



Ventura Park Gazette



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Administrative Assistants: Mrs. T. Brutto, Mrs. F. Sklar, Mrs. C. Mizzi

Lead Caretaker: Mr. D. Price

***"Ensemble vers notre rêve!"
We are the Ventura Vikings!***

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Dec 2013/Jan 2014

Administrators' Message

December, a month full of many wonderful traditions and celebrations, is a busy month for all of us! There has been high energy and excitement radiating throughout Ventura Park as we head into the holidays which offer us the irreplaceable gift of time to spend with family. Throughout the school year, we maintain a focus on student achievement, and we continue to nurture the well-being of our pupils by:

- celebrating good character at our monthly assemblies
- promoting our student leadership team (Les fonceurs) who lead our "gestes de gentillesse/random acts of kindness" initiative and who organize spirit days
- training student conflict mediators (Les moniteurs de paix) to help our younger students resolve minor recess conflicts (this program will be in full swing in January!)
- establishing some short-term extracurricular activities (Gr. 2 Dance Club, Junior Co-ed Volleyball, Primary Intramurals)
- providing students with opportunities to demonstrate responsibility and leadership and service to their school (lunch monitors, bus monitors, milk and popcorn monitors)

Much of what we celebrate is due to the efforts and contributions of our excellent students, staff and parents. We are also fortunate, as a school, to have remarkable volunteers, caretakers, secretaries and a school council who give so much of themselves each and every day to further the learning and positive educational experiences of all our students.

As we look forward to a New Year full of promise, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you much joy and peace as you spend time with loved ones, enjoying this season of celebration! School resumes on January 6. ☺

Mme K. Wagner and Mme R. Totino



SEPTEMBER 2014 GRADE ONE FRENCH IMMERSION INFO NIGHT

Do you have a child or know someone who would like to enrol his/her child in our grade one French Immersion program next September? All interested parents are encouraged to attend the evening information session which will be held at Ventura Park P.S. on January 16, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Upcoming Events

- Jan. 6** –First Day Back & Milk Delivery resumes
-School Council Meeting @ 7 p.m. (Library)
- Jan. 15**-Parent Education Evening (Child Youth Mental Illness & Well-being) @ 7-9 p.m. (Library)
- Jan. 16**-Gr. 1 FI Info Night @ 7-8 p.m. (Library)

Upcoming Events (cont'd)

- Jan. 17** PA Day
- Jan. 29** Character Assembly @ 9:15 a.m.
For students who have pre-ordered:
Sub Days: . Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29
Pizza Days: Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30

Jackie Young
Superintendent of Schools
905-764-6830

Dennis Lazovski/Lisa Attias
School Council Co-Chairs
416-835-3530/ 416-200-8639

Joel Hertz
Trustee
905-882.4179

Reflection Corner...Nelson Mandela

It is with a deep sense of loss that we in the York Region District School Board mourn the passing of Nelson Mandela. He was a tireless champion for the rights of all the people of South Africa. He was a hero and an inspiration to the children, youth and adults in Canada and around the world.

Nelson Mandela is admired and respected, not only for his life-long struggle to achieve freedom and democracy for all the people of South Africa, but also for the courage with which he defended his ideals and his principles. He is also respected for his spirit of compassion and forgiveness, even for those who caused so much suffering for so many.

These are the qualities which he demonstrated to the people of South Africa and to the world, upon his release from 27 long years as a political prisoner of the former apartheid Government of South Africa. These are the qualities for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

After his retirement from active political life as President of his country, Nelson Mandela devoted the rest of his life to championing the rights of the poor, orphaned, disabled and homeless children of South Africa. He founded the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund which raises funds to support better education, improved health and nutrition, and access to housing for the disadvantaged children of South Africa. In the past, our staff and students have contributed funds to support this worthy cause.

The world has lost a great human being in Nelson Mandela. We will all miss the strength and courage of his character, the wisdom of his words and the compassion of his heart. We will miss above all those unforgettable moments of inspiration when he was among us.

