

# Parliament Oak News for January 2010

From the Principal's Desk...

*Happy New Year! We hope you had an enjoyable break. As 2010 begins, Parliament Oak staff continues to offer a wide variety of extracurricular opportunities for your children. At the same time, your children do a lot for Parliament Oak through their participation in these activities, as well as volunteering in the office during nutritional breaks, helping out with the snack shack, participating in the Oak Crew, organizing school-wide student parliament events, and handing out milk, to name just a few. As parents, we can certainly encourage them to try something new in 2010, and support their growth toward independence in many different ways.*

## \* Students of the Month

Congratulations to the following students who were selected as "Students of the Month" for their demonstration of improvement over the first term:

JK/SK1 Ciaran McCarthy, Sophie McClure.

JK/SK2 Jac Bateson, Izabel Schiff-Malins, Will Cau

1/2... Sadie Williams,

2/3... Marlow Davis, Maggie Burns

3/4... Leah Parker, Edwin Chu

4/5... Ryanne Adams, Kiara Nestor

6/7... Kate Wilson, Ethan Shulman

7/8... Megan Davies, Jason Gillard

FSL... Gabe Lupia

In January we will focus on the character trait of caring. We are on the look out for students who are honest, trustworthy, and genuine in demonstrating that their actions match their words.

## \* Thank you to our Students for. . .

- ☺ arriving at school on time and being ready to learn
- ☺ using the proper entrances for entry and exit
- ☺ using your student organizer to make sure homework assignments are done on time!
- ☺ being involved in various extracurricular activities
- ☺ having a positive attitude

## \* Thank You to our Parents for. . .

- ☺ calling the school when students will be absent
- ☺ stopping and checking in at the office when visiting the school
- ☺ saying goodbye at the backyard and letting primary children line up on their own
- ☺ using the student organizers to communicate with staff
- ☺ volunteering in many ways to help our students

## \* Additional Thanks...!

Thank you to our wonderful school council co-chairs, Heather Davis and Toby Simmonds. They work tirelessly to support the school's initiatives and to work on behalf of our school community.



Thanks to Laura Dominick for her hard work in organizing and setting up the Eco School Bake Sale with Mrs. Andrews. It was a huge success in helping raise money toward an outdoor classroom.

Thanks to the Gatta family for donating a clothes dryer to Mr. Bissell so he can wash and now dry his cleaning rags.

Thanks to Stone Road Grille for donating their wine bottle return dollars to the school to support the repairs needed on our playground.

Thanks to Mr. & Mrs. Sanders for the great work she did in getting her truck decorated for the NOTL Santa parade.

Mrs. Robinson did a great job leading our cheerleading crew during the Santa Claus Parade..thanks!

Mr. LaPointe crafted a beautiful circulation desk for our library. It looks wonderful.

## An important message about Inclement Weather Procedures...

There may be times during the school year where inclement weather or other situations could cause transportation cancellations or school closures.

Information about transportation changes and school closures will be available on the websites, radio and television stations listed below as soon as it is available.

Please do not phone the school for transportation or school closure information.

### Websites:

[www.dsbm.org](http://www.dsbm.org)

[www.nsts.ca](http://www.nsts.ca)

### Television Stations:

COGECO Cable 10

CHCH Television

City TV

### Radio Stations:

KLite - 102.9 fm

EZRock 105.7 fm

Y-108 - 107.9 fm

Wave 94.7 fm

CKTB 610 am

CHML 900 am

CHSC 1220 am

Htz 97.7 fm

If early dismissal becomes necessary, we will use the emergency numbers you provided on the confidential form which was sent home in September. If your contact numbers have changed, please call the office with your updated information.

## \* Graduation Committee Do you have a child graduating



from Grade 8 this year? We are forming a small committee of staff and parents to begin planning the festivities for our graduates. If you are interested in being a part of the committee please leave your name with Mrs. Ciazynski. We will have our first meeting at the end of January.

## \* Secondary School Open Houses

Once again it is that time of year when our grade 8 students will need to be thinking about next year and the decisions that they will need to make. During January and February, our students will be given information about the high schools they should be considering. St. Catharines area schools open houses are: Laura Secord: January 12th, 7:00-9:00 PM; Governor Simcoe: January 13th, 6:30 - 8:30 PM; Eden, January 11th, 7:00 - 9:00 PM, and Kernahan Park, January 11th, 6:30 - 8:00 PM. A.N. Myer will also hold their open house on January 14th at 6:30 p.m. Parents and students are encouraged to take advantage of the open houses. Parliament Oak staff is available to assist students and parents in making the right choices for next year.



## \*Thank you. . .

To all who supported our community through the donation of Canadian Tire money (\$100.00) for Christmas Gifts. Well done!

## \*Eco Club

Many, many thank yous to all who supported our bake sale, from bakers to buyers. We made \$631.00 for our ECO teams' outdoor classroom.

