



# Ross R. MacKay Public School

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

Phone: (519) 855-4957  
Fax: (519) 855-6901

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

Principal: Ms. T. Armstrong  
Office Coordinator: To Be Hired

September, 2019

## Principal's Message

To our many returning families, welcome back. We thank you for enthusiastically supporting school programs and initiatives as well as working so hard with your children at home. Reinforcing foundational skills and positive character traits will allow them to succeed in all areas related to school life.

Responsibility  
Perseverance  
Collaboration  
Honesty  
Fairness  
Compassion  
Citizenship  
Self-regulation  
Courage  
Respect

A special welcome to our new families joining RRM this year. We look forward to working with you and trust that you will enjoy our school community.



We thank our custodians Brandi and Tim who cleaned Ross R. MacKay from top to bottom during the summer break. We thank them for their efforts both during the summer and every day for making our school shine.

Our staff has also worked hard, organizing classrooms and planning program for the upcoming year. Over the summer, staff read professional material, completed

courses or attended learning opportunities and look forward to implementing this ongoing learning during the school year.

I always tell students that a Principal's job consists of two main things - LEARNING & SAFETY, as pretty much all of the facets of the administrative position fall under these two big umbrella terms. This year again, RRM has an allotment of 0.6 Principal which means I will also be balancing the role of Administrator with Special Education and Library roles.

Please be sure to keep up with what is happening at school by signing up to receive emails and following us on our social media accounts. Details are on the following page.



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

## News & Information from Ross R. MacKay

We want to ensure that you are receiving news and information from our School.

1. We invite you to sign up to receive regular email blasts from RRM. Please visit our school website

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

At the bottom of the page, please

click on the link



and

fill in your

information.

2. We encourage you to follow us on our Twitter Account [@RossRMacKayPS](https://twitter.com/RossRMacKayPS)

3. *Our School Council invites you to follow their Facebook Page [Ross R. MacKay Public School - by School Council](#)*

4. Upper Grand DSB has a parent communication tool for your smart phone. Designed to streamline communication between schools and the communities they serve, the Upper Grand Mobile app provides parents with a simple interface with up-to-date information including news, calendars and social media feeds. The [Upper Grand Mobile App](#) is available today for free at either the Google Play Store or at iTunes. Use the search term "Upper Grand" to find the app.

## School Organizations

Schools have built class lists based on their tentative organizations. Changes may be necessary at Ross R. MacKay in order that our Board remain compliant with Ministry parameters (see below). Any changes will be implemented by Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. Principals do NOT have the option of changing the school organization that is set by the District Staffing Committee of the Board. If changes are necessary and your children are affected, you will be notified as

soon as possible.



MINISTRY OF  
EDUCATION  
PARAMETERS

- Full Day Kindergarten Class Size  
Average for the Board is 26 students
- 90% of Full Day Kindergarten classes with 29 or fewer students
- 10% of Full Day Kindergarten classes up to a maximum of 32 students under certain circumstances
- 90% of the Board's primary classes with 20 or fewer students
- 10% of the Board's primary classes up to a maximum of 23 students
- Grade 3/4 classes have a cap of 23 students
- Junior/Intermediate Class Size  
Average for the Board is 24.5 students to 1 teacher



## RRM Staff

Kindergarten - Ms.  
Breanne Hart-Ruhl and  
Mrs. Nancy Kelso\* (Early  
Childhood Educator)

Grade 1/2- Mr. Scott Gaidies

Grade 3/4- Mrs. Sarah Johnston (Long-term  
Occasional for Mrs. Kaitlyn Smith)

Grade 5/6 - Mr. Mark Robnik

Special Education - Mrs. Melinda Lake &  
Ms. Tracy Armstrong

Core French, Planning & Library Planning  
Teacher - Mme. Michaela Bonney (Long Term  
Occasional filling in for Madame Pearce)

Library - Ms. Tracy Armstrong

Educational Assistants - Mrs. Deb Burt and  
Mrs. Linda Paul

Office Coordinator - TBA\*

Nutrition & Activity Break Supervisors -  
Mrs. Angie Jansa and Miss Brandi  
McLaughlin

Custodians -Miss Brandi McLaughlin

Principal - Ms. Tracy Armstrong

\*new to RRM this year

## Terry Fox Run

This charitable school fundraiser to support  
cancer research is coming up on Thursday,



September 26. All  
students will be  
participating. We  
are suggesting a  
donation of a 'Toonie  
for Terry' as a

voluntary donation. Families are more than  
welcome to join us on the run on this day.

