



December 2016

John McCrae News



John McCrae Public School
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Principal: Helen Hart
Vice Principal: Krista Keirstead

Superintendent of Schools: Dan Wu: 905-940-7800
School Trustee: Billy Pang: 647-461-9965

Message from the Administrators



Dear Families,

Wishing everyone a restful Winter Break!

As we approach the end of the 2016 calendar year, we take time to reflect upon John McCrae Public School's community successes and its dedication to improving student achievement. The staff have been busy implementing our challenge of practice and have been collaborating to provide rich learning to each and every student in the school.

Communication between home and school is an essential element of student success. We appreciate your ongoing involvement in your child's education, the time spent communicating through the agendas, and the conversations you have had with staff. We look forward to continuing our partnership in the upcoming New Year.

We would also like to thank parents for their ongoing support at home. Helping with homework assignments and discussing your child's school day provides the opportunity for support and positive reinforcement. Furthermore, it provides parents an opportunity to exercise strategies used at school to reinforce key concepts.

The Winter Break is a terrific opportunity for our students to enjoy the greatness of our Canadian winter. Encourage your children to play outside, skate, toboggan or simply play in the snow. And while indoors, take the time to play board or card games with your children. Games that involve strategic thinking enhance critical thinking skills and provide invaluable family time where you can share in the gifts that each of your children bring to our community every day.

As the break approaches and 2016 quickly draws to a close, we wish to extend best wishes for a happy 2017! We are confident that the two week break will prove to be a restful and pleasurable time for families to spend together. Thanks to all of you for all that you do to make JMPS a great place to be.

We look forward to greeting your children upon their return on Monday, January 9th, 2017.

Helen and Krista



All About Safety!



Kiss and Ride

Although we wish that more families were walking to school, our Kiss and Ride has provided a convenient way for parents to drop off and pick up their children. Please ensure that you are using the Kiss and Ride in a safe way - slow down, do not leave your car, and only have children get in and out of your car on the sidewalk side. Thank you for ensuring the safety of all of our students.



PARKING LOT - please do not enter between 8:45am and 9:15am and 3:15pm and 3:45pm

For the safety of students and staff there is no parent /guardian/caregiver parking permitted in the parking lot during arrival and departure times during the school day. If you or the guardian/caregiver needs certain special accommodations please contact the school office and we would be happy to discuss how we can assist.



Winter Dress...Brrrr!



The cooler weather has definitely arrived! We would like to remind parents and guardians that students need to come to school dressed to play outside during recesses (hats, scarves, gloves/mittens, boots, snowpants, etc.) It is advisable for children to bring extra pants and socks in case they become wet. Being physically active during winter is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle.

Please note - if a student is well enough to attend school, then they will be expected to go outside for recess. We do not keep students indoors—if they are not well, they should not be at school.

The school administration keeps a close eye on weather conditions, including wind chill, and sun/cloud conditions. When conditions necessitate, students will remain inside for recess. When conditions allow, reduced outdoor recesses may take place. Students will be supervised in their classrooms during recess and lunch hour whenever an indoor recess is necessary.

Huddle Up



The Huddle Up Committee started last year in October and it has continued this year. We started this year listening to a presentation from the Toronto Argonauts Huddle Up coach Jason Colero. He gave an awe-inspiring presentation about how we should deliver the message to stand up to bullying. He also taught us the importance of mental health stability and gave us posters to inspire others to stand up to bullying.

In the beginning of last year, the huddle up team decided to create a play to educate the school about bullying and how we should work together to stand up to bullying. The play was based on a poem that was skillfully created by the members of the Huddle Up committee. We also organized many events and participated in many presentations. At the end of last year, the entire Huddle Up Association, along with the team and special guests, gathered at the Enercare Centre to celebrate our success of the Huddle Up Association.

