



## UNIONVILLE PS MAY NEWSLETTER

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*For upcoming events please visit our school website: <http://www.unionville.ps.yrdsb.edu.on.ca>*

### *PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE*

May 2014 Spring is finally here!

As we approach the last two months of school, we are excited about the many events and initiatives that are still to come.

Firstly, we would like to say THANK YOU to all the families that supported our first UPS Family Fitness Night. It was a huge success with well over 180 participants. Special thanks go out to the many parents and staff members who took the time and effort to plan activities for all of us to enjoy.

On April 24<sup>th</sup> in honour of Earth Day, our student participated in a cleanup of the school grounds. Students could be seen working in pairs and gathering small branches and shrubs. They filled their buckets and carried them off to the bunker area where the caretakers were stationed to empty the buckets.

As part of the new social studies curriculum the grade three, four, and five students showcased their Heritage and Identity projects with a museum storefront where they shared their learning with the rest of the school. Classrooms of students had the opportunity to view, ask questions and listen to presentations.

On May 2, Ms. Haidari's class and their kindergarten reading buddies walked the food drive donations over to the Fire Hall and were greeted with the happy faces of the firefighters who thanked UPS for supporting the Markham Food Bank. To their delight, they were treated to a tour of the fire hall and the fire truck. Thank you to all our families who supported our food drive. And special thanks to parents and staff who helped our school with this initiative.

### **Some upcoming events to watch for:**

Dr. Shyamala Kiru will be presenting an evening devoted to **Fostering Confidence in our Children** for our parents and guardians on May 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. This is a partnership with Unionville, Ramer Wood and Parkview Public Schools. Since reservations will be required, please ensure that you have registered with your child's teacher. Light refreshments and babysitting will be provided.



## Synervoice and SchoolConnects

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To enhance our existing absence check procedure, Unionville Public School is one of a number of schools participating in a pilot project to introduce **a new, more efficient** student absence or late arrival reporting system. This new system will reduce the time it takes to verify student attendance making it easier for you to report your child's absence and easier for staff to respond to unaccounted student absences.

This new reporting system is called *Safe Arrival* and it will allow parents to report their child's absence or late arrival quickly and conveniently.

**Parents can call into an automated interactive telephone system via a toll free number**

**(1-855-203-2994) through which absences and late arrivals can be reported. You will receive a confirmation number and a follow up email confirming your child's absence or late arrival.**

The system will be available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Future absences can be reported at any time.

In addition, we will also be introducing an automated notification system already used by our High Schools to contact parents who have not reported their child absent. The automated notification system will contact parents at multiple contact numbers until one of the designated contacts is reached. If our system is unable to reach a designated contact after 30 minutes, office staff will follow up.

By reporting your child absent in advance using the Safe Arrival toll free number, you will NOT receive a call.



## OUR VOICE CONFERENCE

On Wednesday April 30th, Clara, Justin and Ms. Dyer were selected to go to this year's "Our Voice Student Conference". Student representatives from each school in the York Region District School Board gathered in a large conference room at the 'Sheraton Hotel' in Richmond Hill. Two students from grade 6, 7 or 8 were chosen to participate in the conference. One teacher from each school is chosen to go as well. At the conference, the students vote for next year's student trustee. They also got a chance to listen to this year's keynote speaker 'Lights'. Students were later put into smaller conference rooms to discuss issues with bullying and how to make their school a safer and better environment for everyone. The school representatives are given an 'Action Plan' to fill out how they will deliver the messages of what they learned at the conference, to the members of our school. The conference is a great opportunity for the students and it makes sure that everyone's voices are heard.

Written by Clara





## **UPS Fun Fair 2014 – June 5,**

It is very hard to imagine that we are already into May and our last full month of preparation for the UPS Fun Fair. Please remember to **RSVP by May 9, 2014** to take advantage of the Early Bird Ticket Pricing.

We are very inspired by the generosity of our UPS community and are excited to be creating an event that will appeal to all of the families of our students from JK up to Grade 8.

We have extended special invitations to our newly registered families who will be joining us in September. If you know any of them, please encourage them to attend.

### **Class Basket Items:**

Perhaps you have heard your child talking about Class Baskets and wondered what that was all about. As you know, the Fun Fair is also our major fund raiser for this year. We are raising funds to complete the audio visual system upgrades in the school gymnasium.

