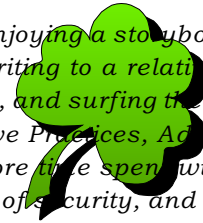


Parliament Oak News for March 2010

From the Principal's Desk...

Family Literacy refers to the many ways families develop and use literacy skills, from enjoying a storybook together at bedtime and during the day, to playing with word games, singing, writing to a relative or friend, sharing day-to-day tasks such as making a shopping list or using a recipe, and surfing the Internet for fun and interesting sites. (Family Literacy in Canada: Profiles of Effective Practices, Anne Thomas, Soleil Publishing Inc., 1998). It has been proven that for a child, the more time spent with a parent reading aloud increases his or her level of attachment, enhances a sense of security, and imparts the knowledge that their parent feels they are worthwhile people with whom to spend time. We encourage all parents to read with their child(ren) whether they are 4 years old or 14. Develop a routine of spending 15 minutes before bedtime reading to each other. Please join us at our book fair this month. Nothing inspires children to read more than a shiny new book! For more great reading ideas, please see our latest issue of The Reading Connection and keep reading!



March Break

There will be no classes for students from Monday, March 15th to Friday March 19th. Classes will resume at 8:40 A.M. on Monday, March 22, 2010. We hope that students and staff will take this opportunity to relax and return refreshed for the final school term.

Students of the Month

Congratulations to our students who demonstrated optimism this month:

JK/SK1 Dawson King, Rachel Aitken

JK/SK2 Eleanor Guy, Sophie Hawthorne

1 / 2. Alice Woods, Lucas Michlik

2 / 3. Aaliah Bint Sadoon, Alex Aitken

3 / 4. Alice Woods, Ben Simmonds

4 / 5. Hannah Schaaf, Nicole Aitken

6 / 7. Rachel Bannerman, Katarina Martins

7 / 8. Mark Klassen, Scott Robinson

The character trait we will focus on for the month of March will be perseverance. Students demonstrate the effort and determination to complete a task to the best of their ability and to stick to that task even when it is difficult.

Report Cards

Term 2 reports will go home on March 26.

Please review your child's report together to recognize where progress has been made and areas that need more attention.

Please sign and return page 3 of the report.

Teachers will arrange some interviews. Parents are also encouraged to contact teachers as needed.

Please continue to monitor your child's organizer to help them to plan to use time wisely to complete homework assignments or study for tests.



Kindergarten Enrolment

We are still accepting Junior and Senior Kindergarten registrations for September 2010. If you have a child who will be four or five years of age on or before December 31, 2010, please call the

school. To register a student, you will need the child's birth certificate, immunization record and health card number. If you know a neighbour or friend in our school area with a child who may attend Kindergarten, please ask them to call the school.

News from the Library

Reading has a huge impact on student success in school. Reading aloud to our children and encouraging them to read makes a real difference in their lives. It impacts thinking skills, grammar, vocabulary and introduces students to interesting characters, settings and adventures. In April we will be hosting a Young Author's Day at Parliament Oak. We are pleased to welcome authors Brian Cretney and Mike Wade to our school that day to speak to our students. Further details will be sent home after the March Break.

Parliament Oak Silver Birch Book Club

More than 10 Parliament Oak students have joined the 2010 Silver Birch Book Clubs. We are reading a variety of excellent non-fiction and fiction books written by Canadian authors and selected by the Ontario Library Association. In late April students will join thousands of kids from across Ontario in voting for their favourite books. Only students are eligible to vote for the Silver Birch Awards, making this truly a children's choice award for best new Canadian literature. Students in the Silver Birch Club will have the opportunity to attend the DSBN Silver Birch Celebration of Literacy Student Conference.

Technology Challenges

On February 23rd, Emily D., Varun M., Rachel B. and Christoffer H. traveled to Brock University to compete in the DSBN Tech Challenge. The group worked well and programmed their Lego Robot to compete in round two of their Olympic themed competition. We are very proud of the team, who's

effort placed them in the top 10 teams in the DSBN. All of the students did a great job, represented Parliament Oak well and showed why Parliament Oak is a great place to learn.

