



John Darling News

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE: December 2012

Time certainly does fly when you are having fun! Students and teachers continue to work hard to develop independent skills related to our learning agenda. Our school success plan, this year, is focused on improving students' ability to communicate their thinking in mathematics. We continue to use high yield instructional strategies to promote critical thinking across the curriculum. When you look inside classrooms, you will see students actively engaged in the learning process. Teachers share learning goals with their classes in order to help students to articulate and use clear criteria to explain their thinking both orally and in writing. Classrooms display student work, related anchor charts as well as subject specific terminology and various strategies that support comprehension and communication skills.

The staff and students are engaged in extra-curricular activities that serve to enhance the school climate. A big thank you goes out to Mrs. Burrell, Mr. Heer, Mr. Siegfried, Mrs. Pollock and Mrs. Vines for organizing our fall extracurricular activities such as running club & soccer intramurals. In addition, many thanks to Mrs. Yaschuk, Mrs. Coles & Mrs. Vines for their leadership with our Green Team. Our students are working hard at recycling and composting. It's so important that we actively model ways in which to help sustain our environment. This is valued by the whole school!

We continue to promote school spirit through a variety of ways, for example:

- Gotch'a Program
- Orange and Black day/ Hallowe'en Parade
- Pumpkin decorating contest
- Stand Up to Bullying day: Wear Pink
- School Spirit Wear: t-shirts, shorts, etc.
- Students vs Teachers Dodgeball
- Chess Instruction

The staff and students at John Darling P.S. continue to learn about and demonstrate the concepts embodied in our "Drake Motto". We have participated in some valued experiences through the following experiences:

- Bullying Prevention Presentation
- Remembrance Day Assembly
- Fall Food Drive
- We Day Rally: Promoting Citizenship & Caring
- EIEI social skills groups focused on Problem Solving Skills and the Board's focus of our Character Attributes
- Humane Society visit

Student leadership is a vibrant and essential part of building a positive school climate: We would like to thank all of the junior students who are volunteering their nutrition break time to be of help to others in the school. To our lunch helpers, kindergarten helpers, A08 buddies, library helpers, custodian's helpers, green team members and office helpers; a big THANK YOU!

And lastly, we would like to express a heartfelt thank you to our parent community and our school council! Your volunteerism, support and collaboration are valued assets to John Darling P.S. Through the efforts of our parents, our Home Reading program and library programs we are busy sharing the joy of literacy with students in their homes while math concepts and strategies are being reviewed during homework time. Our school council has offered two fundraising campaigns. The funds have been allocated towards supporting school initiatives and offering real-life experiences to engage students and make learning relevant in their lives. THANK YOU for your continued support!

Sincerely,
Gillian McKenzie

Important Dates



Nov. 26-Dec. 18 Dec. 3	Create Change: Penny Drive Poinsettia pick up in gym after school
Dec. 12	Seasonal concert dress rehearsal 1:45 p.m.
Dec. 14	Seasonal concert 1:45 p.m.
Dec. 21	Pajama Day
Dec. 24- Jan. 4	Winter holidays
Jan. 7	First day back to school
Jan. 18	P.A. day

LIBRARY NEWS

John Darling is registered with the Ontario Library Association to take part in the Silver Birch and Blue Spruce reading programs for 2012-2013. The Silver Birch program will begin in January, giving participating students a chance to read quality Canadian literature.



Our primary students will take part in the Blue Spruce program by listening to ten recently published Canadian children's picture books. These nominated stories are sure to become favourites among our students.

SEVERE WEATHER PROCEDURES

This is a reminder that in the event of a severe storm it is possible that school would be cancelled. Please listen to local radio stations (Oldies 1090, Kool FM- 105.3, Dave FM- 107.5, CHYM FM- 96.7) for such news. Since we do not have bussing at John Darling, our school would only be closed if the whole school system were to be cancelled. This decision is made prior to 6:30 a.m.



WINTER USE OF PLAY STRUCTURES

As the ground freezes around Ontario, the resilient ground cover that the Board installed to comply with the CSA standards will no longer provide the protection required by CSA Standard to prevent head injuries. Under these circumstances, it is foreseeable that falling onto hard frozen ground from the top of a slide or from monkey bars could injure a child. **Play structures will be off limits to students when the ground is frozen.**

SCHOOL COUNCIL REPORT

Due to the generosity of our John Darling families during the Fall Fundraisers (Treasures Book, Christmas catalogue, Poinsettia orders), we have been able to purchase the following items from monies raised: 1 bus trip per class, a hands-on science experience in the school, and a chess program. All monies raised from poinsettias will go towards 3 data projectors. Thanks again for supporting the school!

Many thanks to our wonderful fundraising committee; headed by Lori Williams and Kim Schmidt. We just finished our Poinsettia fundraiser. Orders can be picked up on December 3rd from 3-7 pm in the gym. Our final fundraisers for 2012-2013 are our spring campaign and our exciting annual event: **Darlingfest!** Stay tuned.