The York Region District School Board sends its deepest sympathy and condolences to the family of Nelson Mandela and to the people of South Africa on this sad occasion.

Celebrating Diversity



CHRISTMAS –December 25/January 7- December 25 is Christmas for most Christians in the West. Some Orthodox Churches, such as the Ukrainian Church, follow the Julian calendar and will celebrate Christmas on January 7. December 25 is Christmas for most Christians in the West. Some Orthodox Churches, such as the Ukrainian Church, follow the Julian calendar and will celebrate Christmas on January 7.

KWANZAA-December 26-January 1 is a seven day cultural celebration initiated by African Americans starting on December 26. Each day a candle is lit and placed in a seven-cup candelabrum called a kinara that sits on a straw mat adorned with fruit and vegetables. The final feast is known as Karamu.

BIRTH OF GURU GOBIND SINGH - January 5 -January 5 marks the birthday of the tenth and last guru within the Sikh tradition. Guru Gobind is recognized as the "saint/soldier" and poet who fought against oppression by infusing a martial spirit in people through soul-inspiring heroic poetry. He founded the "Khalsa" order within the Sikh tradition that sought to bring justice and equality to mankind through selfless service

LUNAR NEW YEAR-January 31 The day after the new moon, marks the beginning of the new lunar year. It is the year of the Horse. Irrespective of their religion or country, all Chinese, Vietnamese and many Koreans celebrate the cultural aspect of this day. This is the beginning of year 4712 in the Chinese calendar. It is a time for renewal and personal relationships, and pledges of prosperity.

Locked School Doors



Beginning February 3, all school doors, including the front doors and doors to portables, will be locked 15 minutes after the morning entry bell. The doors will remain locked for the rest of the day. Anyone arriving at the school after that time must buzz in and sign in at the main office.

Measures will also be put in place for parents/guardians to buzz in and pick up students participating in before and after school programs. More detailed information will be available in January. Measures will also be put in place to lock port-a-pack doors.

Our school continues to be a safe place where parent and community member involvement is welcomed and encouraged. This additional step will enhance the measures we already have in place, and ensure that all visitors sign in at the main office upon arrival.



French Immersion Information Sessions and Registrations

Information sessions for the French Immersion (FI) program will take place at Ventura Park P.S. (see [chart](#)) on January 16, 2014 at 7 p.m. FI registration will begin January 17, 2014. In order to streamline the registration process, parents or guardians of Senior Kindergarten students entering Grade 1 in 2014, and wishing to enrol in the FI Program, can visit or call the school office and request an *Office Index Card - short version*. The Office Index Card must be signed by the principal of the home school. Parents or guardians then take this form, along with one piece of identification showing their address to Ventura Park P.S. to register between January 17 and February 14, 2014. This eliminates the need to provide duplicate enrollment information or to pre-register.

YRDSB's FI Accommodation Plan provides long-term consistency and equity of access to all students in York Region and will enable YRDSB to continue to offer the FI program to all who wish to enrol. The FI program will be offered in Dual Track or Single Track settings, in a variety of configurations. In order to meet community needs and optimize available space in our schools, a community's Grade 1-8 FI program may be provided over more than one school during the course of a student's FI education. This will allow flexibility in addressing community needs and the opportunity to use existing space in schools. More information is available on the Board's website: www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca. Please note: Some of the FI accommodation plans will require facility modifications or the development of new schools and will require short-term transition plans that might include overflow while we work toward the long-term vision. Overflow refers to situations in which the Board directs students to attend a school other than their community school or optional program for a specific period of time, as defined in Policy #108.

School Boundaries Meeting

The Ventura Park/Julliard/Block 18 FI School Boundaries Public Meeting was held on December 4th in the gym. If you were unable to attend that evening, the information is posted on the YRDSB Board Website. Go to www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/ (Schools > Find a School > Ventura Park P.S. > Boundaries)

Messages from the Office

Contact Numbers and Emergency Information

Thank you to our parents for returning our student contact sheets. Our office staff has made changes to telephone numbers and emergency contact information as indicated on your returned sheets.

