching the

Spanish comedy short film "Bikini; A Real Story", followed by a discussion.

Thursday, March 28, 1:30 - 3:00 pm

### Novels and Nibbles Book Club (Preteens)

Calling all readers! Join us for discussion, activities and snacks featuring your favourite books. Please register.

Wednesday, March 20, 6:30 - 7:30 pm

### March Break Movie Monday (All Ages)

Start your March Break by joining us for a screening of Disney's A Wrinkle in Time (rated G). Bring your friends, we'll supply the popcorn. Ages 8 and under must be accompanied by a caregiver. Please register.

Monday, March 11, 2:30 - 4:30 pm

### Spin a Story (Grades 4 – 6)

We know the cover is not the book, but your words are shaping up beautifully! Join us to explore different ways of capturing your story. We'll be creating zines today. Please register.

Tuesday, March 12, 10:30 - 11:30 am

### Science of Magic (Preteens)

Don't be a mad scientist – be a magical one! These tricks and projects are sure to impress. Today's events are Harry Potter themed. Please register.

Tuesday, March 12, 6:30 - 7:30 pm

### Once Upon a Time Story time (All Ages)

Do you love fairy tales as much as we do? Together we'll explore classic stories with a twist of fun! Please register. Wed. March 13, 10:30 - 11:30 am

### Tales from Around the World (Grades JK-2)

We'll look at traditions from around the world to find inspiration for beautiful creations. Please register.

Thursday, March 14, 10:30 - 11:30 am

### Carnegie Café: Art for Beginners (Adults)

Thinking of trying a paint night, but feeling a little shy? Join us for an acrylic painting session and test your talent there! No experience necessary. Materials supplied. Please register.

Friday, March 22, 2:00 - 3:30 pm

### Science of Magic (Preteens)

Don't be a mad scientist – be a magical one! These tricks and projects are sure to impress. Today's focus is potions and magic. Please register.

Wednesday, March 13, 6:30 - 7:30 pm



## March Break – how to keep the family engaged!

Not sure how to keep the children engaged, having fun and maybe even still learning over March Break. This is a great resource that is chockablock full of ideas to keep the whole crew busy (maybe even WITHOUT screens).

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/parenting/article/un-learning-parents-children-activities-handbook>

## Life-threatening Allergies

We have students with life-threatening food allergies R. MacKay. Students, staff AND visitors are reminded to not bring the following items into our building.

- Tree nuts
- Pineapple
- Eggs



Thanks for helping to keep our students safe.

It is the policy of the Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB) to support students with a life-threatening medical condition to access school in a safe, accepting, and healthy learning environment that supports well-being, and empowers students to reach their full potential for self-management of their medical condition(s).

The UGDSB is committed to minimizing the risks for students who have asthma, diabetes, epilepsy/seizure disorder, life-threatening allergies and/or other serious health condition through the development and implementation of individualized Plans of Care.

### 9 Tips for Being More Active

Physical activity is important for children and adults of all ages. Being active as a family can benefit everyone. Adults need 2½ hours a week of physical activity, and children need 60 minutes a day. Follow these handy tips to add more activity to your family's busy schedule.

- 1 Make time**  
Find time in the week when the whole family is around and spend it being active. Try doing something physical after dinner or begin the weekend with a Saturday morning walk.
- 2 Plan ahead and track your progress**  
Write your physical activity plans on a family calendar. Let the kids help in planning the activities. Allow them to check it off after completing each activity.
- 3 Include work around the house**  
Have the kids help with yard work and other active chores around the house. Have them help you with raking, weeding, planting or vacuuming.
- 4 Use what's available**  
Plan things that require little or no equipment or facilities. Examples include walking, jogging, jumping rope, playing tag and dancing. Find out what programs your community recreation center might offer for free or for a minimal charge.
- 5 Plan for all weather conditions**  
Try things that don't depend on the weather conditions. Think mall walking, indoor swimming or active video games. And whenever the weather is nice, get outside!
- 6 Turn off the TV**  
Set a rule that no one can spend longer than 2 hours per day playing video games, watching TV and using the computer (except for school work). Instead of a TV show, play a family game, dance to favorite music or go for a walk.
- 7 Start small**  
Begin by starting one new family activity and add more when you feel everyone is ready. Take the dog for a longer walk, play another ball game or go to an additional exercise class.
- 8 Include other families**  
Invite others to join your family activities. This is a great way for you and your kids to spend time with friends while exercising. Plan parties with active games such as bowling or an obstacle course, sign up for family programs at the YMCA or join a recreational club.
- 9 Treat the family with fun physical activity**  
When it's time to celebrate as a family, do something active as a reward. Plan a trip to the zoo, park or lake to treat the family.

## **EQUITY & INCLUSION**

Let's celebrate and/or acknowledge customs, traditions and days of significance 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 March 2019

March 2-20	19 Day Fast	Daha'l
March 4	Maha Shivaratiri	Hindu
March 5	Shrove Tuesday	Christian
March 6	Ash Wednesday	Christian
March 8	International Women's Day	UN
March 17	St. Patrick's Day	Christian
March 20 - 21	Holi	Hindu
March 20	Equinox Journee Internationale de la francophone	
March 21	Purim Norooz New Year Naw-Ruz New Year Lord's Evening Meal World Down Syndrome Day Hola Mohalla Magha Puja Day International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	Jewish Zoroastrian/Persian Baha'i Jehovah's Witness, Christian  Sikh Buddist UN
March 22	World Water Day	
March 26	Epilepsy Day (wear purple)	
March 28	Khordad Sal	Zoroastrian



## **Feedback welcome on draft board policies**



The Upper Grand District School Board is welcoming public input on draft policies. Currently under review is:

[Policy 602 – Animals in the Classroom](#)

This policy is important to students, staff, parents and guardians, school councils and community members because everyone plays a role in maintaining a healthy and safe learning and working environment in our schools when animals are present.

You are invited to review the draft documents and submit online feedback at [www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy](http://www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy). **The deadline for public input is March 28, 2019** 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.