



John Darling News

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May 2013

Dear John Darling Families,

March and April have been very busy months at John Darling School. Here is a taste of what's been happening at John Darling school during the past few weeks:

- Skating, A08 swimming, Scientists in the Classroom & class trips
- The introduction of iPads in the school
- Epilepsy awareness/ Purple day
- John Howard Society: Bullying prevention focus
- The Green Team, Runners' club and Intramurals have resumed
- Earth Day activities
- Frank Glew- guest writer visit
- Fire House visit
- Volunteer Tea
- Rumpelstiltskin live performance
- School Council's Vesby Bulb Spring Fundraiser



Students continue to demonstrate improved ability to communicate their thinking in mathematics. Staff and students share solutions to math problems using a variety of effective strategies and represent their thinking using pictures, numbers and/or words. Students are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively to use their understanding of number and mathematical concepts as they 'unpack their thinking' and share their solutions to a variety of challenging math problems. By using a variety of assessment tools, such as the PM Benchmark reading assessment (Primary) and the CASI assessment (Junior), our teachers continue to monitor and assess our students' reading levels and comprehension abilities. This information assists teachers in focusing lessons towards appropriate learning goals, provide focused feedback to the learner and plan timely interventions to support the child on their learning journey. Our recent PD day in April was focused around Assessment and the Effective Use of Descriptive Feedback.

As a school community we continue to focus on our DRAKE behaviour code, and we talk about the values outlined in this code daily. We promote positive behaviours through leadership activities for the students and through learning experiences regarding conflict resolution and respect. We

show our respect for the environment by recycling, reducing our waste, conserving electricity and keeping our school and schoolyard clean and clear of litter.

We also continue to celebrate our students as they demonstrate 'good character' everyday through our Gotcha' Program.

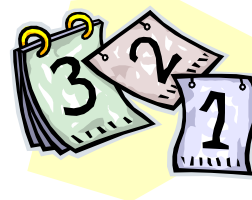
We have a lot to be proud of and to celebrate at John Darling P.S. We look forward to sunny days and warmer weather as we race towards meeting academic, social and personal goals by the final school bell in June!

Sincerely,

G. McKenzie

Principal

Mark these dates on your calendar!



May 6 & 8

May 6

Family Boston Pizza Nights
Tree Dedication In Memory
of Wyatt Helmuth

May 8

Kindergarten Parent Info Night

May 10

Family Movie Night

May 13

School Council 6:00 p.m.

May 14

Gr. 6 Camp Parent Info Night

May 16/ 17

Spring School Photos

May 20

Victoria Day Holiday

May 24

Spirit Day: Sports Day

May 27-June 7

Grade 3& 6 EQAO Assessment

May 31

PD Day- No School

Staffing

A warm welcome to **Ms. Susan Saunderson** who joined John Darling school in April to replace Mrs. Heuchert who is now on maternity leave. Ms. Saunderson is excited to be teaching our grade six students.

The staffing process has begun in our school board and with it will come some change. Our tentative school organization for September 2013 is below. It is subject to change based on changes in enrolment.

September Organization: 2013/2014

Developmental Education

JK/SK 1

JK/SK 2

Grade 1

Grade 1/ 2

Grade 2

Grade 3

Grade 3/ 4 A

Grade 3/ 4 B

Grade 4/ 5

Grade 5

Grade 6

Class Planning Begins for 2013- 2014

It is hard to believe that we will soon be making plans for the 2013-2014 school year! Teachers from each grade will be meeting to consider the placement of each child based on a combination of the following criteria:

- The academic level of the students
- Each child's learning skills
- The social/emotional levels of each student
- The relationship that exists between our students
- A balance, in each classroom, of students with special needs

This is a process that we take very seriously and it has a tremendous impact on the whole school year. We do our best to ensure that your child's placement will best serve his/her learning needs.

There will be a number of combined (split) classes at John Darling next year. A misconception of split grades is that combined classes are more distracting than same grade classes, with the image that the teacher is rushing back and forth between the grades teaching different lessons. In reality, there are

children working at a wide range of levels in any class at any point in time. Our instruction is delivered in such a way that children can respond and work at their level while the teacher programs to move them along the learning continuum. One strategy is to differentiate teaching and learning tasks to meet the needs of the individual learner. Another is to utilize small group instruction in the classroom to hone in on particular concepts and skills with specific learners.