Our thanks go out to Amanda Pope for her leadership in arranging to set up and maintain our winter skating rink. As well, thank you to the team of volunteers who will be sharing the task of flooding the rink. The boards should arrive soon! Cross your fingers that the weather cooperates this year. Volunteers are welcome... many hands make light work!

Upcoming Meeting dates for School Council:

Jan. 21, February 25, April 15, May 13, June 13.

Everyone is welcome at any or all meetings.
John Darling School Council

PLEASE HELP! – Student Safety

Thank you, to all those who continue to support us in following our safety procedures when attending the school. Please be reminded on those occasions that you do need to come into the school, **all** visitors are required to sign in at the office directly. Also, we ask that you have your child go home right after dismissal. Supervision after school is brief and solely for the purpose of seeing students safely on their way home. Please also be very careful when dropping off children. Community members don't appreciate it if there is a drop off in their driveway.

PLEASE HELP! - Wait Outside

Due to Safety issues and the heavy volume in our hallways in the mornings, and after school, we are requesting that all parents drop off their children **outside** and/or **wait outside** with them until the bell rings. It is important for all of our students to follow the established expectations and also build independence by coming in with their classroom line. *We appreciate your support.*

We Day: We Create Change! Global Citizenship Initiative

This year our school is participating in a Penny Drive. The penny drive is to make wells in places like Africa. These wells will also help create villages. People, especially girls, travel miles just to get water and that is their whole day, so we are making wells to save people from having to travel so far. It will enable more girls to go to school because they will have time to do so. It will mean that less people will get sick and/or die of diseases from parasites and bacteria in dirty water.


Each class will receive a plastic bag provided by RBC and the Free the Children Foundation. The bag has a black line on it which shoes \$25 (2,500) pennies. Twenty-five dollars provides clean water for one person for life. The penny drive begins in classrooms on November 26 and will end on December 18th. We will also be collecting pennies at the Christmas concert.

Create Change: Support our Penny Drive!

By Libby & Nolan (A01)

CURRICULUM CORNER:

Assessment of, and for Learning



Shortly, you will be receiving the first term reports, (the first one was the progress report). Parents had a chance to speak with their student's teacher to discuss progress already made. The Achievement Report Card represents a collection of summative assessment data that has guided the teacher toward being able to enter a grade on the report. This is assessment **of** learning. There is much thought that goes into the reporting process, and the children are given many opportunities to demonstrate what they know, and more importantly, what they can do. Perhaps you have seen some of the assessment rubrics that come home to let you know how your child made out on a particular unit, or how successful they were (at this stage in their growth) mastering a certain skill.

We are also very interested in the ongoing, day to day assessment, of how your child is developing during a particular unit or area of study. This type of formative assessment may be in the form of checklists, notes, or other informal methods of informing us how close a student is to "target." This ongoing collecting of data informs the teacher of what the specific teaching focus for that child should be. This is assessment **for** learning.

Running records could be used as a formative assessment so that the teacher may look at the completed task and make decisions about what focused instruction in reading the child needs next.

Remember when you read the report card that the resulting "grades" are only part of the picture. They are a "snap shot" in time, giving good information to parents about where their child is performing along a continuum. We encourage you to really follow up with your child on how he or she did on the Learning Skill comments. These are a good indicator of your child's readiness to really develop in the next term. Help them to set improvement goals, and celebrate their successes.

For parents in the know! ☺

French Immersion: Web based registration

All parents/guardians of Senior Kindergarten children interested in Grade One of the Partial French Immersion Program 2013 must complete a registration form on the Waterloo Region District School Board website beginning January 10th to 31st, 2013. All online registrations will be on a first-come, first served basis starting at 8:00am. Any questions? Call Learning Services secretary at 519-570-0003 extension 4277.

[**WWW.WRDSB.CA**](http://WWW.WRDSB.CA)

Once again we have an enthusiastic group of students providing leadership and modeling citizenship in participating in "WE DAY".

Sixteen students attended Waterloo Region's "We Day" on November 14th. It was a day that sparked motivation and empowerment as students learned that they can make a positive difference in our world. A student Leadership club worked to run our Food Drive and is now organizing a service learning Penny Drive to help raise money for wells in countries around the world.



The Sound of Music!

The students in A1, A9, A3 and B4 will soon begin learning and/or improving their musical skills by playing the recorder. Many of the students have been eagerly awaiting the time for this fun and educational music activity. Please encourage your child/ren to share their musical talents with you at home, and to practice, practice, practice!! All students in these classes have access to a recorder that they can use both at home and at school. Please help these students to remember to bring their recorder to school on the days that they have music class. The halls will soon be alive with the sound of music!!

Mrs. Harrison

Donations: SKATES!



We are still looking for donations of skates to John Darling. We will have our rink up and running shortly and would love all students to be able to participate in this awesome

opportunity at our school. Please drop off any skates to the office with the size indicated on them. Thanks for your ongoing support of our Physical Education Program.

John Darling Seasonal Concert

December 12th at 1:45 p.m.
(dress rehearsal)

&

December 14th at 1:45 p.m.



