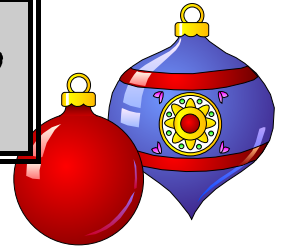


# Parliament Oak News for December 2009



## From the Principal's Desk . .

December is always a busy and exciting month. There are decorations to be hung. Shopping has to be done. Plans need to be made. Lists must be checked. Cards are to be sent. Amidst all that bustle, we send home first term report cards and hold parent-teacher conferences! It is difficult to fit it all in, but make time to review the report card with your child and conference with his/her teacher. Discuss the strengths your child is displaying as well as the areas that need improvement. Together, set two or three attainable goals on which your child can work for the next term. Take an especially close look at the *Learning Skills* portion of the report card. Good work and study habits are the foundation for success across subjects and grades. Your support can make an incredible difference for your child and their education!

Please celebrate the joy of this season with us by attending our special holiday events beginning with the Christmas Concert on December 9<sup>th</sup>. On behalf of the staff of Parliament Oak School, we wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season.

## Holiday Celebrations

You'll want to mark the evening of Wednesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> on the calendar ~ that's the night of the Christmas Concert. The morning concert (perfect for grandparents, parents, friends and siblings) starts at 10:00 a.m. The **evening performance starts at 6:30 p.m.** Students are asked to be at the school by 6:15 p.m.



## Christmas Break Dismissal

Friday, December 18<sup>th</sup> is a regular school day with the usual dismissal time of 3:15 PM. School reopens on Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at 8:40 AM. Happy Holidays!

## Students of the Month

Our November Students of the Month were:

JK/SK 1	Maddie Tait, Christina Talaiporos
JK/SK 2	Jac Bateson, Mercedes Agahzadeh
Gr. 1/2	Clara DeMunnich, Nathan Wilson
Gr. 2/3	Beth deBoer, Andrew Stocks
Gr. 3/4	Zackary Green, Cierra Perron
Gr. 4/5	Katie Coughill, Sabrina Gerritson
Gr. 6/7	Will Cowling, Tia Rollason
Gr. 7/8	Abbie Cowherd, Chloe Tribe-Sherlock

## Student Council's "Giving is Good" Campaign

Once again the community of Parliament Oak School will be participating in a number of initiatives to help make a brighter Holiday Season for families in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Until December 11<sup>th</sup>, we will be collecting Canadian Tire money. Representatives from the Student Council will use this money to purchase toys which will be donated to Newark Neighbours. There will be a prize for the class who collects the most money.

\*There will be containers to collect non-perishable food items. We will collect these items until December 15<sup>th</sup> and then forward them to Community Care on the school's behalf.



## Community Gives Back

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.

Parliament Oak would like to sincerely thank Penner Home Hardware for donating the wood materials needed to build our new circulation desk for our library. Mr. LaPointe has been working away at creating the library's circulation desk and we would like to acknowledge and recognize his dedication and commitment to this project. Another special shoutout goes to the Hoadley family who donated a box of Christmas books to the library. We've been so grateful for the sincere thoughtfulness of the Parliament Oak community.



## Eco Club

The ECO Team will be selling cookies during the interview days, December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. In order to maintain our gold status of last year, we have set a new goal for this 2009-2010 year. We plan to build an "Outdoor Classroom" for Parliament Oak to be enjoyed by all the school community. Funding for the Outdoor Classroom Project will come from various directions, one of these being the bake sale next week.



## Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher conferences will be held on the evening of December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 3:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. and the afternoon of December 4<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. Conference confirmation forms will be sent home with the report cards on Wednesday. We encourage all parents to meet with the teachers during this time.



## Secondary School Open Houses

Eden.....	January 11th.....	7:00 PM
Governor Simcoe.....	January 13th.....	6:30 PM
Kernhan Park.....	January 11 <sup>th</sup> .....	6:30 PM
Laura Secord.....	January 12th.....	7:00 PM
A.N Meyer.....	January 14 <sup>th</sup> .....	6:30 PM

## Senior Volleyball

Congratulations to the Girls Volleyball team. They came close to winning the match that would have earned them a spot in the tournament. The girls played an outstanding match, beating the Jordan team soundly in the second game.