## Ross R. MacKay PS—Balanced School Day

8:25 a.m.	Staff on duty
8:55 a.m.	Entry Bell
8:55 - 10:35 (100 minutes)	Instructional Block #1
10:35-10:55	Nutrition/Activity Break #1 (20 minutes)
10:55-11:20 (25 minutes)	Outside Time
11:20-1:00 (100 minutes)	Instructional Block #2
1:00- 1:20	Nutrition/Activity Break #2 (20 minutes)
1:20-1:45 (25minutes)	Outside Time
1:45-3:25 (100 minutes)	Instructional Block #3
3:25-3:45	Dismissal and Bus Loading

## Walking or Riding

We have two transportation lists for our students - walkers or bus students. We expect all students from JK to Gr. 6 to be either a bus student or a walker and that this will be the situation for them all the time - unless otherwise informed by note or by phone from the parents. If a student is on the walker's list, they will not be allowed



to take the bus. If students are on the bus list, they will not be allowed to walk. This is very important for us to know in order to be sure of the attendance on our buses and to ensure the safety of our students.

\*School staff cannot make changes to students riding buses. Parents must contact the bus company directly to make changes.

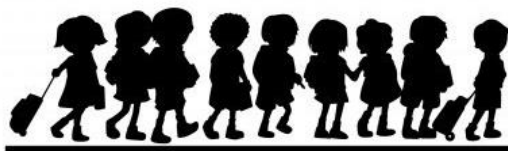
No exceptions will be permitted. Please keep in mind that student safety is our number one priority.

Our school day begins at 8:55 am. A staff member is on duty beginning at 8:25 am. We ask that you not send your child, or drop your child off at school prior to 8:25 am as there is no supervision.

Just a reminder that between 8:25 am to approx. 8:40 am, we ask that you not enter/exit the parking lot in order to ensure safety while busses are unloading and exiting the lot. If you are dropping off

your child, please do so at the sidewalk. They will then proceed to their appropriate yard. No students should be entering the front doors of the school in the morning, unless they have prearranged permission.

At the end of the day, the driveway will once again be blocked off from 3:25 pm to approx...4:00 pm to ensure student safety. Bus students will leave the school through their assigned exit doors when their bus is called. All students who are walking home or being picked up will leave through their assigned exit doors. Parents may meet their child at these doors.



\*Students who arrive late, or visitors to our building, must report to the office upon arrival. Thank you for helping to keep our students safe!

## Transportation Website

All information regarding bussing can be found on the transportation website at [www.stwdsts.ca](http://www.stwdsts.ca)



Service de transport de  
**Wellington – Dufferin**  
Student Transportation Services





### Agendas

The use of agendas helps to promote student organization, improves study skills, and facilitates home and school communication.

We greatly appreciate your support in helping to defray the \$7.00 cost of the agenda. We encourage you to read the agenda and sign it with your child regularly. Please send the money to your child's teacher or pay via SchoolCashOnline. Thank you!!!

### Visitors to Ross R. MacKay

To ensure the safety of our students, we ask that all visitors check into the office with our Office Coordinator. Throughout the school day, all other doors to the school are locked in order to better control access to our building. At break times, front doors are also locked as students are assisting in the office during this time. Please ring the doorbell if arriving during these times.

Should you wish to meet with your child's teacher, we ask that you please arrange a mutually convenient time. If you are picking up your child at the end of the day, please wait for the 3:25 pm dismissal bell outside at your child's exit door. This will enable us to get students to their proper bus and dismissal locations with reduced congestion in the hallways.

Thank you for your support and understanding with this safety routine.



### Life Threatening

### Allergies

Students with Life-Threatening Medical Conditions

UGDSB Policy 518:

Students with Life-Threatening Medical Conditions, outlines the roles and responsibilities for all in the educational community to support students with possible life-threatening medical conditions. The prevalent medical conditions covered under this policy are Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Diabetes and Epilepsy/Seizure Disorders. If your child has one of these, or any other life-threatening medical condition, please visit: [www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy](http://www.ugdsb.ca/board/policy) (and look for Policy 518) or contact the school as soon as possible. We will work with you to develop a Plan of Care to support your child.