At the beginning of this year we went downtown for a rally hosted by Toronto Argonauts. At the rally, we got to hear from the spokesperson from The Family Channel, a trampoline olympic medalist, and John Tory the Mayor of Toronto. Many of the presenters in the rally gave real life examples showing the importance of anti-bullying.

In the future, the Huddle Up team we will once again host a play showing how standing up to bullying makes a big difference, both mentally and physically, and how it impacts our environment. We are also planning to make rallies to enhance our school relationship and helping each other feel safe in J.M.P.S.

Written by Yannie and Yutian

Kid's Kitchen Co.

Celebrate the season with our Annual Seasonal Favourite Lunch!

The 2016 Holiday Lunch Special
includes

Roast chicken leg, Mashed potatoes with gravy,
Steamed veggies & a mini Chocolate cupcake
with candy cane sprinkles



Available only on the days we service your school
from Dec 1 – 23, 2016.

Also featured for the month of December:

Meatballs with mashed potatoes (regular, veg or halal)
Meat tortellini
Cheese tortellini
Gluten-Friendly Beef ravioli
Gluten-Friendly Cheese ravioli



Many more choices available on our regular menu
Online orders can be completed up until 10am the previous business day. A valid credit card is required.

Ordering is easy! Visit us at www.kidskitchen.ca to place your orders online.

**Enjoy more quality time with your children.
Leave the lunches to us.**

We're here to help.
905-944-0210 www.kidskitchen.ca



Please join us for our

Family Fun Night

on

Thursday, December 1st, 2016

from

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

*Students must bring a family member to supervise them, as well as a pair of indoor shoes.

School Council 2016 - 2017

Chair: Michael Chun

Vice Chair: Helena Ke

Treasurer: Lavina Yip

Secretary: Christy Chen

Voting Members:

Anna Leung, Said Salameh, Yolanda Smidt,
Deepak Varma, Yamini Varma, Jennifer Shum,
Rakesh Yadav, Juan Du

Please plan on joining us for the next School Council Meeting, which will be held in the library at **7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 17, 2017.**



Markham District High School

Upcoming School Council Presentations and Events



MDHS School Council is pleased to be hosting a number of upcoming informative events and presentations. These events are open to students, parents and administrators. All local area schools are invited to attend. Events take place in the MDHS school library. Additional details are provided below:

Event	Details	Date/Time
Student Advocacy Cards	Learn more about the new Advocacy Cards program and gain a better understanding of how you can support your son or daughter to advocate for their learning needs in the classroom environment. This session is for both parents and students and will directly follow the School Council meeting taking place from 6-7PM. RSVP to markham.dhs@yc.yrdsb.ca by Nov 25th. Presented by the Learning Disabilities Association of York Region	November 28th 7-8:30 pm
Supporting Community Concerns	Learn about the board's policy on how they support community concerns . The policy and procedure reinforces the importance of high standards of practice with regard to service provision by the Board.	January 23rd 7:00 pm
Advocacy Training	A workshop on effective approaches to advocating for our children, school and community. Presented by YRDSB Inclusive School and Community Services	
Supporting High School Students with Math	A session for parents targeted on providing strategies to support your son or daughter with high school Math. Presented by MDHS Math Department	February 6th 7:00 pm
Social Media Branding	This session is open to both parents , students and teachers to gain an understanding on how social media can be used to portray who we are positively or negatively . As well , a brief discussions on the dangers of social media. Presented by Socially Active	March 20th 6:00-8:00 pm
YRDSB Mental Health Strategy (Tentative)	Session for Parents and Teachers to be held immediately following School Council meeting scheduled from 6:30-7. The focus will be on the board's strategy . Presented by Mental Health, YRDSB	May 15th 7:00 pm

For Senior Kindergarten Parents/Guardians:

Fred Varley Public School Grade 1 French Immersion Program Information

Night

Thursday, January 19th, 2017 - time to be decided...more info will follow

Healthy Snack Program

Every Tuesday and Thursday our students are offered a healthy snack. A variety of healthy snacks (e.g., apples, oranges, bananas, carrots, etc.) are available in the front foyer.