In past events, classroom baskets have been a fun and successful way to involve our UPS families. Each class will be creating a unique theme- based basket of items that will be offered in a “drop in the box” type raffle on the night of the event. Everyone can purchase tickets to try to win their favorite basket – one ticket wins it! Watch for a letter to come home on **May 5** with your child. It will also have a contact name for your classroom lead in case you have questions.

Items will be accepted any time up to **May 23, 2014** and can be sent in with your child. The committee will then wrap and package the items for display at the Fun Fair!

### **Sponsorship:**

At this time I would like to thank **JEI Learning Centres** in Markham for being the sponsor of the Bouncy Castle at our Fun Fair this year.

There is still an opportunity to sponsor the Photo Booth at the Fun Fair. We expect this to be a very popular activity. Sponsorship contributions will be gratefully acknowledged.

### **Volunteer:**

Many volunteers are already hard at work creating and coordinating this event. We are now actively seeking parent volunteers to help for about an hour on the night of the event. We ask that you send your contact information including email address and telephone # to [unionville.ps@sc.yrdsb.edu.on.ca](mailto:unionville.ps@sc.yrdsb.edu.on.ca) and indicate your preferred time slot(s). We require volunteers for same day setup, 5-6, 6-7, 7-8, 8-9 or Take Down (after 9 pm).

We are looking forward to seeing you there!

Thank you on behalf of the UPS Fun Fair Committee

**The City of Markham will be launching the Zero Waste Program at Unionville Public School in September!**

- ✓ Unionville Public School will be equipped with green bins to collect organic waste – just like home!
- ✓ All food waste as well as soiled paper will now be collected in the Green Bin
- ✓ Staff and students can work together to reduce their waste and recycle more
- ✓ Diverting organics from landfill will take our eco-school status to the next level

**Coming In  
September 2014**



**WANTED**

**Crossing Guard for the Kennedy / Bridle Trail Crossing**

Adult school crossing guards play an important role in the lives of children who walk or cycle to school. They help children safely cross the street at key locations while also reminding drivers of the presence of pedestrians. The presence of adult crossing guards can lead to more parents feeling comfortable about their children walking or cycling to school.

There is **URGENT** need for an Adult School Crossing Guard, for the Kennedy Road and Bridle Trail crossing. As an added incentive for referrals, the school will receive a \$750 finder's fee if a parent referral results in a successful hiring. If you know of someone who might be interested in this paid position, please let the Principal, Helen Hart or Vice Principal, Robin Cockburn know as soon as possible or call 905-477-1824.



**UPS Food Drive**

UPS collected food items in support of the Markham Food Bank and the Daily Food Bank (GTA) from April 17th to April 30th. We wanted to thank families for their support. Students walked over the food to the local Fire Station and were met with smiles from the Fire Fighters.

Every single donation helped, and together we hope our combined donations will make a real difference for those in need. Thank you for taking the time to check out the display near the gym that shows how much of the world is used to grow food and what that means on our environment.

Together we think globally and act locally! Well done !

## **Unionville Public School Family Fitness and Health Evening**

On Thursday April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 Unionville Public School (UPS) opened its doors to our over 180 parents, caregivers, students, and staff by hosting an evening targeted at health and fitness. This evening was funded by a Pro-Grant submitted by school council. We were fortunate to have three interactive sessions provided by community resources. Beginning at 6pm families took part in a community walk around the neighboring streets of the school and upon returning to the school received a handy bag with a mini first aid kit and bottle of water. Families were then invited into the gymnasium to participate in a circuit class where Carolyn Smith from Jack It Up fitness demonstrated that you do not need fancy equipment or facilities to exercise in a fun and safe way. After getting the circulatory system pumping, students were taken on a journey of jungle animals while embracing some of the unique and often challenging moves of yoga by Laura Gardash of Ahhsana Yoga. To wind the evening down the audience was then privy to a motivational talk and fitness demonstration by Kary and Uche Odiatu, North America's #1 fitness motivators and founders of Fitspeakers.com. Families who chose not to participate in the active part of the evening or who wanted to learn more about our local community partners were able to peruse the halls of the school visiting and collecting information. Participants included a chiropractor, a massage therapist, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Tai Chi Society, Canada's Food Guide, The Town of Markham: Parks and Recreation, The Active and Healthy Safe Routes team, the York Region District School Board representing bicycle safety and healthy schools, the Town of Markham: Public Libraries, the Canadian Mental Health Association York Region Branch, and the upcoming UPS Fun Fair. At the end of the evening all attendees were given an organic apple courtesy of Whole Foods.