☼ **Royal Canadian Legion Art Winners**

Congratulations to Lauren Cain and Lavinia Chu whose art entries won awards at the provincial level. The girls each received a certificate and monetary award.

☼ **Peregrine Falcon Adoption**

Due to the collection of donations from our Peregrine Foundation visit, we have received an adoption certificate for "Nova", the young falcon who entertained and educated our students. We will display the certificate in the front hall by the office for everyone to see.

☼ **From Your School Council**

February has been busy, as expected. Movie & Childminding night was a success again, with 39 children attending this time. Pasta dinner has been planned and will have come and gone by the time you read this. We sold doughnuts at the last skating day, with a twist... we sold them at the school after the students returned from the rink, thus removing the sweet-distraction and allowing them to focus on having fun skating instead of eating doughnuts during the ice time. We think this was a successful change.

Now comes the fun part... we have a new fundraising team that has put the wheels in motion for what will be our big fundraiser of the year: "The Totally Radical, Hip '80's Party"! There will be music, food, drink, and a silent auction. The date is Saturday 1st May, 2010. Funds raised will go toward necessary playground repairs and possibly the addition of a few benches around the school yard. This will be an adults only event so don't forget to book your sitter early.

The March Staff Recognition program is recognizing Mr Pawlick and Miss Kostaskey. (All grade 7/8's, parent council specifically asks for your contributions for these teachers as you are the only students ever to have them as teachers!, thanks).

Enjoy the break in March!

☼ **A Great Learning Tool**

We want to share some great news with you about our **Premier AT Home** website where you can download reading, writing and study tools that can be used on your **home** computers. This program is sponsored by our school in conjunction with Premier Literacy. If you haven't already used the site, you'll want to take advantage of the free literacy tool downloads from www.premierathome.com. You can download software, documentation and support videos using the following login information.

Username: dsbon

Password: enable

Please note the following: The login page is customized specifically for our School Board. The interface and graphics make the site user-friendly.

- A Getting Started page will help you determine which tools might be best for you.
- A detailed description of each tool is right on the site so you don't have to look anywhere else.
- Additional support options like online video tutorials, online product manuals and email and phone contact information for Technical Support and Customer Service. A QuickStart Guide can be obtained through the office. Send us a note, and we'll send one home with your son/daughter! The guide shows you the interface features and functions, a list of all the available tools and steps on how to download the software for your computer. Don't forget that these tools will work on Windows XP and Vista operating systems. (Older Windows operating systems are not supported.) We're excited about this technology and hope that you'll make use of the great tools that can benefit you at school and at home.

☼ **Staff Appreciation Week**

Please say thank you to your child's teacher during the week of Monday, March 1 - Friday, March 5. Mrs. Hadfield will be showing her gratitude to the staff through numerous activities during the week as well.

☼ **Parking Concerns**

Parking in our parking lot continues to be a problem, especially at dismissal times. Please park so that you are not blocking the flow of traffic through the parking lot. With the better spring weather, we would encourage walking to and from school instead!



☼ **Learners in Action at the DSBN Road Race**

Come on Parliament Oak it's time to lace up those running shoes and get your feet moving once again for the DSBN Road Race. You can walk or run a 1Km or 5Km race on Sunday, April 25th, 2010. You can get a form from your teacher or from the office. The cost is \$10 per race entry under 20, \$20 for adults. A DSBN Road Race t-shirt is given to all runners who register before April 8th. Please return all forms and cheques to Mrs. Hadfield by April 2nd if you want to receive a t-shirt.



☼ **Winners Day Camp ~ March Break 2010**

Winners Day Camps will be offering camps this March Break & Summer to all children ages 3 - 12. March Break Camp runs from March 15 - 19, 2010 and the Summer Camp runs from July 5 - August 27, 2010. Winners Day Camps is located at the Kinsmen Scout Hall, 430 King Street, and all sessions are

still open. Children can register on a daily or weekly basis. Full day and half day camps available. Winners' is back with an experienced staff of certified school teachers and campers will participate in cooperative games, sports including floor hockey & soccer, arts & crafts, drama, water fun, musical experiences, special events and so much more!

