



John Darling News

200 Rolling Meadows Drive
Kitchener, ON N2N 3G9

Telephone: 519-749-0834
Attendance/Fax: 519- 570-8092 ext. 3409#

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE: Jan./ Feb. 2014

Welcome back and Happy New Year to all of our families in the John Darling School community! After the hustle and bustle of the Holiday season, we look forward to comfortable routines and engaging challenges at school.

We have many enriching activities planned over the coming months. The Blue Spruce & Silver Birch Reading Program, Character Development Drake Assemblies, School Spirit Days, Skating, Chess & "Scientists in the School", as well as our Free Family Event: the Health & Wellness Fair! John Darling is a busy place!

As we settle into the winter months and 'raise the academic achievement bar' for our learners, we would appreciate your support at home by reminding our children that maintaining good learning habits and routines is important. Behaviours such as independently using the agenda and having it signed, completing assigned homework, keeping up on home reading, returning permission slips as well as prompt and consistent attendance are essential. They make a huge difference for our kids!

The staff of John Darling Public School sincerely thank each family for the continued support you demonstrate towards John Darling P.S. and towards your child's learning.

We extend best wishes to our students and their families for a happy and healthy 2014!

Gillian McKenzie

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION Full Day, Everyday 2014-2015!!

Children born in 2010 and 2009 are eligible to attend Junior and Senior Kindergarten in September 2014.

Kindergarten Registration will be held at John Darling School on:



**Tuesday, February 11th (afternoon)
Wednesday, February 12th (morning)**

If you have a child who will be starting school in September, please call the school at 519-749-0834 and arrange an appointment to register with Mrs. Simmonds, our office manager. If you know of neighbours or friends who have children who are eligible to start Kindergarten, please ask them to call as well. It is very important for our planning that we register as many of our next year's kindergarten students as soon as possible.

EQAO DATES

Grade 3/6 EQAO assessment dates have been established for the spring of 2014. 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 26th – June 6th.**



Library News: 2014 Silver Birch and Blue Spruce reading programs

We are pleased to announce that 53 of our junior students have signed up to participate in the Silver Birch program. Students who finish reading five of these fantastic Canadian books, will be eligible to vote for their favorite Silver Birch book in April. The Blue Spruce reading program will begin after the March break. Our primary students will have the opportunity to listen to this year's ten picture books and will also vote for their favorite book in April.
Happy Reading!

KINDERGARTEN REPORTING

The provincial report card is designed to give parents clear, detailed information about the expectations for the end of Kindergarten. It reflects achievement in the skills and strategies that the child is developing as they progress through the 2 year program.

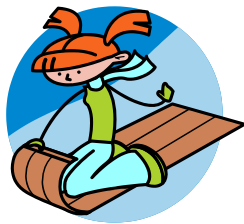
The report reflects evaluation of achievement in all six areas of learning:

- Personal and Social Development
- Language
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Health and Physical Education
- The Arts

The Kindergarten report card includes parent friendly comments on the child's achievement in relation to overall expectations, the next steps for the teacher, as well as the next steps for the parents to assist them in supporting their child's learning.

BACK HILL

We will have the opportunity to open the back hill for students to slide down at times during the winter months. Staff on duty closely monitor this activity. Students must wear slush pants or snow pants in order to participate. The hill and the rink are **NOT** supervised before or after school.



DARLINGFEST – Coming in June, 2014

It's hard to believe, but it's time to start planning Darlingfest 2014! We have 10 members on the committee, and there is room for more. The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 14th, 2014 @ 6:30pm. Please consider being part of the committee this year and join us at our meeting!

Also, if you can make a donation of a prize, give a gift, or gift certificate, or know of someone who can, please contact the school (gifts or donations can be sent directly to the school marked "Attention Darlingfest" - include your email to get a donations request letter if needed). Please also consider volunteering yourself or a family member for this huge event as many hands are needed (200 volunteers)! Only 30 minutes of your time, can help make this event a HUGE success!

Severe Weather Procedures

This is a reminder that in the event of a severe storm it is possible that school would be cancelled. Please check www.wrdsb.ca or listen to local radio stations for updates:



Oldies 1090, **Kool FM- 105.3,**
Dave FM- 107.5, **CHYM- FM 96.7**
News 570, **Kicx FM 106.7**

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.

SKATING AND THE J.D. RINK

Our rink is up and running this winter! The rink committee members are very optimistic as they prepare for and maintain our community rink. Thanks



to Michelle Martin, for coordinating our rink committee and to the following volunteer members of their committee for maintaining the rink: **Austin Stamp, Bill Pope, Chris Bauman, Ian Vanderpool, Justin Hawkshaw, Katie and Tony Hoedl, Kevin Hollands, Marc Bourassa, Mark Dowsett, Paul Schmidt, Rob Gutri, Steve Coleman.** Thanks in advance for all of your hard work!

Parents, please watch for our school skating letter that will be sent home shortly. Please sign and return the skating permission form to indicate that your child has permission to use the rink during physical education classes. Grades three to six students have access to the rink during first and second nutrition break, if they are able to tie their own skates. Please make sure they also have proper gear and a helmet.

Think sub-zero temperatures!

Strong Start Volunteers Needed!!!

Each year at John Darling we offer a valuable session of the strong start Letters, Sounds and Words program. If you can volunteer at least once a week for half an hour to help a child, by playing fun games to assist their learning, then please call Mrs. Deanne Bidinosti at the school or leave her a voicemail message at 519-570-8092 ext. 8813.



