



MAC'S NEWSLETTER

Mackenzie King Public School - "A Great Place To Be"

Volume 17 Issue 3

January / February 2014

Upcoming Events

January "2014"

- 17 - P.A. Day—no school for students
- 21 - Primary Symphony Trip—1:00 pm
- 27 - Family Literacy Day
- 29 - Mad Science begins, 3:20-4:20 p.m.

February



- 2 - Groundhog Day
- 3 - Kindergarten Vision Screening-Red
- 3 - Character Assembly—9:55 a.m.
- parents welcome to attend

School-wide goal "Initiative"

- Pajama Day!
- 4 - Kindergarten Vision Screening-Blue
- February 5, 13, 19, 26:
- Mad Science—3:20-4:20 p.m.
- 7 - Olympics Day
- February 10—14. Kdgn. Registration
- 10 - Term 1 Reports Go Home
- 11 - T1 Reports Go Home—blue day kdgn
- 12 - Winter Walk to School Day
- 12 - School Council Meeting—6:00 p.m.
- 14 - Valentine's Day
- 14 - Move-A-Thon
- 17 - Family Day Holiday—no school
- 20 - Jump Rope for Heart—Kick-off

March

- 4 - Character Assembly—9:55 a.m.
- parents welcome to attend

School-wide goal "Kindness & Caring"

- School Spirit— Jersey Day
- 6 - Jump Rope for Heart Event
- 7 - P.A. Day—no school for students
- March 9—14. March Break

Message From The Principal

Dear Mackenzie King Families:

The new year is upon us and we have a lot to be thankful for, and to reflect upon, as a Mackenzie King Community. Our December theme of "SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY" has given us many opportunities to help people in our community to believe that there is a better tomorrow. Students and families donated winter coats. Our leadership team collected toonies for the Philippines to support a country devastated by a tsunami. Non-perishable food items filled the area underneath our Christmas tree and were donated to our local food bank to help families over this winter season. Students raised \$600.00 for Mary's Place through our ever-popular garage sale. Thanks to your partnership, our children are experiencing, first-hand, the joy that comes from giving to those in need.

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As we enter in to 2014, we are reminded of our busy fall, which included some exciting school trips to supplement the curriculum; "WE DAY" that our grade 6 leaders were able to attend; character assemblies to celebrate our monthly character goals of respect, empathy and social responsibility; memorable Remembrance Day activities and the communication with parents through the Ministry of Education's Progress Report and subsequent parent-teacher interviews. Our teachers worked hard to ensure that the progress reports were written in "parent-friendly" language, reflecting ministry expectations. In February, the first term achievement report will come home, and we will be replicating the same "parent-friendly" reporting of the achievement that each child is making at school. Please read the article on feedback in this edition of our Mac Newsletter.

~ Mrs. K. Haddock

Snowballs at Mackenzie King

For the safety of everyone, we have a **no snowball throwing** rule at Mackenzie King P.S. Although throwing snowballs can be a fun activity, it is not a safe activity for the school yard, and not respectful to those being hit. We also advise the students that snow forts or other snow sculptures are temporary structures. There is no ownership of such things and no guarantee from one nutrition break to the next that the structure will still be standing. We do want the students to have fun in the snow and enjoy the winter. Each new outdoor activity break should be viewed as a new adventure, and one where we play cooperatively.



Curriculum Corner

For parents in the know

Descriptive vs. Evaluative Feedback

On February 10, 2014, term one report cards come home. A report card is an example of evaluative feedback or 'assessment of learning', as is described in the ministry document "Growing Success". This type of feedback checks what has been learned to date and is presented in a formal report. A report card is a form of evaluative feedback that has summarized information into grades, scores or levels. These evaluations are made in comparison with the provincial standards. Assignments with marks or levels, rubrics with highlighted levels and report cards with grades are examples of evaluative feedback.

Descriptive feedback is specific information in the form of written comments or conversations that help the learner understand what he or she needs to do in order to improve. This information is designed to assist teachers and students in taking next steps in the learning. Descriptive feedback is usually detailed, specific and is related to pre-determined criteria. For example, if the writing is focussed on the use of dialogue, then effective feedback wouldn't focus on the word choices that the writer has made. Descriptive feedback helps the learner improve the quality of their work, according to learning goals and success criteria.