We have children in our school with potential life-threatening allergies (called anaphylaxis) to various foods and other materials. Anaphylaxis is a medical condition that can cause death within minutes. Due to current life-threatening allergies of students at RRM, please do not send products with **whole eggs, pineapple or nuts/nut** products to school. This year, we also have a new JK with a life-threatening allergy to **dairy** so families are asked to have your children wash their hands before coming to school and to NOT eat dairy as a morning bus snack. All students will also wash their hands after eating at school. Students can experience anaphylactic shock

by coming into contact with small particles or residue from these food products so we appreciate the effort required by families to keep all of our children safe. Please be aware that there may be specific restrictions in your child's class to protect a student with such an allergy.

In recent years, anaphylaxis has increased dramatically among students. Although this may not affect your child's class directly, we are letting you know so that you are aware that we aim to create an allergy safe environment at our school. If your child is in a classroom with an anaphylactic child, or your child has anaphylaxis, you will be informed by the classroom teacher. Our school has procedures in place for the prevention and management of anaphylactic reactions. If your child has health concerns of any kind, please tell your child's teacher or the office and we will take the necessary health protection steps. Thank you for your understanding in ensuring an allergy-safe environment for all of our students.

### **Smoke-Free Environment**



The Upper Grand DSB provides a smoke-free environment for its students, staff and others while on school

Board property, in accordance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. This policy refers to all forms of tobacco, and any processed form of tobacco that may be smoked, inhaled or chewed, including e-cigarettes.

### **Message from Public Health**

If you have any questions please contact us at  
1-800-265-7293 ext. 4111 or email  
schoolhealth@wdgpublichealth.ca

Children that eat well, learn well. A variety of food provides the energy and nutrients needed to pay attention, learn, grow and be active! Try to include at least one food item from each of these 4 categories in your child's lunch every day. (Please consider Life-Threatening allergies at your school when deciding what to send with your child).

☐ **Protein-rich Foods** (beans, lentils, chickpeas, cheese, eggs, meat, fish, plain yogurt, plain milk)

☐ **Whole Grains & Starchy Vegetables** (whole grain pasta or bread, potatoes, corn)

☐ **Vegetables**

☐ **Fruit**

#### **Additional tips:**

- Send a re-usable water bottle with water every day.
- Involve your kids in planning and preparing - it takes 'two to mango'! Kids are more likely to eat food that they were involved in making.
- Be a positive role model. Kids are smart and always watching, so if you're eating the veggies, they'll likely eat them too!
- Check out [UnlockFood.ca](http://UnlockFood.ca) for school lunch tips and recipes or watch our new YouTube video for recipe inspiration and tips (Visit: <http://bit.ly/2it19CG>). For more information visit [www.wdgpublichealth.ca](http://www.wdgpublichealth.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.

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.



UG2GO is the virtual learning commons for the Upper Grand District School Board. UG2GO provides 24/7 access to quality online subscription databases and websites for all UGDSB students and staff.

Visit [UG2GO](#) and select either the [Elementary](#) or [Secondary](#) portal.

**\*\*Login at home is the same Windows username/password you use to access the network at school\*\***



Environmental Activities to help celebrate our planet

## SEPTEMBER 27<sup>TH</sup> IS NATIONAL TREE DAY!

*"Let nature be your teacher." William Wordsworth*

Celebrate National Tree Day on September 27<sup>st</sup> 2019

*"National Tree Day will serve as a celebration for all Canadians to appreciate the great benefits that trees provide us - clean air, wildlife habitat, reducing energy demand and connecting with nature."*

<http://www.nationaltreeday.ca/>

*"Children today spend less time outdoors than any generation in human history."*

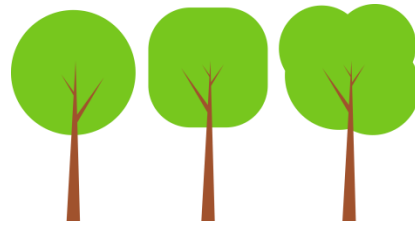
<http://getbackoutside.ca/>

*"For children, studies show that time outdoors, especially unstructured time in more natural settings, can increase curiosity, creativity and problem solving ability. It also improves their physical fitness and coordination." <http://30x30.davidsuzuki.org/>*

**Some great activities for your family to do on Tree Day, or any day!**

- Read a book on trees: *The Lorax*, by Dr. Seuss; *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein; *What Good Is a Tree* by Larry Dane Brimner; *The Great Kapok Tree* by Lynne Cherry
- Learn the names of the trees in your backyard or neighbourhood
- Do tree art - e.g., a leaf collage, or leaf/bark pencil rubbing art, or tree photography

- Create a tree book: "adopt" a favourite tree, name it and throughout the year record and examine its characteristics and the changes that it goes through.
- Organize a Tree Walk game - Look for trees that are: the tallest, oldest, has the widest trunk, has the largest leaf, is the most prickly, etc.
- Download a bird app and start to help your child learn to identify the colours and songs of birds in your neighbourhood
- Research all the great forest hiking trails in your area and pick one to try out.