Unfortunately, the third game was the charm for Jordan and they succeeded in placing a win. (The Jordan team that defeated the Panther team went on to win the tournament.) Mrs. Pyle thanks the ladies for a fun and successful season on the court. The boys team participated in the DSBN tournament last week. They had a great day with many great wins. Unfortunately, they did not qualify for the playoffs. The boys are to be congratulated for their fine efforts this season.

## Junior Volleyball



Congratulations to the girls and boys junior volleyball teams who gained a lot of confidence and skill this season. The wins were few but the teamwork that was displayed on and off the court was wonderful to see. Thanks to Mrs. Andrews and Mrs. Bowron for their wonderful coaching efforts with the

girls and to Mr. Mead for sharing his expertise with the boys. Thank you to Mrs. Pyle for the great refereeing that she did for our home games.

## Snowballs

Snowballs are dangerous and students are reminded of our "Throw No Snow" policy. Students throwing snowballs will receive a letter to parents and further consequences at school. Please remind your children of the dangers of throwing snowballs or playing in ditches and on snow banks as they walk to and from school.

## Kudos to...

- Lila Bata-Walsh and Tiana Dominick who run the Snack Shack every day.
- Scott Robinson, Weston Miller and Jason Gillard for the wonderful job they do setting up for assemblies
- all parents who have volunteered in classrooms, in the library, on out-of-school excursions and with sports.
- All staff who have provided extra-curricular sports, clubs and leadership opportunities for Parliament Oak students in Term 1.
- Crystal Norton who has been a great school photographer
- Multi thanks to Mrs. Godwin for conducting outstanding art classes with students in Grades 2 to 5. The students' "New York City" pastels turned out 'crystal' clear.
- Many thanks to Laura Crocco who has decorated the walls of our school with sparkly Christmas elves.
- Mrs. LaPointe for keeping our library organized and for helping our in our school wherever she is needed.
- Mr. Feuer who is making latkes for the whole school to celebrate the beginning of Hanukkah.



## Winter's Here !

Please... dress children appropriately for the weather and Listen... to the radio stations. They will announce any bus changes and school closings. **Please do not call the school!** Keep our phone lines open!



**Please be aware that arrival after 8:25 a.m.** will ensure supervision of students by staff on the school yard. Arrival prior to 8:25 means students will be alone on the playground. During inclement weather, students will be admitted at 8:25 a.m.

## Parent Council News

Yikes, it's December!

We have had a busy November at Parent Council. We had our first speaker come as part of our Speaker Series this year - Don Gibson from Heart Niagara spoke to us about Heart Health, Risks and Prevention. Thankyou Don, it was a very informative session and much appreciated. Our next speaker will be Briar Kreiger from Balance Fitness, speaking about nutrition and exercise, and doing one of their famous (though smaller scale) grocery tours... this



will be held some time in January.

Movie/Childminding Night saw 26 children out for a night of fun while Mum and Dad had the night off, all while raising funds for Parent Council. Any feedback for future events like this is more than welcome.

Anne Robinson is once again co-ordinating cheerleaders and rock stars for the Christmas Parade on the 12<sup>th</sup> December - thanks Anne! If your child (from grades 4-8) would like to take part but has not yet signed up, please contact the office to do so.

This month we recognized Mrs Andrews and Mrs Ciazynski (who's name I can now spell without looking up!) in our Staff Recognition Program - thanks again to all of you who submitted comments about these valuable people who are a big part of every day life at school. Again we welcome parents, families & other staff to submit comments as well as individual students. In December we are recognizing Mrs. Burton and Mrs. Inglis - remember it is a short month so get those comments in sooner than later.

Thanks to all who have been dropping off bottles for our ongoing bottle drive - every little bit helps.

Have a great December,  
Parliament Oak Parent Council

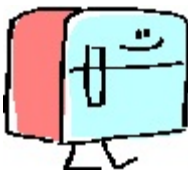
## Indoor Shoes

With winter coming, and students wearing boots, it is important, for safety reasons, that students have indoor shoes to wear at school!



## Refrigerator Needed!

The refrigerator in our staff room is no longer working. Do you have a used fridge that is still in good working condition? Please contact Mrs. Ciazynski if you can help us out.



## Is your child going to be absent?

Please call the school office when your child will be absent. An answering machine is available 24 hours a day.

