



## **Weekend Update: Friday, January 31, 2025**

We have had a great week to end the month of January. Our Junior Boys Indoor soccer team had to change their plans on Wednesday morning with the postponement of their tournament due to the weather and canceled buses in some areas in the region of Peel, but our Junior Girls had their tournament the following day as planned and had a wonderful day advancing to the playoffs, unfortunately losing a heartbreaker in the quarterfinals. The girls looked great sporting our new Mercy Magic Jerseys, a big “Thank You” to our amazing Catholic School Council for funding the purchase of the new jerseys; our students are thrilled with them! They will get a lot more use next week as well as our three remaining soccer teams all have their tournaments in Brampton.

We are also excited to share that our Grad hoodies came in today for all those Grade 8 students who purchased them. We immediately had students put them on and got a fantastic picture of the Class of '25. As Term two approaches, we will be getting into full swing with Graduation activities and our Grad photos will kick that off on March 18<sup>th</sup>. More information will come closer to the date regarding what students need to have and prepare, but at least you can save the date. You can also save the date for our Graduation Ceremony at Millenium Gardens on Wednesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>.

Throughout the past few weeks, we have been taking more time to meaningfully, and with intention, support transitions through breathing exercises. These “brain breaks” are backed by research and are intended to help everyone in our community move from a period of unstructured time back to instructional time with a sense of calm and balance. Classes are taking the time for Brain Breaks throughout the school day, and several days a week we are participating in them together as a school. Many of our students have shared with me how much they are enjoying the brain breaks each day.

As we look ahead to next week and the month of February, we will focus on “Self-Love” through our Well-Being initiatives and led by our Well-Being Leaders. We will shift from the virtue of Self-Control to the Virtue of Respect which ties so beautifully with all the learning we will do as part of Black History Month. I encourage you to ask your children about the read-alouds, virtual workshops, and presentations that students will experience as we uplift Black Voices and Black Joy with a strong focus on HOPE (as linked to the Catholic Education Week theme). We also look forward to sharing the Term One report cards, which will once again be delivered digitally to student emails and opening our doors for parents to come and connect with teachers during Parent-Teacher Interviews.

Have a wonderful weekend!

*Leslie Marchand*

### **February's Virtue of the Month: Respect**

*For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a servant to all, so that I might win more of them. (1 Cor. 9:19)*

God wants us to treat all people with the respect they deserve.



#### **Staff Directory:**

Leslie Marchand	Principal
Serita Pereira	Head Secretary
Jennifer Cahill	FDK Teacher
Hui Zhang	DECE (LTO)
Heather Maxwell	Grade 1/2 Teacher
Caroline Loiacono	Grade 1/2 Teacher
Cindy Nguyen	Grade 3/4 Teacher (LTO)
Trish Fang	Grade 4/5 Teacher
David MacSporran	Grade 5/6 French Immersion Teacher (LTO)
Colleen Dougherty	Grade 6/7 French Immersion Teacher
Trish Duivesteyn	Grade 6/7 Teacher
Madeleine Hinterhoeller	Grade 7/8 French Immersion Teacher
John Galbraith	Grade 7/8 Teacher
Sara Petrucci	SERC Teacher/ESL/SERT/Planning Time
Elaine Romaniuk	Sanctuary Program Teacher
Filomena Pandullo	Special Education Teacher/Planning Time
Lyla Colavecchia	Core French/ Planning Time Teacher (M, T, Th, F)
Paola D'Agostino	Teacher Librarian/Planning Time
Asmaa Ezzo Daher	Education Resource Worker
Sylvia Caruso	Education Resource Worker (Sanctuary)
Kellie Donaher	CYW
Jamie Brassard	CYW Sanctuary Program
Gillian Grant	Social Worker
Margaret Russ	MHSW (Sanctuary)
Jason Kotsopoulos	School Psychologist
Cheryl Suh	Speech and Language Pathologist
Tony DiRenzo	Head Custodian
Rose DiCerbo	Night Custodian
Luigi Aquino	Night Custodian

#### **February Cookies:**



Thank you to everyone who purchased cookies for the month of February! We look forward to beginning our weekly delivery of the heart cookies on Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **TD Grade 1 Book Giveaway**

The TD Annual Book Giveaway is a fully funded program by TD Bank Group that provides over 500,000 books to Grade 1 children across Canada. This year all grade 1 students are receiving a copy of *Violet Shrink*, written by Christine Baldacchino and illustrated by Carmen Mok. This book is the story of a young girl who navigates social anxiety and works with her father to find a solution. The text demonstrates the role imagination often plays for children dealing with anxiety, and the power of a child expressing their feelings to an adult who is there to listen. Books were distributed to all our grade 1 students on Friday.