Parents are reminded to inform the office if there are any changes during the school year so that we always have the most up-to-date contact information on file.



Don't forget!

Responsibility is a learning skill you can reinforce at home!

If your child forgets their lunch, homework, shoes, etc. please put **a note on the item with your child's name** and leave it on the table outside the Office. We are not able to interrupt the class of the students to let them know you have brought these things in for them. **All students should know to check this table for forgotten items.**

Your cooperation is appreciated!

Dressing for Winter

Being physically active during winter is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle and recess is one opportunity for students to be physically active.

Students need to come to school dressed to play outside during recess (hats, neck warmers- as scarves can be dangerous if worn outside the coat- gloves/mittens, boots, etc.). It is advisable for children to bring extra pants and socks in case they get wet.

The school administration keeps a close eye on weather conditions, including wind chill. When conditions necessitate, the principal may decide that students will remain inside for recess or may go out for a shortened recess.

**We ask that parents be sensitive to the demands placed on our secretaries and not call the school to inquire about indoor recess, but send their children dressed for outdoor play. Often the decision is made just prior to the recess as we observe changing conditions.



Too Sick For Recess Means Too Sick For School

All students are required to go outside for recess times, unless there is a note from a medical doctor explaining why being outdoors may be hazardous to a child's health. Colds and flu are not made worse by being outside. If your child is too sick to go outside for recess, he or she is too sick to be at school.

Important! End of Day Safe Dismissal



Please remember that at Ventura Park, over 90% of our students are bussed to and from school. **Students are not allowed to ride a bus other than the one assigned to them.** For safety reasons, school staff and the bus drivers must be able to account for all students assigned to all buses at all times. We appreciate your cooperation in getting all our students to and from school safely.

We also ask parents NOT to approach busses in our bus loop at the end of the day to retrieve their child from the bus. Parents are advised to send a written note to their child's teacher in the case of changes in after school pick up plans. Last minute changes to regular end of day dismissal routines are not able to be safely accommodated. For the safety of all students, please note that our office staff has been instructed NOT to release a student to the care of an individual other than their own parent/emergency contact person unless clear communication by way of a written note has been received at the school. In these cases, the individual picking up a child other than their own, will need to come to the main office and produce identification.



Volunteers in York Region Schools

Please note that the Board requires that ALL parents wishing to volunteer in York Region schools must obtain a Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) check from the police, in accordance with Policy and Procedure #280. This requirement is to protect your children at school.

If you are thinking of joining a field trip, offering to transport students other than your own to sports tournaments, being a volunteer in the library, helping school council hand out pizza or helping in any other way that involves contact with students the VSS check must be carried out. Once you have the Vulnerable Sector Screening check, please bring the original copy to the school office. We will photocopy the original, stamp that the photocopy is a certified true copy, give you back your original and then file the VSS in the office.

Parents will also be required to sign a confidentiality form as well, which can be obtained in the office and we will keep those forms on file as well.

Once a VSS has been completed, each year that parents continue to volunteer, a form entitled, "Offence Declaration" is to be signed and this will also be kept in the school office.

Thank you for your cooperation in ensuring that we are all working to keep our children safe.

Staff News

How time flies! Soon after the holidays, we will be welcoming back two of our teachers who have been off on maternity leave since last year. Mme Cunning returns on January 14 to her grade 2 class and Mme Tovt will be rejoining her grade 3 class on January 24.

We will miss both Mme Bazyleva and Mme Cooper who have been instrumental in establishing these two classes and providing solid instruction and care for the well-being of their students.

School Yard Play Areas



Student behaviour in the school yard during outdoor play is monitored daily by our supervising staff and the administration. Designated play areas for each grade level were established recently (grade 1 and 2 on the pavement, grade 3 on the East field, grade 4 and 5 on the West field) in an effort to diminish the number of bumps and scrapes that occur when little ones, who tend to be less aware of their surroundings, inadvertently cross into the path of Junior level soccer games while playing tag and looking backwards as they run! ☺

While we believe positive sibling relationships are very important, we also know that it is important at school for each child to form close bonds with their own grade-level peers and to have opportunities to develop social skills appropriate for their age (how to break into a group, how to cooperate, how to play fairly, how to take turns, how to solve minor conflicts).