All sessions are still open so please call or email to register and be sure to check out our website for weekly themes and further information:

winnersdaycamps.ca Call Jennifer Caughill: (905) 468-9408 We hope to see you!

☼ **Niagara Flag Rugby League**

Last Spring and Summer a number of children from Parliament Oak Elementary School participated in practices and tournaments for the Niagara Flag Rugby League (Niagara on the Lake team) As members of the Niagara on the Lake (Grape) Crushers, Olivia and Marlow Davis, Alex Gibson, Tait and Jessica Robinson, Rory Hellwig, Sean Papadimitriou, and others competed against teams in Grimsby, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, and Port Colborne. Niagara Flag Rugby is offering a similar dynamic and fun sports opportunity for Niagara on the Lake girls and boys grades 2 - 8. Parliament Oak parents will be happy to know that the \$60.00 cost for this 16 week activity covers games, practices, insurance, and a Niagara on the Lake Flag Rugby Jersey. Parents can register in person at NDSS on April 8 from 7 to 8 pm in the front foyer or visit the website www.niagaraflagrugby.com. Flag Rugby is a safe blend of individual and team strategy combined with physical development within a culture of sportsmanship, making it welcoming to all children. Participants are organized according to age divisions and coached by experienced local athletes.

☼ **March is Nutrition Month! - Let's Eat Well Together**

When parents and children eat together, they are more likely to eat healthy, balanced meals. They eat more vegetables and fruit and less fried food, and drink less pop. When children see their parents eat healthy, they will also eat healthy and develop healthy eating habits. Healthy eating habits can help reduce the risk of children developing chronic diseases such as heart disease, some types of cancer and obesity.

Whether it's breakfast, lunch or dinner, eat meals together as often as possible.

Family mealtime

1. Aim to eat at least 4 meals together each week. If you do more that's great!
2. Keep the conversation positive. Turn off the TV and radio. Return phone calls later.
3. Plan easy meals for the entire week. Get the whole family involved in making a menu for each day.
4. Involve your children in making a grocery list and doing the shopping.
5. Let the whole family help out with getting supper on the table. Younger children can set the

table and older children can help cook.

6. Respect each person's right to decide how much to eat. Like adults, children should decide for themselves how much food to eat. This amount will vary during childhood as they go through growth spurts and activity levels change.

Visit www.dietitians.ca for more healthy eating tips.

☼ **Communication Matters**

Idioms: "Don't miss the boat!"

Smart Talk from your Board Speech-Language Pathologists

Idioms are a type of figurative language. They are expressions that mean something other than the literal meaning of the words used. For example, the title of this article contains an idiom: '*don't miss the boat*'. What the expression really means is 'don't miss the opportunity'; it has nothing to do with 'a boat'. Idioms can make up approximately two-thirds of the English language*. Without comprehension skills for figurative language, especially idioms, children can be confused and miss out on conversations. Direct instruction is the best way to teach many idioms. When you hear or see an idiom, explain its intended meaning. The following are several examples of idioms and their nonliteral interpretations:

- a piece of cake: very easy, as in:
Doing this lesson will be *a piece of cake*.
- put on your thinking cap: to think seriously about something, as in:
You will need to *put on your thinking cap* to solve the problem.
- give me a break: 'give me another chance', or 'I don't believe you' as in:
I was only late once so *give me a break*.
You say a dog ate your homework? *Give me a break!*

You can find many more examples of idioms by listening to conversations, watching television, reading books, etc. Different cultures use different idioms. No matter what the culture, however, understanding idioms can improve a child's understanding and usage of spoken language, reading comprehension, and/or written expression.

*Adapted from *Idioms: As Easy as ABC* by K.

Stuckey and Julie Daymut, 2009

(www.superduperinc.com)

Please note: Our February Student of the Month Assembly and Winter Olympic Day has been rescheduled for Friday, March 5. Students are asked to dress appropriately for the weather that day as our activities are all outdoors.