Happy Holidays To Everyone!
Love, **John Darling Staff**

Primary Intramurals

Students in grade 1, 2 and 3 filled the Gym on Days 3 and 5 as part of our Primary intramurals! We have had lots of fun learning and playing dodgeball, tag and other co-operative games. Excellent work Dragons!

Mr. Heer



A7 Superstars



Land of Superstars!!! The A7 Superstars have been working hard on developing catchy hooks and using commands words for their steps as part of their procedural writing unit. Students have enjoyed comparing various books in class to their own life, other texts and the world around them. YES! The A7 Superstars can solve 3 digit addition and subtraction problems using a variety of strategies. Students have worked hard developing maps, researching and learning about various urban and rural communities in Social Studies!

Over the next few weeks and into the New Year we look forward to learning: how to summarize information, explain how things work, investigate structures, understand various parts of speech and many more exciting things! Keep working hard! **Mr. Heer**

Backpack of Caring

As part of caring for others, our school is again participating in the Backpack Program this year. You may remember that, as in previous years, this program benefits Anselma House, Haven House, Mary's Place, Bridges and St. Monica House. All of these organizations provide much needed support in our community.

Each classroom in the school has been given a backpack to fill with **new** items requested by the groups listed above.

Please note that all donations are requested by **December 13, 2012.**



Special Events and Photos

Our students and staff enjoy opportunities to share some of their activities with parents and the school community through teams, clubs and special events. Many of these are "memory making" for families and as such, photographs are often taken. We ask that families use their discretion when taking photographs or videos at school events and consider the privacy of other students who may also be present in those pictures. We would appreciate it if families not upload images of students other than their own to the Internet (e.g. YouTube or Facebook). Your understanding is appreciated.

LIBRARY NEWS!

Parents Can Help...

Please help us by reinforcing these library rules with your child;

- ***Carry your books in a book bag or knapsack.***
- ***Keep food and drinks away from your books.***
- ***Store your books in a safe spot at home, away from young children and pets.***
- ***Return your books on time.***



Please remember that your child is responsible for books and materials borrowed from the library. It is expected that materials will be returned on or before the due date. Overdue notices will be printed twice a month. Borrowing privileges will be suspended until overdue materials are returned. Payment will be requested for books that are badly damaged or lost. Should a lost book be found, your money will be happily refunded.

Loan standards are as follows;

- ***JK/SK students may borrow up to 2 books.***
- ***Gr. 1 & 2 students may borrow up to 3 books.***
- ***Gr. 3 - 6 students may borrow up to 4 books.***

Parent Resources

The library is a great place for not only students to get books but also parents. Don't forget to check out our Parent Resource section in the library where you can get books about Autism, nutrition, bullying and much more.

Virtual Library

Have you been to the Virtual Library websites yet? If not, these are amazing online resources available to you from the school and also from home.

WRDSB Virtual Library Home Access <http://library.wrdsb.ca>
Select Virtual Library from the top or bottom menu.

User ID: wrdsbulib Password: inquire

Resources in the Virtual Library have been licensed for use by Waterloo Region District School Board staff and students. Login information may not be shared beyond the WRDSB.

Happy reading!





It's been a very busy this Fall in A-11!

The students have now completed their first science unit and have gained a greater understanding of plants and animals. We had the opportunity to examine the life cycle of the butterfly as we watched our caterpillar in the chrysalis emerge as a butterfly. The grade three's also observed the life cycle of a plant as they took care of, and watched their bean plants grow. In Math, we have all been learning to become great thinkers and problem solvers as we work together to use a variety of strategies to solve problems. The students enjoy the daily challenges presented to them. We have also had the opportunity this fall to enjoy three different field trips. We have visited the Huron Natural Area where we enjoyed the beauty of nature to learn about plants and animals. The Safety Village helped us learn all about the importance of fire safety in our homes. The children also enjoyed the musical experience of the Peter and the Wolf performance.

Mrs. Yaschuk

Planning our French Plays



. . . The students in grades two to six have all begun reading and learning a play in French. Over the Christmas holidays, your child/ren may be bringing home their script to practice reading at home. We hope to share these wonderful performances with parents in the spring. If you have any props or costumes that could be used with your child's class French play, please let Mme Harrison know. Within the next few weeks, students should be able to tell parents who the characters are in the play and what they wear, as well as any relevant props that could be used. Thank you, in advance, for continuing to support your child with his/her learning in French.



Mme Harrison

Kindergarten in B3 with Mrs. Bidinosti

We love Pete the Cat! Whether he's wearing his white shoes or "rocking in his school shoes", the students in B3 have enjoyed counting the "groovy buttons" on Pete's shirt, making Pete using 2D shapes and making their own Pete the Cat booklets, to keep in their personal reading folders to read on their own. The children have worked very hard this fall on a variety of counting, sorting and patterning activities. They have also learned about the life cycle of an apple, from seed to tree, and then we discussed the cycle of changes that the apple tree goes through as it cycles through the four seasons. In Writer's Workshop, the children are working hard on their personal stories. They are doing a great job adding details to both their pictures and their stories. Keep up the great work everyone!