### **Grade 6 to 8 Trips: February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Thursday, February 6, 2025, is going to be a very busy day for all our Grade 6-8 students. The Intermediate Girls Indoor Soccer team will be competing in their tournament in Brampton and a group of our “Girls Who Game” students will be making their way to Microsoft for the day. The remainder of students in Grades 6 through 8 will have their lunch early as they head to the Rose Theatre for the *Mighty Remix* in the afternoon. Parents are asked to ensure that you go to SchoolCash online to pay for the trip as well as complete the permission forms that were sent home previously. Please note that this presentation is part of our programming, and the expectation would be that all students not on the Soccer team or going to Microsoft should be prepared to attend the presentation. As always, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the school.

### **Empowering the Next Generation of Coders: Go CODE Girl Event at the University of Guelph!**

Exciting news for students in Grades 7-10! The highly anticipated Go CODE Girl event is back and will take place on Saturday, February 8, 2025, at the University of Guelph campus. This free learning opportunity is open to girls across Ontario, offering an inspiring introduction to the world of coding, software development, and career opportunities in computing and engineering.

- Date: Saturday, February 8, 2025
- Location: University of Guelph Campus – Thornbrough Building
- Time: Two sessions (morning and afternoon) to accommodate high demand

No prior programming experience is necessary—this event welcomes beginners and aims to make coding accessible and enjoyable for all. For more information on Go CODE Girl at the University of Guelph, please contact Jean Hein at [jhein@uoguelph.ca](mailto:jhein@uoguelph.ca).

### **Term One Report Card Distribution and Parent-Teacher Interviews:**

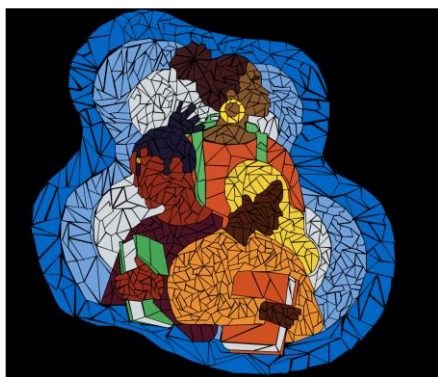


Term One report cards will be distributed electronically to student emails on Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. We will ensure that all students know how to log into their school email accounts. Parent-Teacher interviews will take place on Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup> in the evening, and Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup> during the PD Day. Information regarding utilizing the online booking system for interviews will be sent to all families at the beginning of February.

### **Eco Club Spirit Week: February 3 to 7**

During the first week of February, our Eco Club is bringing us a fun and fresh, Winter Eco Week! Students are encouraged to wear Blue and Green in honour of our beautiful planet on Monday, and wear sweaters on Thursday. All classes will have opportunities to get outside for some extra fresh air (weather permitting) and students are encouraged to pick a day to walk to school one day that week, for those who are close enough to do so.

### **Black History Month:**



Throughout the month of February, our school will be engaged in activities, workshops, and reflections to honour Black History Month. This year's theme is "Black History 365: A look back, A look within, A look ahead" with specific emphasis on hope in alignment with our Catholic Education Week Theme, Pilgrims of Hope. Each class will present an individual to the school during morning announcements throughout the month highlighting their accomplishments as well as how they bring hope to their lives, and the lives of others in the community. Along with morning announcements, students will have activities in their classes and opportunities to participate in webinars, virtual workshops and the Grade 6-8 trip to the Rose Theatre.

### **Inclement Weather:**

As a reminder, weather that could cause cancellations and/or closures is now upon us. Should there be bus or school cancellations reported in the morning, Our Lady of Mercy School is located in Zone 1 for Dufferin-Peel Catholic DSB. Bus cancellations affect only a small handful of our students, as the majority of students do not depend on transportation for daily school attendance. If buses are canceled, the school is open. If schools are closed, all students are to stay home and access "Snow Day" work in their Google classrooms. These are tasks that will allow for review and consolidation. There will be no virtual learning for the day.

### **Weekly Lunches**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
No special Lunches.	<b>Subway</b> Order from Lunchbox on SchoolCash by previous Sunday @ noon.	<b>Lunchlady</b> Order from the lunchlady website, 48 hours in advance.	<b>Panago Pizza</b> Order forms are out now, due Thurs. Sept. 26 <sup>th</sup> . Payment on Schoolcash.	<b>Harvey's</b> Order from Lunchbox on SchoolCash by previous Sunday @ noon.

Our lunch offerings are always optional and meant to ease the pressures of daily lunch making for families and our students do enjoy their special lunches as well! The school does get a share of commission from these items to support extra activities and materials in our school.