- Hold a Tree Day birthday party with your family, friends, neighbours or community! Serve tree-shaped foods! (*Find lots of ideas on Pinterest.*)

**For more ideas:**

- ✓ Join the **30x30 Nature Challenge**: If you want to feel healthier, happier and more focused - add a daily dose of nature to your routine! Find out more at <http://30x30.davidsuzuki.org/>
- ✓ Do a Google search: "What to do on a nature walk" or "Arbour Day activities"

**Transitions to School in the Fall**





Returning to school is both an exciting time as well as one that can be challenging for some of our students. As our students get ready for new September routines, here are some tips to support parents on things to consider when the new school year is beginning again:

- If you are new to the school community, make an appointment to meet your child's school team so that you can develop relationships with the school and learn the school based routines alongside your child.
- Connect your child with neighbourhood friends that are in their class to help them get to and from school with a peer to make the transitions more fun.
- Consider adapting your child's bedtime routine by returning to an earlier 'school day' schedule before school starts, aiming for 10 hours of sleep a night.

- Sit and plan what your child would enjoy eating as part of a healthy lunch while at school. Including kids in these routines helps them build their independence in packing a well-balanced lunch and snacks.
- Sometimes when kids are older and have more things to remember like school responsibilities and schedules for classes, they can get worried about remembering it all. Talk through their concerns and make some plans for how they can remember these items during a busy day.
- Walk with your child to school to remind them of the safety rules and routines. The summer is a long time and this needs to be refreshed from time to time.
- Spend time each night checking in on how the first few weeks of school have gone. If your child is facing some concerns that do not seem to be ironing out, connect with the school to see if together something can be done to support them to be happy in their new school year.

Talking About  
Mental  
Health Sept  
2019 -  
Heading Back to School



Hope that you had a wonderful summer! As the children and youth head back to school, here are a few suggestions on how to make this a mentally healthy school year.

1. Start each day with a positive thought. Everyone in the family choose a positive thought for the day.
2. Talk about what they like about school and what they are good at. Have them name 1 thing they like about school.
3. Set a goal for the day. Have each child or youth set a small goal to achieve each day.
4. Brainstorm ideas of how to deal with challenges. Have your child or youth make a list of ways they can deal with challenges at school. At the end of the day, ask them which strategies they used to deal with challenges. Encourage them to try out different strategies to build their coping tool kit.
5. End the day by being grateful. Name three things you are grateful for today. Have each child or youth name three things they are grateful for today.

**Have a wonderful and mentally healthy school year!**

The Benefits of  
Making Mistakes



As the new school year begins, there is one quote that educators wish all

students would consider as they enter their new classrooms, "making mistakes is part of life—and a really big part of growing up. It's how you learn who you want to be"

(<http://talkingtreebooks.com/quotes/quote-making-mistakes.html>). As adults, we understand that making mistakes is an important part of life, however, students sometimes struggle to see the benefits of their errors.

One of the ways that we, the adults in children's lives, can support youngsters is to be open about the mistakes that we make and share with students how we take responsibility for our errors. It is important that children see that everyone makes mistakes and that mistakes are a valuable part of our lives due to the fact that they encourage brain development. Researcher, Jo Boaler, states in her book *Mathematical Mindsets* (p. 12) when the brain is challenged and mistakes are made, that is the time when "the brain grows the most."

When students are taught about the importance of mistakes, it can have a positive impact on their lives. New York Times author, Peter Sims, identified the following habits of successful people:

1. They feel comfortable being wrong.
2. They try new ideas.
3. They are open to different experiences.
4. They try out ideas without judging them.
5. They are willing to go against the crowd.
6. They do not give up when things get hard.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if all of our students followed these ideas?

It would be wonderful if students believed that every time they entered school they were going to a place where they were going to make mistakes that will help them grow and learn. It is vital that we understand that learning means not being afraid to examine the mistakes that we all make. It would be great if children remember this quote from former President of the United States, Bill Clinton, "[everyone] will make mistakes. But if you learn from them, you'll be a better person. It's how you handle adversity, not how it affects you. The main thing is never quit, never quit, never quit."