Grade 8
Information Night
Bur Oak
Secondary School
Thursday,
December 1st at
6:30 p.m.

Literacy Corner

Critical Literacy...

What is it, and why is it important for my child?



A great deal of research has been done over the years to support the understanding that improving literacy and comprehension skills is critical to a child's development.

We have seen early years' initiatives, programs and resources become available; we regularly read, write and discuss things with our children, in order to further develop their communication and understanding skills; we support student programs and initiatives that will help improve these fundamental understanding and communication skills.

However...how often do we promote critical literacy in our children?

Critical literacy is not a program, so much as it is a lens with which to better understand and make meaning of communication.

According to the Adolescent Literacy Guide, critical literacy can be defined as the ability to:

- *recognize that texts contain certain perspectives and biases
- *recognize that point of view influences how a text is interpreted and understood
- *determine whose voices are present or absent
- *evaluate multiple perspectives for bias, reliability, fairness and validity
- *analyze how language is used

It is important to understand that all of these skills need to be present if our children are going to fully understand what they are presented with. This extends beyond books, but applies to their understanding of information found in websites, in advertising, in blogs and social media outlets.

Look for opportunities to engage with your children through conversations that enhance critical literacy. Ask about what your child believes to be the author's message and why? Discuss the points of view presented, as well as those that are absent. Evaluate the validity of the information that you are reading - how accurate is it?

By understanding what we read, see and hear through a critical lens, we are better able to determine an understanding of ourselves in the world - what we believe, what we value - and in doing so, also develop a better understanding of the beliefs and values of others.

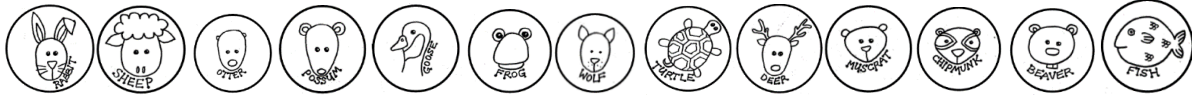
Just a small note to remind parents how important it is for your child to be on time for class. Coming to school late causes anxiety for many children, and also results in missing out on morning announcements and learning.



BUS CANCELLATIONS - Keep in mind on field trip days

On occasion service cancellation due to inclement weather conditions may be required. A decision to cancel school bus transportation will be region-wide meaning all buses, vans and taxis will not operate. Parents, students and school staff are asked to access local radio and television stations after 6:00 a.m. to receive bus cancellation information. A bus cancellation message will also be available at www.schoolbuscity.com and 1-877-330-3001 or by following the YRDSB on Twitter. Please note that school bus charters will not operate when regular home to school service is cancelled.





MUSTANG RALLY

During the 2015-2016 school year, we began a new initiative at John McCrae P.S. The initiative is known as the Mustang Rallies. All students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 have been organized into groups named after an animal that is native to Canada. All staff, including our Principal, Ms. Hart, our Vice-Principal, Mrs. Keirstead, teachers, office administrators, caretakers and lunch assistants participate in our initiative. Each group is led by a staff member and includes students from all grades.

The purpose of the Mustang Rallies is to build and promote a sense of community, inclusivity and equity, by engaging in team building activities. It is a way for students to get to know others that are not necessarily in their class, grade or in their division. It is also a way for the students to get to know more staff that they do not necessarily work with and a way for staff to get to know more students.

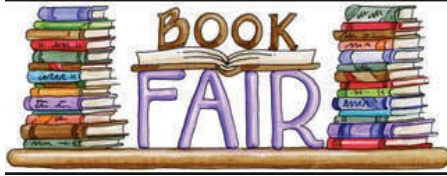
Last year we held 3 rallies, one in April, May and June. The first rally for this school year will take place on Friday, December 2nd from 9:00 am until 11:30 am. We are very excited about this initiative as we continue to make new connections and promote a sense of community at John McCrae P.S.