### **Reporting Student Absences**

Student absences should be reported by parents/guardians for each student in our school through the Safe Arrival system in School Messenger. There are three ways to access the program:

Web: [www.go.schoolmessenger.ca](http://www.go.schoolmessenger.ca) App: SchoolMessenger Phone: 1-844-435-3440 (toll free)

Student absences not reported will trigger phone calls to confirm the absence each morning. If you need assistance, please contact the school.

### **EQAO Math Night for Parents and Guardians**

EQAO staff are hosting free LIVE webinars for parents and guardians.

Staff will discuss math questions that Ontario students encounter when they participate in Ontario's large-scale assessments in Grades 3, 6 and 9. During the webinar, EQAO staff will show how these math questions help assess the skills students are learning in their math classes. Staff will also share valuable insights from the past three years of assessment results, which can help parents and guardians support their children's math learning.

**Webinar Registration Link:** [Tuesday, February 18, 2025](#) 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

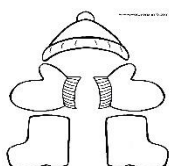
### **Water Bottles:**

As we are a Platinum Eco School, we remind students to bring a reusable water bottle to school each day. We have water-filling stations for their bottles to be refilled but we do not have any disposable cups for students to fill.

### **Reporting Student Injury:**

When students get hurt and come to the Office for care, we look at their injury and provide first aid treatment as appropriate. Sometimes, students are just looking for some "magic ice" and a visit in the Office and then go on their way. When students hit their head, or require more significant treatment, you will receive a call from the school to inform you of the injury. This may come from the Office, or the classroom teacher.

### **Dress for the Weather:**



Please be mindful of the weather conditions and dress children appropriately. Students need to have warmer items to play outside comfortably, such as hats, gloves, and warm jackets. **Students are all expected to have indoor shoes at school**, as wet and soiled boots and shoes will remain in the hallways to keep the classrooms clean!

### **School Day and Kiss and Ride:**

Our school day commences at 8:45. Students will be able to enter the school as of 8:30 each morning and will be asked to make their way to their classroom. All students (other than FDK) are asked to enter the school through the side door closest to the driveway entrance of our school.

Parents who are driving are asked to drive their children up to the front of the school so staff supervising the Kiss and Ride are present to assist children exiting cars and making their way to the sidewalk.



**Please avoid pulling over to drop children off at the entrance to the parking lot, as this significantly backs up traffic.** If you wish to park and walk your children to their entrance, you are welcome to do so.

Students are dismissed at 3:15. Primary students are to be picked up on the school grounds so teachers can ensure they have been safely met. All students being picked up by car are asked to walk around to the front of the school to line up on the sidewalk and wait for their ride. All our Kindergarten students are to be dropped off and picked up at their gate at the front of the school.

### Student Lunches:



Please make sure your children come to school with their lunch. Our intermediate students (**grade 7 and 8 only**) may bring a note to sign-out for lunch. Please ensure the note is dated with the appropriate date. Students can then go out to eat but are asked **not to bring food or drinks back to school**. Students will not be able to go back to their class until the bell rings again at 12:56 to signal the start of our afternoon classes. Students will not be permitted to call home to ask for permission, please have this arranged in advance.

### Students Signing Out for Lunch:

**ONLY students in Grades 7 and 8 are permitted to leave the property for lunch.** EACH time your child wants to go out for lunch in the community, parents are required to provide a note, dated, and signed, for that specific day. We thank you for supporting your children in making these plans in advance.

### Allergens:

Please make sure you are sending your children to school each day with lunches that are free from allergens including **Nuts, Tree nuts, Pumpkin, and Seafood**. We have many children in our school who have serious allergies to these allergens, some of whom are airborne allergies. We thank you in advance for your attention to this as you pack lunches.

### Non-Essential Items at School



Just as a reminder, we ask that students refrain from bringing non-essential items to school like toys, and trading cards. Students may want to share some of their special items, but we'd hate to see these favourites get lost. These items are a distraction from learning and can also create conflict between students if they go missing. I thank you all for supporting this from home.

### Cellphone Communication

This is just a reminder that cell phone communication is not permitted during the school day. If you need to connect with your children, please contact the school and we will support you in connecting with them. Students bringing phones to school are expected to leave them in their backpacks on silent or turned off. Smart watches should also be set to school mode.

We also remind parents and students that taking pictures, and recording videos of students or teachers during the school day is prohibited, ESPECIALLY when there is no consent.