Safe Arrival Program...a reminder



Through a directive from the Ministry of Education and Training, all School Boards must implement a safe arrival program in their schools. The York Region District School Board has been working very closely with the York Regional Police to ensure the safety of our students.

The safe arrival program at Ventura Park P.S. depends on parents to notify the office in the event of their child's late arrival or absence. All parents and guardians are reminded to please call the school (905) 707-6488 and leave a message if your child is going to be absent or late. Please leave your child's name, teacher's name and the reason for the absence. This phone operates 24 hours a day so please call the moment you know that your child will be absent or late.

If a student is not in school and the school office has not received notification from the parents, the school will take the following steps:

Step One:

Call the student's home. If there is no answer the school will,

Step Two:

Call the parents at work or cell phone. If there is no response the school will,

Step Three:

Call the emergency contact person. If the contact person cannot be reached and/or does not know where the student is then

Step Four:

The school will notify the York Regional Police that a child is missing.

Please remember to call the school if your child will be late or absent. You may be interested to know that the secretary often spends over an hour daily following up on the numerous unreported absences. Each year we are forced to contact York Regional Police to assist in finding a 'missing child'. In each case the child is usually found with his/her parent. Please help out by being conscientious about phoning the school when your child is going to be absent.

Student Absence—Please call the Office ASAP (24hr answering machine) at 905-707-6488 for every student absence and/or **late**.



Information Literacy

Information constantly swirls around us in our daily lives wherever we are. Our goal is to empower students with skills so that they learn to sort through information and make good decisions about which information is reliable and relevant. The specific skills related to information literacy include:

- ✓ how to access information
- ✓ how to process that information
- ✓ how to transfer and communicate that information using communication technology

When students learn to develop these skills, at home and at school, they learn to use information to be problem solvers, decision makers and critical thinkers.

Many grade 3, 4 and 5 classes have been **learning how to access information** by using Ventura Park's online library catalogue which we call the **e-bibliothèque**. Students are learning to use their prior knowledge of books and text forms to sort through the information in order to make relevant and well informed book decisions.

The French Fall Scholastic Book Fair was a HUGE success

Merci! Merci! Merci! The French Fall Scholastic book fair was a huge success. Thank-you for all of your support, it could not have happened without you! We sold over \$11,000.00 worth of products of which we will be taking 50% of the total sales as a credit for new library resources for the Learning Commons. Many new books have already been purchased and are now available for students to borrow. Thank-you!

Winter Break

All library books will be collected from the Primary students prior to the winter break. If you are planning a vacation out of the country **BEFORE** the winter break, please ensure that the books get returned to Ventura Park P.S. before you leave to ensure that they do not get left behind in another faraway location.

Staying close to home? Visit the Vaughan Public Libraries website <http://www.vaughanpl.info/> for special events and programs during the winter break and all year!

Snuggle up and read every day!

Mme Matthews

Teacher-Librarian

Community Outreach-One Warm Coat

Our winter clothing drive for New Circles, an organization that collects clothing and other goods through donations to help those who do not have warm clothing for our Canadian winter, has been a huge success. Through the promotional efforts of one of our grade 3 students, Mackenzie H., and Les Fonceurs, the Ventura Park community collected 645 items of winter clothing (coats, hats, gloves, scarves and boots) over double the amount collected last year! Way to go everyone for giving so generously!





RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY EMPATHY FAIRNESS INITIATIVE

At our recent November Character Assembly, we celebrated the following grade 3, 4 and 5 students who have been demonstrating "good character" on a consistent basis. Congratulations go to the following recipients:

Rebecca R.	Omri S.	Daxton S.	Jiyaa T.	Paula L.
Mattan L.	Evan A.	Tal P.	Kris B.	Alyssa N.
Yael L.	Deev P.	Andy G.	Daniel T.	Tara T.
Emma M.	Dylan S.	Rebecca D.	Carolina Z.	
Khush P.	Nicole W.	Sergey A.	Anna K.	
Sophia S.	Alissa G.	Abigail E.	David G.	
Elizabeth L.	Michal B.	Russell L.	Katherina T.	
Madison R.	Eden K.	Dennis M.	Jennifer B.	
Shelly S.	Ana A.	Yasmin P.	Michelle K.	
Valerie K.	Daniel L.	Ian A.	Adam T.	Missed last month
Noah K.	Daniel A.	Nicolas G.	Felanna S.	Christopher C.
Stasseya G.	Daniel G.	Andrew F.	Katia M.	Sabrina K.
Yuval B.	David W.	Sarah R.	Max A.	Katia M.
Megan L.	Jacob F.	Liam K.	Liza B.	
Ethan M.	Nysa V.	Joseph C.	Ian P.	
Valentina F.	Gabe S.	Sammi D.	Paul D.	
Delan M.	Ryan S.	Allie T.	Rochelle T.	

Thank you to Mme Nakhla's and Mme May's students and the "Foncers" with the help of Mme Dakran for presenting at the assembly.

PERSEVERANCE HONESTY INTEGRITY COURAGE OPTIMISM



RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY EMPATHY FAIRNESS INITIATIVE

At our recent December Character Assembly, we celebrated the following grade 1 and 2 students who have been demonstrating “good character” on a consistent basis. Congratulations go to the following recipients:

Cole L.	Ari M.	Christian N.	Abby L.
Elizabeth B.	Alisa P.	Arya J.	Aaron O.
Zachary F.	Alan P.	Aaron Y.C.	Auvai J.
Jordan Z.	Kaden N.	Violet M.	Danielle M.
Isabella B.	Ariel K.	Adam B.	Shane B.
Tudor B.	Taylor S.	Noa G.	Jason H.
Ethan G.	Ben B.	Matthew G.	Anastasia F.
Evander J.	Shiloh Z.	Daniella A.	Kaya P.
Leora K.	Ariella Y.	Joshua B.	Brielle N.
Layla P.	Michelle N.	Aeriel F.L.	Kayden L.
Hannah S.	Alan P.	Tim L.	Estella V.
Crystal C.	Ashley S.	Nicole P.	Dorsa S.
Tyler Z.	Gavin K.	Layla R.	Liel A.
Mattio B.	Mathew F.	Eitan S.	Olivia Z.
Hailey E.	Maya S.	Belle Y.	Denise B.
Maya M.		Eileen X.	Laura A.
Zevv L.		Ruqaiyah P.	Max P.

Thank you to the “Fonceurs” with the help of Mme Dakran and to the gr. 2 Dance Club and grade 5 student leaders, with the help of Mme Abate and Mme Graham for presenting at the assembly. We also enjoyed the trio of a capella singers!

PERSEVERANCE HONESTY INTEGRITY COURAGE OPTIMISM

arts@baythorn

Would your child enjoy learning the Ontario curriculum through the Arts?

If so, the York Region District School Board offers an Elementary integrated Arts program at Baythorn Public School. Students currently in grades four and five may apply for the arts@baythorn program, where they will have the opportunity to explore the disciplines of Dance, Drama, Visual Arts, and Music while meeting the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum for grades five, six, seven, and eight.

To learn more about the arts@baythorn program, students and their families are invited to attend an information evening at **Baythorn Public School on Thursday, January 16, 2014 @ 6:30 p.m.**

Applications will be on line via the school website and available after January 16, 2014. www.baythorn.ps.yrdsb.edu.on.ca

Please call us at Baythorn Public School (905) 889-7992, if you require further information.

Jacqueline Linton
Principal

Jennifer Rosenberg
Vice-Principal



We recognize the importance of digital literacy and its potential to engage students in meaningful communication and collaboration. As a result, the York Region District School Board is providing and managing access to the Google Apps for Education service for staff and students. This service, referred to as GAPPS, may be used by your child's teacher to complement the learning that already occurs in our classrooms on a regular basis. Specifically, GAPPS provides fast and easy collaboration, real-time editing and feedback, and access for students on any device at any time. Use of GAPPS, by both staff and students is governed by existing policies, including [Policy #194: Appropriate Use of Technology](#). This policy is available for review on the Board's web site.