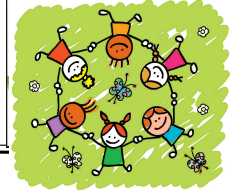
Book Sale

Scholastic Book Fair

The Scholastic Book Fair was held from November 23rd to December 1st. We sold a lot of books to raise money for our Makerspace and Library! Some of the purchases we will be making with the proceeds will be some more Lego for our Lego wall, a light table, and some fantastic new books!



Kindergarten Registration for 2017-2018 will begin January 20th, 2017. We will confirm the date in the January News. If you have a child born in 2013 they will be eligible to start Junior Kindergarten in September of 2017. You will be required to please bring the child's original Birth Certificate, Citizenship papers, and Proof of Residency such as a Tax Bill, Purchase Agreement or Lease Agreement to the school when you come to register. Please register your child early so that we can begin planning for September.



NEWS FROM MS VIERO IN THE LIBRARY

Food Drive

The Grade 3's did a fantastic job of coordinating and collecting canned and boxed food for the Markham Food Bank. We collected over 500 pieces of food to donate! Thank you to all families for your generosity.

Hour of Code

The Hour of Code is a global movement by Computer Science Education Week and Code.org reaching tens of millions of students in 180+ countries through a one-hour introduction to computer science and computer programming. John McCrae PS will be participating this year!



News from Healthy Schools:

Healthy Schools Committee

We have partnered with the ECO team to challenge everyone to walk/bike to school more often. Starting in December, every Wednesday morning we will be keeping track of how many students from each class come to school in an active way. The class that has the most walkers/bikers each month will win our new "Golden Running Shoe" award. We will also have a map of Ontario posted on our Healthy Schools bulletin board and will be tracking how far each class walks. We are hoping to get all of our classes across Ontario before the end of the school year. Classes who are the most active each month will also win an active prize to celebrate their achievement. Each month we will also be having a theme walk. Our first walk will be our Jingle Bell walk on Wednesday December 7th, and every student who walks or bikes to school will receive some jingle bells. Let's get walking JMPS!!



Winter activities for you and your family

Don't hibernate this winter! Active living is alive and well all year round. Snow and cold weather provide opportunities for a wide variety of fun and inexpensive activities for the whole family. Here are just a few suggestions:

- Take a walk and enjoy nature
- Use your creativity and build a huge snowman
- Participate in a public skate at your local municipal rink
- Experience a new winter sport like curling, indoor badminton and snowshoeing

Tips for safe winter fun

- Stay warm and safe from the cold by wearing layers of warm clothing. Hats, scarves and warm gloves keep extremities warm, while weather proof outer layers keep you dry
- Remember to always wear bright coloured and reflective clothing when outdoors so you are visible to traffic
- Play in safe areas. Do not let children play in road-side snow banks. Snowplows may not be able to see them
- Be aware of icy or slippery conditions. It is best to walk on the side walk. If that is not possible, walk facing traffic and stay close to the curb
- Check your equipment before you head out. Make sure that your skis, snowboards, skates, toboggans and safety equipment are in good repair
- Inner tubes, plastic discs and other makeshift sliders are not recommended, as they are not safe and may lead to injury

Not all helmets are the same. Wear a [helmet](#) that has been certified for the specific sport or activity you are participating in. When choosing a helmet for tobogganing, a snow sport helmet made for skiing or snowboarding is best. A hockey helmet is also good. Bike helmets are better than nothing, but must be discarded after a significant impact

- Be sure to wear sunscreen and sunglasses and don't forget to drink water to stay hydrated

Remember to check yourself and your children for [cold-related injuries](#) such as frostbite and hypothermia. Check the temperature and wind chill. It is great to have fun outdoors, but it's important not to lose track of time. In between short outdoor activities, move indoors and warm up first. This is especially important when children are participating. In extreme weather, play indoors