### Catholic School Council

The next Catholic School Council meeting will be held on Monday, February 3, 2025 @ 6:00 PM. The agenda and link for those who wish to join virtually will be sent out closer to the date. If you have items for consideration for the Agenda, please reach out to the school. Approved minutes can be found on our school website: [www.dpcdsb.org/olmcy](http://www.dpcdsb.org/olmcy) .



## **Merciful Redeemer Parish**

Please check out the Merciful Redeemer website at [www.mercifulredeemer.org](http://www.mercifulredeemer.org) for the latest bulletin and other events happening at the Parish.

### **Self-Identification Option for Indigenous Families:**

If you are First Nation (Status Indian or Non-Status Indian), Métis and/or Inuit you can self-identify as Indigenous. You do not need to produce any documentation or proof of ancestry. Self-identification is voluntary and confidential. "This has been really important for us because of the sense of community and the connection to other Indigenous families." ~ Melanie Cormier, parent.

Self-identification will provide access to culture and language programs and monthly programming for students and families. Relevant information will be sent directly to you about upcoming cultural events and opportunities which help to build community and a sense of Indigenous pride in Dufferin-Peel.

To learn more about opportunities for Indigenous students and families please visit:

<https://www3.dpcdsb.org/students/indigenous-self-identification>

### **Final thoughts:**



January has been a long month. I am sure that many of you have seen the same images and memes on social media as I have highlighting just how long it has felt. We have all been getting back into our routines after the hectic pace of the Christmas season and many have been dealing with colds, flus, and other viruses that have spread through homes. I invite all of us to take a deep breath as we prepare to welcome February.

### ***A prayer for Black History Month***

*God of grace and spirit of abundance, we remember those stories that are all around us, but so often passed over, those stories that speak of real culture and identity. This month is Black History Month. Help us to realize that Black History is a part of all our journeys.*

*May the day come when the story of these journeys are so wildly taught. We know this comes if we work together, we stand tall, we lift our voices and we take up space. May we celebrate those who have thrived and remember to serve those who are marginalized. May we celebrate the rich journey and heritage of many – past, present and future.*

*There are so many beautiful stories of journeys needing to be told. Let us hear them. Widen our vision so that the journeys that are shared this month, and every month, come to be known as our journeys too. It is in this that we learn that we are most human when we see the humanity in others.*

*We are many, We are one.*

*Amen*



## **Upcoming Events:**

Please click on the following link to access the [2024-2025 School Year Calendar](#).

### **Monday, February 3, 2025**

**Wear Green and Blue in honour of Mother Earth!**

Jr Boys Soccer Tournament Rescheduled  
BHM Read Aloud (Cahill, Maxwell, Nguyen)  
Catholic School Council @ 6:00

### **Wednesday, February 5, 2025**

Intermediate Boys Soccer Tournament (indoor)  
"Equalize It" Virtual Math Workshop  
(Dougherty)

### **Thursday, February 6, 2025**

**Sweater Day!**

Intermediate Girls Soccer Tournament (indoor)  
"Girls Who Game" Trip to Microsoft  
Grade 6-8 Trip to the Rose Theatre

### **Monday, February 10, 2025**

Junior Boys Basketball Tournament @ OLMCY

### **Tuesday, February 11, 2025**

Report Card Distribution (electronic delivery)  
BHM Read Aloud (Maxwell, Nguyen)

### **Wednesday, February 12, 2025**

Junior Girls Basketball Tournament @ St.  
Bernard of Clairvaux

### **Thursday, February 13, 2025**

Red, Pink, White Day  
Valentine's Day Dance in the AM  
P/T Interviews PM

### **Friday, February 14, 2025**

PD Day: P/T Interviews

### **Monday, February 17, 2025**

Family Day Holiday: No School

### **Tuesday, February 18, 2025**

BHM Read Aloud (Maxwell, Nguyen)

### **Wednesday, February 19, 2025**

Morning Sar School Rosary/Father Adam

### **Thursday, February 20, 2025**

French Concours

### **Tuesday, February 25, 2025**

Grade 6/7 FI Science North Virtual Workshop

### **Wednesday, February 26, 2025**

Grade 7/8 Black History Month Virtual  
Workshop (Galbraith and Hinterhoeller)

### **Thursday, February 27, 2025**

Provincial Election: OLMCY Voting Site

### **Tuesday, March 4, 2025**

Pancake Tuesday  
Indigenous Education Workshops with Guest  
Tim McGregor

### **Wednesday, March 5, 2025**

Ash Wednesday: Mass @ 9:00

### **March 10 to 14, 2025**

March Break: No School

### **Monday, March 17, 2025**

St. Patrick's Day: Wear Green!

### **Tuesday, March 18, 2025**

Graduation Photos (SK and Grade 8)