Current educational research has found that descriptive feedback is significantly more valuable to a student and has a more positive impact on a student's learning. In the book "How to Give Effective Feedback to Your Students", Susan M. Brookhart tells us that students need to view descriptive feedback as constructive and positive. She says that students need to understand that learning cannot occur without practise. If there is a focus on always getting things right, then if something needs improvement, it is seen as wrong - this attitude actually hinders learning. Similarly, Anne Davies, author of several educational theory books about assessment, says that students learn more when: they are involved in the assessment process, they experience more specific descriptive feedback and they experience less evaluative feedback.

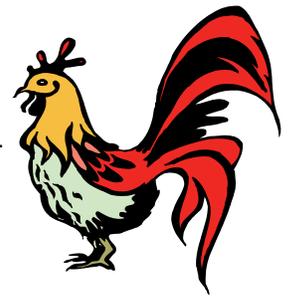
What does this mean for parents? You may notice less school work coming home with overall grades or levels since as educators we know that this information is not helpful for students' learning. Instead, student work is assessed in terms of strengths and next steps or "2 stars and a wish." When you read your child's report card, focus on the learning skills and subject comments. This information provides strengths and ways for your child to improve. Do not look at marks as a competition worthy of a reward. This inhibits learning and creates a focus on "getting it right," instead of a journey of learning and improving. The staff has been learning about developing criteria for success and about giving effective descriptive feedback.

You can model our focus on descriptive feedback and help us teach your child to use feedback to improve their work.

So now you know!

My Chicken

My chicken is my friend.
He lives in my pocket.
He is multi-coloured and he has red eyes.
My chicken goes everywhere I go.
My chicken is imaginary, but I still see him and love him.
I have lots of chickens at home.
Oh!
I forgot to tell you what I feed them.
I feed them steak and beef.
They love it!!!



Silas - Grade 4 - Room 7

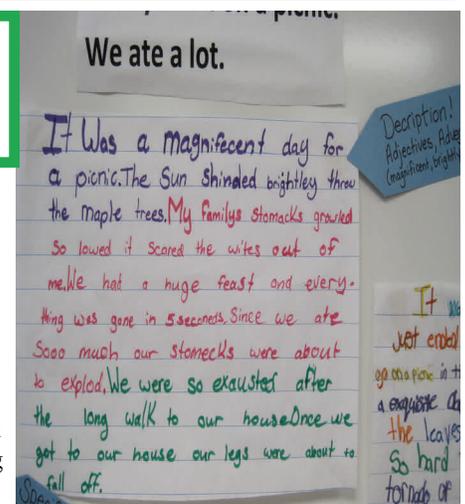
Feedback Sample



Knowing What to Expect ...

Students and teachers share a common understanding of what constitutes success in learning.

Success criteria describe in specific terms what successful attainment of learning goals look like.



Winter Weather

With winter upon us, the safety of your children is a priority for us.

The creative playground will be closed during the months that the ground is frozen and children are dressed in bulky snowsuits.



If the schools are closed due to weather, it will be announced on Kool FM 105.3, CHYM FM 96.7, 570 News and HITS 103.5. If all schools are announced CLOSED, please do not send your children to school. Special Education bus and taxi cancellations will be announced on the radio. If the buses are cancelled and the schools are open, parents must provide their own transportation to and from school. Please avoid calling the school to check if we are open. Please turn your radio on and listen for information.

The following media outlets will carry Waterloo Region District School Board and Waterloo Catholic District School Board Inclement Weather Cancellation Announcements.

Media/Station	AM/FM BAND
News 570 (CKGL) CHYM FM KICX FM 106.7	AM band 570 FM band 96.7
K FUN KOOL FM	FM band 99.5 FM band 105.3
DAVE FM 107.5	FM band 107.5
CJOY Magic FM	AM band 1460 FM band 106.1
CKWR 98.5	FM band 98.5
CTV	TV 12
CKBT The Beat	FM band 91.5
FAITH FM	FM band 94.3
THE RECORD	therecord.com

Knowing What to Expect ...

Reader's Theatre

Learning Goal:

- I can read a script clearly to entertain my friends.

Success Criteria:

- to speak loudly and clearly enough so the audience hears me
- keep ~~your~~ script away from my mouth
- I have practised my lines so that I am able to read them fluently.
- I am able to read all the words properly.
- I ~~can~~ stay in character and sound like my character.
- audience members will be quiet and respectful

Examining samples of student work with their teachers helps students understand what success looks like.