SAFETY, SAFETY, SAFETY

Parents are reminded that *access to the parking lot is for staff and current day's volunteers only.* The drop off loop is for the Daycare and the Developmental Education's class's transportation only. Your cooperation is necessary in order to ensure safety for all our students, especially during the winter days when snowbanks are high and visibility is reduced. Thanks

Crossing Guard Appreciation Day is in February. Our Crossing Guard is located at Highview Dr./Willow Green Crt. Crossing Guards work in all kinds of weather to ensure a safe walk to school for our children. Please say "Thank You" when you see our Crossing Guard!



Dates to Remember

Jan. 9- 31	On-line Registration for French Immersion
Jan. 13	School council meeting@ 6:30pm
Jan. 17	P.A. Day- no school for students
Jan. 20	Bullying Prevention sessions begin with the John Howard Society
Jan. 21	Gr. 6 Camp: Parent Info.night @6pm
Jan. 24	DRAKE assembly & Spirit Day: Beach Day
Feb. 7	Family Event: Health & Wellness Fair (6-8pm)
Feb. 10	Reports Go Home- K-6
Feb. 11	Kindergarten Registration PM
Feb. 12	Kindergarten Registration AM
Feb. 12	Reports home- Kgn (Blue)
Feb. 14	Valentine's Day/ Spirit Day: Red & White Day
Feb. 17	Family Day Holiday
Feb. 24	School Council meeting@6:30pm
March 10-14	March Break

Developing Critical Thinking Skills

"Traditionally in reading, the emphasis has been on the author's power, but in critical literacy, readers who are text critics actively exert their power by questioning the author's message and its hidden implications."

(McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004, p. 151)

"Three key strategies that specifically promote a critical perspective are:

1. Problem posing:

Just as texts position us to think of ourselves in a certain way, so that we feel compelled to buy a product or identify with a character in a film, we as readers or viewers can problematize texts. Also called "problem posing," problematizing provides teachers with a way to consciously and intentionally nurture a critical perspective. Problem posing requires that we ask students questions such as the following:

- *Who is the intended audience?*
- *Who created this text and why?*
- *Who benefits if this "message" is accepted? Who may be disadvantaged?*
- *What techniques and stylistic elements have been used and why?*

2. Juxtaposing:

The intent of this strategy is to have students come to an understanding of point of view. Two texts on a similar topic (e.g., editorials) are set side by side so that students can compare author's bias, perspective and intent as well as strategies used to influence the reader/viewer (adapted from McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004, p. 47).

3. Switching:

This is an effective strategy for getting students to consider the impact of alternative perspectives and to identify which voices are present and which voices are missing from a text. Some examples of switching are gender switch (students replace key characters with characters of the other gender), setting switch (students set the story in a different time or place or switch the social class of characters), and emotion switch (students have characters exhibit a different emotional tone)" (adapted from McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004. p.51).

"Critical literacy is not something to be added to the literacy program, but a lens for learning that is an integral part of classroom practice." "All text is constructed for a purpose and ... reading is not a passive act but an interaction between the text and a reader who looks for meaning, asks questions and challenges assumptions."

(Excerpts taken from, Special Edition #9 at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacy_numeracy/inspire)

Diversity Corner

Here are a few of the multi-cultural celebrations and activities occurring during January and February:



Orthodox Christmas (Jan. 7)

Some Eastern churches celebrate the birth of Jesus according to the Julian calendar.

Chinese New Year (Jan. 31)

This is the year of the Horse. It is a three day holiday in China and Hong Kong. The Chinese clean and decorate their homes with the 5 lucky signs of happiness: new clothes are worn.

Black History Month (February)

This is a time to celebrate the many achievements and contributions of Black Canadians, past and present.

Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)

One version states that a priest named Valentine was martyred on Feb. 14, 269 A.D. in Rome for secretly marrying couples against the orders of the Roman Emperor.



Friday, January 17, 2014

Professional Development Day

Teachers will be engaged in reporting and assessment activities. There is no school for students.



Strong Start

Strong Start: Letters, Sounds and Words.

The program is designed for children in SK and Gr.1 who need extra instruction to improve their chances for success in learning the names of the letters, the corresponding sounds each one makes and some basic sight words to begin reading development.

This program is implemented by volunteers and has been very effective in closing the gap for many of our early years learners. We are pleased to have the opportunity to provide this valuable and engaging program to our students at John Darling school.

In January, a new session of Strong Start will begin. The number of students we can support depends completely upon the number of volunteers. If you enjoy working with little children and would be able to give us one half-day per week, for 10 weeks, please contact Mrs. Bidonosti. All training is provided. Your time and enthusiasm are all we need!



Thank You!



To Our School Council members, the staff and families of John Darling P.S. and the Equitable Life Insurance Company for your generosity and kindness to our families at Christmas time.

To Tim Mitchell of Sherwood Music for his continued help with the sound equipment used in our Seasonal Concerts in December.

To our many parent volunteers and friends of John Darling P.S: We couldn't do it without YOU!

We're Moving to Our Website!

You can access our John Darling P.S. Newsletter on our website: <http://jdp.wrdsb.ca>

Return this slip to Mrs. Simmonds in the office if you would like to continue to receive a paper copy of upcoming newsletters. Remember to check our website regularly for updates and messages from week to week!

- o Yes, please continue to send me a paper copy of the newsletter.

Youngest/Only Student _____ Teacher _____