



February 9, 2018

Hello Parents and Guardians,

This has been a cold week, but boy have we been hopping! As you may be aware, February is Black History Month and we have kicked off a fabulous school wide initiative to not only learn about black history and how black culture has positively impacted our daily lives, but also how every culture woven together makes us stronger and allows us to grow as a civilization. We discussed our plans as a staff, and today we kicked off our classroom initiatives with a guest speaker. Sean Mauricette, aka Subliminal, shared some of his personal experiences and how they made him stronger as a person. Grade 1-3 students focused their presentation on exploring the word 'Respect' and why it is so important, understanding why acceptance is key, and why being different is ok and makes the world an interesting place. He shared his message to do the things that make you happy even if you think other people will laugh at you; in fact, those are the things that make you unique! After all, would the world be an interesting place if we were all the same?

Grade 4-8 students focused on Mauricette's struggles that required him to be a leader, and we explored why diversity of skills and people in general is a good thing. Beatboxing from a young age and his creation of puppets allowed Sean to develop the self-confidence to believe in himself, even if it was against the grain. He was admitted to architecture at U of T because of his unique drawings that no one else did.... Mauricette also made the connection to Black history. What were black people doing before slavery? They were called Moors (from the word "Maurice"). They were sources of information, amazing warriors and wore the finest linen. He emphasized the point that we must first have an understanding of who we are on our journey as the key to knowing where we are going. Feel free to check out Sean Mauricette's TED talk to get a sense of who he is and his key messages. @akasubliminal.

We hope you will join us for our next Coffee Hour, on Friday Feb. 16 @ 1:45 PM, where we will be discussing our "Unconscious Biases" and how we can change the narrative beginning with our community. Grade 4 students have enjoyed workshops from the Richmond Hill Center for the Performing Arts to learn about the art of performing, descriptively writing a play and other behind the scenes factors in theatre, in anticipation of their visit to the theatre to watch the performance of "Railroad to Canada".

On the ECO front, we had numerous classes take advantage of our snowshoes on Wednesday during the day. We suspect some students may have been forced to Walk to School on Wednesday since the buses were cancelled!

We are very proud of our "You're the Chef" program being run by parent volunteers for Grade 8 students to learn the basics about being in a kitchen, besides simply opening the fridge door! Students have already learned to cook a healthy breakfast consisting of oatmeal, pancakes and a fruit smoothie!

March 2 @ 6:00 – 8:00 PM: Healthy Family Night- Save the date! We are looking forward to hosting you at school for a chef who will share quick and healthy mealtime options and answer and share ideas about lunches for kids! Your kids are also invited to be active in the gym doing Tae Kwon Do. Stay tuned for a flyer and SchoolCash invitation coming soon. We hope you will be able to join us.

Attached to this email please find:

- Information regarding our upcoming  [Coffee Hour Feb 16.pdf](#) @ 1:45 PM
- Parents for Children's  [Mental Health Support Group.pdf](#) information flyer

The English Book Fair begins next week! Students will be visiting throughout the week. We hope you will enjoy the selection. You are welcome to stop by after school on Wednesday and Thursday until 6:00 PM.

Enjoy the snowfall!