Making Predictions

I have supported my prediction and explained my thinking with:

- examples from the text or pictures
- my own ideas, experiences

I predict that Jane will make a new memory string for Laura but Laura won't like it. However she might like it at the end. I think this because Laura doesn't like Jane but since Jane is nice to her like when she asks Laura if she wants lemonade. However I think Laura will like her for doing it at the end. When my bumblebees were fixed my necklace for me it made me like her.

evidence from students

Schema

Construction Update

The construction machinery has been in full force and Jeff, the builder, has been faced with extensive frost in the ground, causing some additional "speed bumps" prior to the beginning of excavation. A construction fence has been erected in the parking lot to totally separate the construction access and the school access. Safety is our number one priority and all is being done to prevent any mixture of construction vehicles or students/staff/community.



Mackenzie King—A Great Place To Be—Our School-Wide Goals

January	- INITIATIVE	“We see a need and we fill it”
February	- KINDNESS / CARING	“We show we care through our words and actions”
March	- HOPE	“We make a difference for the future”

Our goals drive our character development program. We know that when students learn to care, they care to learn. With our JK/SK students on the playground during our nutrition break, our “older” students have been doing a fabulous job of showing how caring, courteous and co-operative citizens act at school. They look after their young friends to ensure their safety and comfort. Please continue to talk with your children about how these character traits look, sound and feel at home.

The monthly assemblies are Mackenzie King’s celebration of our school-wide goals and character attributes. At the end of each month, students from some classrooms present these attributes through such things as stories, songs, poems, dances, or role plays. Parents are always welcome to attend our monthly assemblies. Watch the newsletters and school website for times and dates. <http://mck.wrdsb.on.ca/>

Thank you Mackenzie King for your generous donations to the Foodbank of Waterloo Region.

You have truly *shared our wish...so all will be fed.*

Your donation of 418 lbs will set food on the table and provide hope for many of the 28,200 neighbours who will ask for food assistance from The Food Bank and our 82 community food programs in the coming months. Thank you once again. Sincerely, Wendi Campbell—Executive Director, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region



Ryan Laird at Mackenzie King

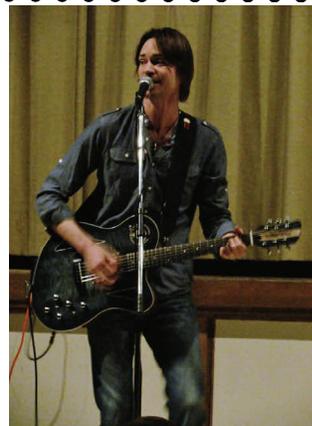
Canadian Country Music recording artist, Ryan Laird, presented at Mackenzie King Public School on Jan. 16th. Students were so excited to listen and participate in his fabulous songs. Through his songs and personal stories, Ryan talked about his experience being bullied throughout his elementary school years. He spoke of how he learned to overcome and rise above this challenge to chase his dream and attain his musical career. His talk inspired and motivated students to strive for their goals in



life and to not give in to bullying tactics. “Never let a bully stand in your way of success and happiness in life.” Our students shared some of their personal dreams, including becoming a gymnast, a hockey player and a lawyer. Another student entertained us by keeping the beat of a song that Ryan and Scotty sang, with his a head bopping, hair-flinging movements. Ryan interspersed his talk with performances of his songs, including his top 10 hit “I’m Your Man” and the song he wrote about his bully entitled “Hey Ashley”. Ryan took the time after his performance to visit each of the classrooms and allow students to comment or ask questions.



Ryan has CD’s for sale. Visit his website www.ryanlaird.com for more information on this amazing Canadian singer from Fergus, Ontario.



2014 Professional Activity Days

No school for students on these days:

January 17

Teachers are involved in assessment and evaluation activities

March 7

Staff are involved in professional development training

Kindergarten Registration—September 2014

Any child born in 2010, living in the catchment area of Mackenzie King P.S., is eligible to attend **Junior Kindergarten** in September 2014.

Also, any child born in 2009, living in the catchment area of Mackenzie King P.S., is eligible to attend **Senior Kindergarten (new-to-school)** in September 2014.

Registration for the 2014-2015 school year will be:

Monday, February 10—Friday, February 14, 2014

Please call the school office (519-745-8695)

to book a registration appointment.

This is the first time that Full-Day Kindergarten is being offered at Mackenzie King. Thank you for passing along this information to your neighbours who may have a child ready for Junior or Senior Kindergarten.

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING DATES

- ◆ February 12
- ◆ March 26
- ◆ April 9
- ◆ May 14
- ◆ June 11