Along with access to the GAPPS platform, most students will now have access to a Board email address. This email address can also be used as a login for other cloud-based educational tools, such as Moodle. The activation of student email on the GAPPS platform, will occur as follows:

- JK-Grade 2: no email access
- Grade 3-5: access to internal York Region District School Board email only
- Grade 6-12: access to internal and external email

As with all use of technology, we rely on parents/guardians to be strong partners in educating children on the appropriate use of technology. To this end, the service is provided as a privilege and violations of Board policy may result in withdrawal of the service. The standard format for the GAPPS email address will be student#@gapps.yrdsb.ca where student# is the same number students use to access the Board network and classroom computers.

Please take the time to review our appropriate use of technology policy and reinforce the importance of responsible technology usage. For your information, we have attached some internet safety tips to this letter. More information and login for the GAPPS platform is available at <https://google.yrdsb.ca>.

It's time to remind children about being safe online.



This is a good time for parents to learn about and review ways to keep their children safe online. Children today have access to the world at their fingertips. But with this access, there are risks. It's important for parents to talk to children about the importance of their personal information and stress that they should never disclose personal details that would allow someone online to contact them in real life.

Here are 10 tips provided by York Regional Police to promote safe online behaviour:

- Children should never give anyone their name, address, telephone number, computer password, or any other personal information on the Internet without parental or guardian consent
- Children should stay out of all chat rooms and websites that are not first approved by their parent or guardian
- The computer should be in a central place in your home where you can supervise their online activities
- Don't allow a webcam in a child's bedroom
- Reinforce that people online may not be who they say they are
- Consider using parental controls like Internet filters or blocking software
- Remind children that everything said online stays in cyberspace forever, whether or not it is deleted
- Talk to your children about Internet safety and clearly define your rules
- Remind children that photos sent over the internet or with cell phones are not private and can be easily shared with the general public
- Remember danger could be just a keystroke away

For more information on this subject, contact the York Regional Police by e-mail at info@yrp.ca or visit www.yrp.ca.

Jewish Family and Child Services January Workshops

The following are the groups and workshops for the month of January.

EFFECTIVE PARENTING- A four session group to help parents learn what they can do to raise a happy, motivated and well behaved child. For parents of children ages 2 to 10 years. Topics include: how to; nurture self esteem, encourage problem solving, increase communication and set appropriate limits and discipline. **Monday January 27/14 from 7- 9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St- Lipa Green Ctre.**

MIND, BODY, CONNECTION for Women: Join us in an 8 session group for women who want to learn the practice of mindfulness and meditation in a safe and supportive group setting. Topics will include: stress and anxiety reduction, connecting with your mind and body, enhancing your self worth and self esteem, and learning about general relaxation and happiness. **Wednesday January 29/14 at 35 Madison Ave. from 2 to 3:30 p.m. OR Thursday January 30/14 at 4600 Bathurst St.- Lipa Green Centre from 7 to 8:30 p.m.**

BEYOND THE CHUPPAH, BECOMING A COUPLE- A five session Marriage Preparation group for couples who are going to be married in the next year. Topics include: Changing roles and expectations, finances, conflict negotiation and resolution, communication, and Jewish home and family life. This program is offered in partnership with the Rabbinical Assembly- Ontario Region. **Wednesday January 29/14 from 7 to 9 p.m. at Beth Tzedec Synagogue.**

As with all of our programs, registration is required. Our groups and workshops are open to all members of the community regardless of cultural, religious and/or racial background and we offer a sliding scale for those who require reductions. For more information or to register please call Shawna Sidney at 416-638-7800 Ext # 6215 or go to our website at www.jfandcs.com.

Wishing all of our Ventura Park
community much joy and peace as you
spend time with loved ones, enjoying
this season of celebration!



Happy New Year 2014!
See you on January 6th!

The Ventura Park Staff