# KINDERGARTEN COUNTDOWN

[www.dsbnsb.org](http://www.dsbnsb.org)

Going to school for the first time is a major step for children and their parents. At the DSBN, families start that journey together at the 'Kindergarten Countdown' open houses. Families can visit our school, meet the kindergarten teacher, and receive a gift bag filled with fun learning resources and information that will help children develop school readiness skills.

Mark your calendar for Thursday, February 4, 2010 from 4-6 p.m. for our Kindergarten Countdown open house. Visit [www.dsbnsb.org](http://www.dsbnsb.org) for more information.

## \* School Council Update

December seems so long ago, it's hard to remember what happened. Mark your calendars for our next Speaker Series Night... to help anyone who set better eating and more exercise as a New Year's resolution, Briar Kreiger - parent and co-owner of Balance Fitness Studio - will be speaking to us about Nutrition and taking us on a Grocery Tour.

Thanks to those of you who filled out our survey. In case you are wondering about the renovations to our school and the possibility of their being stalled, we were informed very shortly after the survey went out that the renovations WILL NOT be put on hold for any reason, they are slated to go ahead in the spring as originally planned.

CALLING ALL FAMILIES... please take a moment to think about the teachers we are recognizing in our Teacher Recognition Program this month - Mrs Berezcky and Mr Mead - and drop a comment off in the box at the office. We always read out a few at our assembly and the teachers get all of the comments to read, so the more the merrier.

If you are looking for an easy way to get rid of (all) those bottles from the LCBO from the holidays, think about dropping them off at school for our ONGOING BOTTLE DRIVE, to raise funds for the council.

Our next meeting is TUESDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, and all are welcome. Enjoy this snow and remember to drive with extra caution, you never know when a little one might come running out from behind that snow bank.



## \* Where Do Your Fundraising \$ Go?

This year the school has made several purchases from the monies raised through our QSP and Acorn Card fundraising campaigns. We have purchased an LCD projector to support our technology program, a new school camera, books for the library to support our boys reading program and our Silver Birch Book Club. We have also added several pieces of equipment to the recess recreation bags that each classroom has. Additional funds have been spent on the purchase of several board games to support our noon hour Games Club.



## \*Congratulations to the following:

The following students were award winners in the *Royal Canadian Legion Annual Literary and Poster Remembrance Contest*:

*Poems:* Rachel Bannerman

*Prose Essay:* Rachel Bannerman

*Black & White Poster (Jr.):* Lauren Cain, Victoria Beale and Cynthia Burrow

*Colour Poster (Int.):* Lavinia Chu, Sarah Hancock

*Black & White Poster (Int.):* Malcolm Harper

## \* Silver Birch Club begins in January!

"Oh the weather outside is frightful, but in the library it's so delightful!" Some of the best new books available in Canada have arrived in the Parliament Oak library for students who wish to participate in Silver Birch Book Club. Students in grades 4-6 will have the opportunity to join thousands of kids from across Ontario in the 2009 Silver Birch programs. Students who participate in these programs will be given the opportunities to read great new books, and register their votes with the Ontario Library Association. These awards are considered especially prestigious because this truly is a children's choice award. Students who participate in the book club will participate during lunch hour book club meetings as they read this exciting collection of books. As an added bonus, Silver Birch Club members will have the opportunity to attend the DSBN Silver Birch Celebration in May. Students who wish to join the book club can pick up their permission forms at the library during the first week of school in January. Books can be read at home as well as at school. Book clubs are the perfect choice for book lovers at Parliament Oak.



## \* Rug Alert!

A special recognition goes to the group of women who helped give the library a mini face-lift. Thank you to Mrs. Lapointe, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Tait and Mrs. Simmonds for helping in rejuvenating Parliament Oak's Library. We are getting closer and closer in making the space inviting, attractive and more user-friendly to students and staff. To create the cozy feel to our library we are looking for a gently used or new (for those really generous folk out there) rug to be used for story-time in the library. Please contact Mrs. Hamdani for further inquiries.



## \* Calling All Volunteers

"Anything that teachers believe they can accomplish alone, they can do better in collaboration with parents." (Trehearn, 2000) Parliament Oak is searching for dedicated parents and community members to join the PIA (Parents In Action) team. These individuals will be invited to share their knowledge and skills in supporting classroom and school activities. Having volunteers in our school benefits all parties including teachers, parents, and most importantly students. Research has consistently shown that volunteers can offer much-needed

support and practice for striving learners. Family involvement improves students' attitudes toward learning, their self-esteem, and their level of achievement. Successful home-school partnerships help parents to become engaged with their child's learning as well as building parent's confidence in learning effective strategies to help children succeed.