As part of this planning, parents may choose to submit, ***in writing***, characteristics of the child(ren) and any observations that they would like the school to keep in mind about their child(ren) when developing classes. If you wish us to consider specific information about your child's placement for September, we ask that you submit this in writing to Ms. McKenzie by Friday, May 31, 2013. Please understand that this is not an opportunity to request a specific teacher for your child(ren). Since our staffing, organization and procedures for September are not completed at this time, we cannot guarantee placement of your child(ren) with a specific staff member. We ask that all families recognize that as a staff, we take class organizations very seriously and give it careful thought, reflection and planning based on the best interests and needs of all students.

EQAO DATES

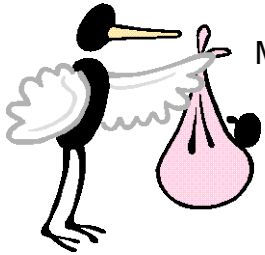
Grade 3/6 EQAO assessment dates have been established for the spring of 2013. We ask that parents of Grade 3 and Grade 6 students at John Darling make every effort to avoid scheduling appointments, trips, or other activities during this time. Our students will write the EQAO assessments during the following dates: **Between May 27th – June 7th.**



Are You Moving???

If you are moving between now and the start of school in September, please let the office know. Trying to accurately predict our enrolment for next September is critical and allows us to start our year with as few changes as possible. As new families with school-aged children move into our community, please be sure to invite them to contact the school at 519-749-0834

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE!



Mrs. Heuchert delivered a healthy baby girl at 11:10pm on Thursday, April 25th, 2013. Her name is *Jane*.

More News!

Mr. Lantz was recognized for 45 years of service with the WRDSB. We are very proud of him and the superb job he does for our school community!

LIBRARY NEWS!

Forest of Reading Voting Results Are In

Both Primary and Junior students have wrapped up their reading in the Blue Spruce and Silver Birch reading programs. In each program, students had an opportunity to read or listen to some of the best in new Canadian literature. The winners of the Blue Spruce and Silver Birch awards for 2013 are...



Blue Spruce Award: Kate and Pippin by Martin Springett and Isobel Springett

Silver Birch Award for Express: (a three-way tie) Dalen & Gole by Mike Deas, Margaret and the Moth Tree by Brit Trogen, Who Need's a Swamp by Karen Patkau

Silver Birch Award for Fiction: (a two-way tie) Cat Found by Ingrid lee, Making Bombs for Hitler by Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch

Silver Birch Award for Non-Fiction: (a two-way tie) Explorers Who Made It... or Died Trying by Frieda Wishinsky, No Shelter Here: Making the World a Kinder Place for Dogs by Rob Laidlaw

Thanks to all students and teachers for participating in these wonderful reading programs!

PLEASE NOTE: ALL LIBRARY BOOKS ARE DUE BACK JUNE 14!

Thanks very much for your support in this matter.

SAFETY IS ALWAYS FIRST AT JOHN DARLING!



Thank you to the parents who have refrained from parking in the daycare circle, coming into the parking lot to drop off their children and stopping in no parking zones on the street. We have noticed an improvement in this area now that winter is finally over, and we would request that you continue to respect the safety of all of our students.

We would again request that only children in grades three to six ride their bikes or scooters to school (younger students may ride bikes at their parent's discretion). We would also ask that you respect our request that no dogs are brought on to school property. There are children who have had bad experiences with dogs, and are fearful of even a friendly pet approaching them. Thanks for your cooperation and consideration in all of these safety matters!

SCHOOL COUNCIL UPDATE

Some of the wonderful things accomplished by School Council this year included sponsoring our Chess Club for all grades, supporting and extending the Home Reading Program, paying for several exciting and educational assemblies such as "Scientists in the classroom", continuing to support the Greening Project, paying for buses for trips, buying new gym equipment and lastly paying for new soccer posts, new benches and music items! The proceeds from Darlingfest this year will go towards technology - a document camera!



Another important function of the council is to act as a sounding and advisory board for the administration and teachers at the school. We encourage all of our parents/guardians to consider becoming a member of School Council. Look for School Council members at their table at Meet the Teacher Night in September. They will be happy to talk to you about our dynamic council at John Darling.

My personal thanks go to all members of our council with special mention to Janice Mitchell and Susie Gutri our co-chairs, Marnie Wuensch, our secretary, Sandra Schroder, our treasurer, and Jennifer Israel, chair of fundraising, Amanda Pope, for running our Rink Committee, Marti-Anne Hachey the WRAPSC rep and Helen Byers chair of Darlingfest. Thanks also to Jennifer Hulett, Colleen Brandes, Jackie Teixeira, Jenniffer Fleet, Andrea Karger, Nicole Marinelli, Kim Schmidt, Lori Williams, and Anita Hollands for a wonderful year! Thanks to our teacher reps- Mrs. McNaughton, and Ms. Westman.

Thanks for all you do to support our students and programs at John Darling!