Thank-you kindly, to all those who participated to make this evening a success.

Pamela Nitert, Parent Council

Robin Cockburn, Vice Principal

## **May School Council Meeting**

Please join us in the Library on Thursday, May 15 at 7:30 for the next School Council Meeting. Due to the event "Fostering Confidence in Children" parent seminar being held on May 21, the Council meeting has moved to an alternate date. At the meeting, there will be an update about all the great sports and activities that your children are participating in from the teachers. We will also be discussing the upcoming schools events including the Fun Fair and the continued plans for promoting "Safe and Active Routes" to school and much more.

If you have any questions for the School Council or would like to volunteer, please feel free to contact us at

[unionville.ps@sc.yrdsb.edu.on.ca](mailto:unionville.ps@sc.yrdsb.edu.on.ca)



## Active and Safe Routes to School Update

The Active and Safe Routes to School Team and many volunteers have been working hard to put some initial project plans into action. We are very fortunate to have the support of so many parents who are contributing their time and energy. We are also working with enthusiastic and supportive community partners who are sharing their expertise and tools. This collaborative effort will help to decrease the traffic and congestion around the school at the start and end of the day so that it is safer and healthier for walking and cycling.

The traffic surveillance in which we collected information and observations about the traffic was completed by mid-April. Thanks to so many enthusiastic parent volunteers for their time and insightful feedback. This information will provide us with some benchmarks so that we can evaluate whether more students and parents are walking and cycling to school after we have promoted the benefits of walking and cycling. It will also help to gain insights so that if there are further opportunities to alleviate traffic and congestion around the school, then we can explore initiatives and/or create tools to address those opportunities. To further evaluate the traffic, annual data collection will be planned to understand the longer-term nuances of traffic patterns and hopefully improvements, around the school.

The data collection did reveal some interesting observations. As we know there are a number of cars which park illegally each day and the City will be out shortly to ticket those offenders. Rolling stops at the stop signs, particularly the Bridle Trail and Main Street stop are unfortunately, very common. We are working with the police to work towards some improvement with respect to rolling stops and speeding in these areas. Please come to a full stop at these corners as there is considerable pedestrian traffic.

We have almost completed our “communication blitz” in which we have been delivering information on the benefits to walking and cycling. Thanks for all your questions and inquiries about the project and your support of this project.

Our next step will be directed to getting more students and parents walking and cycling. We will be delivering actionable tools and ideas to help you get started. If more people walk and cycle to school the area in and around the school will be both safer and healthier.

As you know, we still have the need for long-term, dependable crossing guards. These crossing guards help keep our routes safe as we cross busy intersections during both the start and end of school each day. There is currently an opening for an Adult School Crossing Guard, with a particular need for the Kennedy Road and Bridle Trail crossing. If you know of someone who might be interested in this paid position, please let the Principal, Helen Hart or Vice Principal, Robin Cockburn know.

Now that the weather is starting to warm up, we hope that everyone thinks of walking or cycling to school as a way to get out and be active!

### **Parking,**

as per the City’s by-law:

“Parking” means the halting of a vehicle, whether occupied or not, except when halting temporarily for the purpose of and while actually engaged in loading or unloading goods or passengers.

## New Construction has started

There will be accommodations made to our site due construction and to keep our students safe at all times.

A bunker (picture A) was delivered that will store materials that may need to be moved during the construction. The gate located at the north side of the school will be locked at all times to prevent vehicle/equipment access to the construction site, unless authorized and controlled by a flagman. The double door exit at the portapak will be visually blocked (with removable temporary panels or chain) to prevent students from exiting to the school yard without supervising personnel. The area of the new construction will be hoarded only at the south side of the school around the new addition, with provision for space for excavation/removals and equipment needed during construction (Picture B). Due to interior plumbing work that needs to be executed early in the project, the existing storage room and girl's washroom located across from the Library will be included in the construction area. Hoarding will be installed in the existing corridor accordingly, leaving the existing fire extinguisher and drinking fountain accessible to the school staff and students (Picture B).