All it would require is to commit to an hour, once a week and scheduling will be flexible to meet your individual needs. A PIA meeting will be held in the first week back to school to indicate your interest in the area you would like to offer support in as well as what days you would be available. A reminder that as volunteers, we respect issues surrounding confidentiality to honour the privacy of our students. If you are interested in becoming an influential role model in our school community please send an email to:

[zakia.hamdani@dsbn.edu.on.ca](mailto:zakia.hamdani@dsbn.edu.on.ca)

### \* Pizza Days

Pizza Day is every other Thursday. We offer veggie and pepperoni pizza for \$1.00 per slice.



### \* Cold Weather Alerts at the DSBN

Winter is a time of wonder for many children; many enjoy the crisp air, the freshly fallen snow and participating in a whole host of exciting winter sports and activities.

Although we feel it is important for students to spend some time outside each day exercising and socializing with their peers, there are times when bitterly cold temperatures and other inclement weather conditions require that we keep children inside.

Because Niagara is such a large geographical area, and weather conditions may vary from one municipality to the next, the decision whether or not to hold recess outdoors is made by the individual school principal. When making this decision, principals will often consult with neighbouring schools, talk with parents as they arrive in the morning, and if the decision to send children outside is made, will equip yard duty staff with walkie-talkies so that they can communicate with the office to sound the bells to bring students in earlier.

The health and well-being of our students are a top priority at the District School Board of Niagara, and if it is determined that the weather conditions pose a risk to their safety, students will be kept indoors. Extreme cold weather alerts issued by the Niagara Region are often good indicators that students will stay inside.

Even when temperatures are not low enough to necessitate an indoor recess, it still may be quite cold outside. Here are a few tips to help ensure that your child stays warm during the cold winter months.

- Try to send children to school with plenty of layers, such as long underwear, sweatshirts, sweaters and pullovers. Layering their clothing will allow them to add or remove items depending on the weather.

- Students should have a warm winter coat that repels the snow, sleet and rain, while blocking the wind.

- Warm socks and boots will keep their feet warm and dry in the snow and slush.

- Hats are one of the most important parts of dressing warmly in the winter. A thick winter hat will keep students from losing too much of that essential body heat.



- Put on a good pair of gloves or mittens that are water-resistant as well. Gloves will keep kids' hands toasty warm and protect their skin from becoming damaged by the wind and chill.

If you have any questions about our inclement weather procedures, please visit our website [dsbn.org](http://dsbn.org), or contact the principal.

### \* Winter Safety

Please review the following playground rules with your children to ensure their safety:

- \* Throw no snow. Leave it on the ground!
- \* No tag or running on the playground equipment. Slide down one at a time, only.
- \* Keep all loose clothing tucked in.
- \* Eat snacks on the tarmac near the recycling and garbage cans, not on the equipment or further out in the yard.
- \* No body contact, hands off, safe play.



If there are icy conditions, the playground equipment may be out-of-bounds.

With the colder weather, students should not arrive at school before 8:25 in the morning. Since darkness comes early on these short, winter days, students should walk with others to and from school, especially those who remain after school for extra curricular activities. Students who are not accompanied by a parent should go directly home without stopping to play on the equipment or in the yard. There is no direct teacher supervision at this time and students should report home immediately after dismissal.

### \* Mary's Story



Mary had a little cold, but wouldn't stay at home. And everywhere that Mary went, the cold was sure to roam; It wandered into Mary's eyes and filled them full of tears. It jumped from there to

Bobby's nose and then to Jimmy's ears. It painted Anna's throat bright red, and swelled poor Jenny's head. Dora had a fever, and a cough put Jack to bed. The moral of this little tale is very quickly said .... Mary could have saved a lot of pain; with just one day in bed!

### \* Heart Healthy News

On the cold snowy days when children can't be outdoors finding fun activities can be somewhat difficult. Here are some ideas to keep the kids entertained:



**Go Skating:** Using two pieces of 8 1/2" x 11" paper, one for under each foot, stride forward and

backward on a large carpeted or tiled area, as if you were skating. Have family skating races, create a skating circuit to follow, or make up a routine.

**Tobogganing:** Sit close together as if you are riding a toboggan. Put your legs around the person in front of you. Move all together by pushing with the hands. When the team gets to the turning points, all jump up and run back to the finish line. **Hot Ball:** Divide into 2 teams with each team having its own side of the room. Using lightweight balls, bean bags or recycled pieces of paper scrunched into balls, throw the balls over to the other team's side in a set period of time. The object is to have as many balls as possible in the other team's area at the end of a set amount of time. The game can be played in three-minute quarters. Four quarters constitute a game.

**Mirror, Mirror on the Wall:** Copy or mirror movements made by another person -- stretching tall, tucking into a ball, making your body into wide shapes, etc.)

**Read a Story with Actions:** Have kids pretend to be characters in a book and move to the story. Act out songs, stories, and poetry ("Danny O'Dare" from *Falling Up* by Shel Silverstein, 1977).