With winter coming and cold and flu season upon us please review the following guidelines when deciding whether you should send your child to school. Do not send them to school if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

1. A temperature of more than 100 degrees
2. Nausea or vomiting
3. Stomachache
4. Diarrhea
5. Pale or flushed face
6. Persistent cough
7. Headache
8. Earache
9. Thick yellowish discharge from nose
10. Sore throat
11. Rash or infection of the skin
12. Red or pink eyes
13. Loss of energy or decrease in activity

If your child has any of these symptoms when it is time for school, it is best that he/she stay home until they are symptom free for 24 hours.

Practicing regular hand washing and teaching children to "cover their cough" are great ways to prevent the spread of illness.



## Student Led Conferences

This year, some of our teachers (and students) will be piloting Student-Led Conferencing. "It is a process whereby the student assumes the active role in planning, implementing, conducting and evaluating of parent conference."

### Student Benefits:

- Accountability for their learning
- Students learn to evaluate their own progress
- Students gain greater commitment to school work and learning
- Builds self-confidence and self-esteem
- Encourages student/parent communication
- Builds communication and critical thinking skills
- Places responsibility on the student and parent
- Allows students to become actively involved

### Parent Benefits:

- More information given to the parents
- Learn more about their child's learning and skills
- An opportunity to help their student set positive goals
- Active participant in their student's learning

A strong thrust throughout **The Royal Commissions' Report: "The Love of Learning"** is the move toward extensive inclusion of parents in the education of their children. Student-led conferencing is an effective way to engage parents in meaningful involvement in the schools.

Instead of a traditional parent-teacher interview, a student-led conference allows students to sit down with their parent/guardian and share what they are learning at school (with teacher guidance).

The students prepare a portfolio including their best work and sample work that they can improve on. Your child will lead you through a detailed conference "showing off" the portfolio he/she has prepared. It is hoped that through their conferences, students will become more accountable for their daily learning and they will also feel proud of what they have accomplished. A note will come home in a couple of weeks requesting suitable times for you to attend the conference. We look forward to seeing you.

## Big Brothers and Sisters Needs You

Niagara on the Lake is in need of In School Mentor Volunteers to help out children in the local schools. One hour a week is all it takes to make a **BIG** difference. Spend some time with a child playing games, crafts, sports or just hanging out. It is a commitment of one hour per week for the duration of the school year. Visit with the child at their school during school time. Times are flexible.

For more information or to apply today visit our website at [bbbsmentors.ca](http://bbbsmentors.ca) or contact Colleen Walker at 905-646-3230 ext 34.

Start making a difference today!

## Benefits of Snacking

"Even people trying to lose weight benefit from snacking, because snacks enable you to eat less later in the day, when most people tend to over eat." Active people sense hunger every three to four hours; so, if you have lunch at noon, you'll probably start hearing tummy rumblings around 4pm. Eating sugar-laden snacks provides only a temporary fix though, creating a rapid rise and then drop in blood sugar, leaving you worse off than when you started.

Healthy snacks, on the other hand, provide energy-boosting calories and carbohydrates along with fiber, antioxidants and some protein to keep you satisfied longer and your blood sugar stable.

Regularly scheduled, healthy snacks keep you fuelled throughout the day. And be sure to eat before you get too hungry, since you are more likely to over-eat when you are ravenous.

Try these simple, made ahead recipes, and you'll have something ready to grab to tame cravings and boost nutrition and energy throughout your day...

### On the Go Snacks:

- Half of a multi-grain bagel with unsalted almond butter
- Scoop of dry whole grain cereal with added raisins and a handful of nuts
- Cup or two of plain popcorn topped with a pinch of sea salt
- Ryvita or Rice crackers with natural almond or peanut butter and a quarter cup of dried fruit
- Palm full of almonds and one apple cut in slices
- Can of salmon or Tuna with feta stuffed in a whole wheat pita and drizzled with balsamic vinegar
- Two ounces of low fat cheese and cup of berries or grapes
- Half cup of lowfat cottage cheese with banana slices or berries
- Baked sweet potatoe with nonfat Greek yogurt and chives(a healthier take on the classic loaded side)
- Plain yogurt with whole grain granola, flaxseeds, mixed berries and a splash of vanilla
- Veggies and hummus