**Reminder for parents/guardians:**  
**Accidents happen - be prepared with**  
**Student Accident Insurance**

**Reminder for parents/guardians: Accidents happen - be prepared with Student Accident Insurance**



Parents/guardians are responsible for expenses related to

student injuries on and off school premises during school activities. Accidents can and

do happen and the costs involved might not be fully covered by Provincial Health Care or employer group insurance plans.

The Upper Grand District School Board is empowered under The Education Act to offer Accident and Life Insurance for students.

Information will be sent home with respect to Student Accident Insurance offered by Old Republic Insurance Company of Canada.

You should receive:

1. The Director's letter and an Acknowledgment to be signed by parents/guardians and returned to school.
2. An InsureMyKids application form

Old Republic offers a variety of options, including family rates and multi-year plans, at affordable prices. The cost must be paid by parents/guardians.

Subscription is directly through Old Republic by mail or online. Questions should be directed to Old Republic at 1-800-463-5437 or [www.insuremykids.com](http://www.insuremykids.com).

For today's active children, especially those who participate in field trips, co-curricular and other school activities outside the school day, Student Accident Insurance is valuable.

## Our Well and Drinking Water

We are one of the 14 schools in our district that gets their drinking water from wells. All of our other schools are on municipal water systems.

The Province's Drinking Water System Regulation (Ontario Regulation 170/03) requires us to test the water at our school regularly and provide an annual report. The report covers many aspects of the drinking water system and includes information on its performance, operation and test results.

You can come into the school office and get a copy of this report, or go to the board's website [www.ugdsb.on.ca](http://www.ugdsb.on.ca) to see our annual report and those for the other sites.

The regular testing helps ensure that the water supply in our schools continues to be safe and of a high quality.



### ***Student Absences & Pick Ups***

Please call the office (before 8:55) if your child is going to be absent from school. Voice mail is available 24 hours a day. When calling, let us know:

- The name of your child;
- Your child's class and teacher; and,
- The reason for the absence.

If students are being picked up during the day, parents will need to come to the office to sign out their child.

If you are picking up your child at the end of the day, and your child would normally take the school bus home, please inform the office before 2:15 so that we can update bus lists and ensure student safety. Please make sure to inform the office (not just the teacher) of pick-ups as we need to account for all students on bus lists.

### ***Playground Safety***

Rest assured that our playgrounds are fully supervised. Nonetheless, accidents do happen. To minimize risk, discuss the following precautions with your child:

- Tie back long hair;
- Zip up jackets;
- Remove drawstrings on hoods and jackets;
- Wear a neck-warmer, rather than a scarf, in cold weather;
- Do not tie skipping ropes to slides and climbers;
- Do not throw stones or other objects on the playground;
- Do not play tag on or around climbing equipment; and,

Respect the rights of others





## ***Appropriate Clothing***

Weather can be unpredictable in September. Unless there is heavy rain, extreme cold or an electrical storm, students go outside for recess. All children should come to school with a sweater or jacket in case the weather becomes unseasonably cold.



Two sets of footwear are also requested—one for indoor use and the other to wear

outside. Running shoes are the safest choice for footwear. For safety reasons, flip flops and shoes without backs are strongly discouraged.

## ***Labeling Clothes/Belongings***

Please use a permanent marker or label to identify your child's clothing/belongings. This will help keep the number of items in the "lost and found" bin to a minimum. And, it will make it easier for your child to get ready to go outside during breaks and to go home at the end of the day.

## **Snack Program**



**Food & Friends Program**  
DUFFERIN · WELLINGTON · GUELPH

School Council and Staff will be running and maintaining a

supplemental snack program for students in need. We are committed to ensuring that no student goes hungry and nutritious snacks will be available daily. If you would like to

make a donation to this program, we accept cash or food donation (crackers, granola bars, fruit etc...)

## **School Council Corner:**

Welcome Back to School, and getting back into the routine of packing lunches, getting kids to the bus on time and maybe, just maybe, thinking of volunteering your time?? School Council is a great way to get involved in your child's life at school. There are many opportunities within school council to volunteer your time, and to be part of a passionate team. We hope to see some new and familiar faces back for 2019 - 2020. Watch for the nomination form in your child's backpack.



Also, a double-sided information sheet and nomination form for this year's Council is being sent home this week.