Picture A



Picture B



Picture C

The bull dozers and excavators have arrived and the excavation has begun (Picture C). All work will take place either before students arrive for the day or during the day while students are inside the building. During both recess breaks the work will stop and students can engage in play outdoors while supervised.

Continue to check the Principal's Message each month on the school's website for further updates.



## STUDENT PLACEMENT PROCESS 2014-2015

Our primary goal at Unionville Public School is to develop balanced classes. A balanced class reflects the diversity of our community and allows the variety of interests and talents of our learners to emerge and be appreciated. Like your family, the class unit provides a balance of opportunities for a range of learners to succeed through appropriate challenges. The learner develops the feeling of belonging and the feeling that in a variety of ways he/she makes a noticed contribution. The family, the school and the community provide opportunities for children to socialize. Each new year brings opportunities to meet new friends and expand our circle of acquaintances. School becomes more comfortable and familiar and accordingly our potentials have great possibilities of realization. The following are the criteria we use to guide our placements:

### Balance of Ability, Interests and Talents

All children are unique and different. The teacher's task of providing meaningful learning programs is enhanced when classes are created to accommodate instructional groupings.

### Balanced According to Gender

We attempt to balance the number of boys and girls to ensure many friendship opportunities.

### Learning Style

How does the learner go about the process of learning? What kind of environment allows that style to be utilized effectively?

### Teaching Style

How does a teacher go about the teaching/learning process? What type of learners might best flourish with this teacher?

### Social Blending

What is the best cluster of individuals to effectively and efficiently learn? This should not be viewed as a grouping of friends. At particular stages, some close friends learn best in separate classes.

### Parent Requests

A number of additional considerations are included in our decision making when creating classes. **Regrettably, we are unable to accept specific teacher requests for the 2014-2015 year.** Rather than suggesting a teacher, please indicate the learning style or classroom structure which would be most appropriate for your child. When teachers get together to create new class lists, we will use this information to help make our final decisions. Should you have information to share with us, please send a letter to your child's homeroom teacher.

The staff at Unionville care deeply about student needs. Years of meeting the learning needs of children give them the unique qualifications to recommend placement decisions. It takes hours of discussion, reflection, revision and consideration of alternatives to arrive at the best organization for our school. Rest assured that the organization will include our best opportunities for student achievement

## ***Building Confidence in Children***



### **Parent Workshop**

**THURSDAY MAY 20, 2014**

**Unionville PS**

**6:30-8:00 pm**

### **SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER**



### **Dr. Shyamala Kiru**

(Holds a Master in the field of Counseling and a Doctoral degree in Marriage and Family Therapy)

Light snacks, drinks and babysitting will be provided

Please **register** at your home school office by **Monday May 12, 2014**

Workshop is organized in partnership by the following YRDSB schools

***Unionville PS***

***Parkview PS***

***Ramer Wood PS***



### **Registration Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

- **Number of adult participants attending** \_\_\_\_\_  
Is babysitting (4 yrs old and up) required? Yes/No For how many children? \_\_\_\_\_

## What is Character Education?

Character education is a deliberate effort to cultivate positive personal attributes and civility among students. It is a whole-school effort to create a community in which positive attitudes, values and behaviours are fostered. These qualities are promoted explicitly, modeled, taught, expected, celebrated, and continuously practiced in every day actions. In short, character education is the promotion of universally desirable qualities such as respect, responsibility, honesty and integrity.

**The Character Trait for May is**

### **Courage**

We face challenges directly. We seek help from others when necessary. We do the right thing even when it may be unpopular. We are able to recognize risks and danger and do not take unwise risks to gain the approval of those around us



## Getting Active in Support of the Heart and Stroke Foundation

Unionville Public School is excited to be supporting the Heart and Stroke Foundation through a fundraising event this spring. Grades 5 and up will be shooting "Hoops for Heart" and kindergarten to grade 4 will be jumping "Rope for Heart". There will be a kickoff assembly on May 13, followed by fundraising for just over a week and concluding on May 22 with the event where children jump rope and shoot hoops.

This fundraising effort last year was a great success with UPS raising \$4,801. We have our sights set higher this year with a goal of raising \$7,500 in support of the Heart and Stroke Foundation. To help the school reach this goal, there is an additional incentive of Mr. Copsy wearing a mascot suit for a day!

Let's get active and support the Heart and Stroke's vision for healthy lives free of heart disease and stroke. Together we will make it happen.