Fundraising Committee:

Vesey Bulb Spring Fundraiser: We made approximately \$1820. Thank You for your support! John Darling School Council will be donating \$250 on behalf of the school community to the Epilepsy Foundation in memory of Wyatt Helmuth.

The committee has been working hard getting ready for next year already. The fall fundraiser for the 2013/2014 school year, will have two options for families to help support John Darling. We will be selling

- Treasure Books
- Seasonal catalogue full of great cards, gifts and wrap and sweets.

Thank you for all of your generosity this year! It is greatly appreciated.



Strong Start & Home Reading - THANKS!

Many Kindergarten and Grade One students received support from volunteers for Strong Start

this year. These special people gave many of our youngest readers the boost needed to prepare them to read. Thank you to all of you who provided this support and to Mrs. Bidinosti who coordinated it this year. Also, a "Thank you" to Mrs. Teixeira and the volunteers who helped out with our wonderful home reading program at JD. They did a super job!

VOLUNTEER TEA

It was so nice to host our volunteers at our tea in April. We are so appreciative of everything that our YOU make possible at John Darling!

SCHOOL COUNCIL & OUR FAMILIES

Our students thoroughly enjoyed the live drama performance of Rumpelstiltskin in our gym. This experience was made possible by our School Council and by our families who support our fundraising projects.

Thank you!

Emergency Drills

We are planning to hold 3 Fire Drills and 1 Lock Down Drill this month. Our students are familiar with the routines, but may benefit from encouraging reminders. Thank for your help.

iPads & *BYOD

We now have 44 iPads in the school. Twenty were provided by the school board and the rest were purchased through school funds and fundraising monies. The staff and students are exploring ways to effectively utilize technology to enhance learning and engage critical and creative thinking skills in the classroom. Our future plans are to explore the development of a ***Bring Your Own Device Policy** for our school. The vision is to make it possible for students, who are interested, to bring their own technology devices to school to use as and when directed by their teachers. I will be striking a committee in September to look at the concept of a ***BYOD** and would welcome 1 or 2 parent reps on the team. If you have expertise and/or knowledge in this area, please contact Ms. McKenzie.

John Darling Gives....

We had funds that came in after the due date and have sent the following organizations the following:

Unicef	\$25.56
Terry Fox	\$104.36
Heart & Stroke Foundation	\$15.06
Canadian Cancer Society	\$108.24



This September will mark 25 Years for John Darling P.S.!! If you would like to be part of our planning committee, please contact Ms. McKenzie. We appreciate your help!

JD's Free Family Movie Night!

Friday, May 10th @ 7:00pm

Bring a Perishable Food Item
& your own drinks.

We'll supply the popcorn!
Courtesy of your
School Council



Where a misunderstanding arises, the administration will decide on the appropriate course of action to ensure fairness and respect for all students.

Intramurals at John Darling

Congratulations to the Orange Team, 2013 JD intramural basketball champions! Students in grades 4-6 had fun developing their basketball skills, while at the same time learning the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship. Lots of amazing plays, cheering, hard work and determination were shown. Fantastic job Dragons! Junior Floor hockey intramurals will begin after Primary Intramurals.



Primary Intramurals are underway! Students in grades 1-3 have the opportunity to play in a variety of co-operative games. Remember to bring your running shoes and a positive attitude to the Gym!

Mr. Heer

A Friendly Summer Reminder

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

Student dress must complement the learning environment and must not offend or distract others. In accordance with the Waterloo Region District School Board, Administrative Procedures, guidelines have been established to encourage responsibility, self-esteem, a sense of school pride and to foster the positive learning environment at John Darling Public School. These include the following principles:



Cleanliness	Neatness	Good
Taste	Safety	

We request your cooperation by discussing the following requirements with your children and by encouraging them to adopt a positive, responsible approach to their school attire:

- wide-strap tank tops only
- **tops should cover upper body from waist to shoulders and be made of solid fabric**
- **writing and graphics on clothing must be appropriate**
- **hats may not be worn in classrooms**
- **no gang-related clothing will be worn on school property**
- **shorts and skirts will be a respectable length**
- **hats are taken off at the entrances to the school**

Students in contravention of the dress code will be asked to change or, if appropriate clothing is not readily available, be asked to go home to change.



Running Club

John Darling's Spring Running Club is off to a great start. In spite of a few soggy days, the students are showing up to run for fun, fitness and training. Many of our John Darling runners will be participating in the annual MudPuppy Chase in downtown Kitchener on Sunday, May 5th. This event is a locally organized run that supports the Rotary Club and KidsAbility. It's so great to see so many "Kids helping Kids". Way to go Dragons!

Mrs. Burrell