



Weekend Update: Sunday, February 23, 2025

The past week was a short one but as always, we managed to squeeze in as much as we could. Students returned to school on Tuesday to a winter wonderland, but also frigid temperatures causing us to monitor and alter our recess plans early in the week. All that snow also created challenges for parking at the school with ploughed snow taking up parking spaces. Thank you to everyone in our community for adapting to these conditions including at Kiss'and ride. We want to remind our students to ensure that they are bringing warm clothes and boots for recess to help make that wonderful outdoor time more enjoyable. We had to remind students to stay clear of large snowbanks, especially those close to the parking lot and cars, as well as to avoid creating tunnels through the snowbanks which poses a significant safety risk.

Last week our Black History Month presentations continued with Ms. Nguyen, Mr. MacSporran, Mrs. Duivesteyn, and Mrs. Fang's class, all presenting to the school during the morning announcements. The presentations have all been incredibly well researched with a continued focus on how the individuals or groups being discussed have brought hope to their community and to all those who followed them. We look forward to the final presentations this week. Our French Immersion students had their French Concours on Friday, with students from each grade sharing their speech with the community in the Gym to see who would represent the school at the next level of competition after March Break. The teachers were so pleased with the hard work and dedication that all our students put into their speeches, which made the judging quite complicated!

As we look forward to the week ahead, we remind parents of our rescheduled Parent-Teacher Interview evening on Monday, February 24th. Many parents have already signed up for a time, for those affected by the school cancelation on the 13th. We are ready to cheer on our Junior Boys Basketball team as they compete in the Family of Schools tournament at Gonzaga on Tuesday and we continue to participate in Black History Month virtual workshops, and read alouds, and our Grade 6/7 French Immersion class will participate in a Science workshop with Science North. We also remind the community that our school will be a polling location for the Provincial election on Thursday, February 27th. As we look even further to the beginning of March, we are excited for Pancake Tuesday, Ash Wednesday Mass, and a visit from a special guest, Tim McGregor, an Anishinaabe from Birch Island First Nation who will be sharing with students the significance of Jiingtamok – the Anishinaabe word for “a celebration of song and dance” or more commonly known as Pow Wow. During the session Tim will bring in his regalia and share with students the meaning behind each piece and will also explain the different types of songs and dance.

Take care,

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

Rescheduled Parent-Teacher Interviews:

Thank you to all who have already booked a new time for the parent-teacher interviews that had to be rescheduled due to the weather. If you were unable to make a time work on the 14th or our rescheduled date (February 24th) please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

Ottawa Trip:

We will be meeting with the students scheduled to attend Ottawa this week to review behaviour expectations, itinerary, and work on the room assignments. If you still want your child to attend, this would be the final week to contact the school to be added. Students will be sent home with an information letter with updated news and a reminder of the link for continuing to make payments to Brightspark.

Pancake Tuesday: March 4, 2025

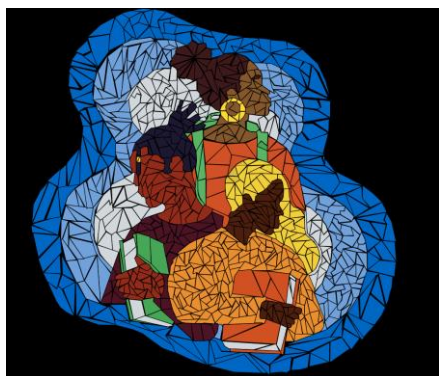
We are excited to welcome volunteers from President's Choice Children's Charities back to our school on Pancake Tuesday to provide our students with another special pancake breakfast! Students will be served by class in the morning prior to recess. We are very grateful for our ongoing partnership with President's Choice Children's Charity, and more specifically for their continued generosity towards our community.

Ash Wednesday: March 5, 2025



Father Adam will celebrate Ash Wednesday with us at 9:00 AM on Wednesday, March 5th. Father Adam will preside over the Eucharist and ashes will be distributed to all in attendance during the celebration. Parents are welcome to join us for this special Mass, marking the beginning of Lent.

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

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

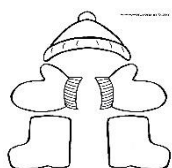
Water Bottles:

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!

March Break: March 10-14

As a reminder, please mark the March Break on your calendars! There will be no school from March 10th to March 14th.

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. If students are feeling unwell, they are reminded that they need to come to the office and call home from there, so we are aware and can monitor them. Thank you for your attention to this.

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

Our next Catholic School Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 24th. The Agenda for the meeting along with virtual link for those who may not be able to attend in person will be sent out tomorrow morning.

Merciful Redeemer Parish



Please check out the Merciful Redeemer website at www.mercifulredeemer.org for the latest bulletin and other events happening at the Parish.

First Confession for students preparing for their First Communion in the Spring, along with their parents, is being held on Wednesday, February 26, 2025 from 4:00-6:30.

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:



Throughout February, our well-being focus has been on “self-love”. We remind everyone in our community of the importance of being kind to oneself, and to remember the importance of positive self-talk. Think of how you would affirm a friend if they were feeling down or made a mistake.... Give yourself the same courtesy! Let’s end February with positivity and gratitude for all our hard work.

Upcoming Events:

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

Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Grade 6/7 FI Science North Virtual Workshop
BHM Read Aloud (Maxwell, Nguyen)
Jr. Boys Basketball @ Family Tournament
(Gonzaga)

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

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

Thursday, February 27, 2025

Provincial Election: OLMCY Voting Site
Tasha Spillettt Read Aloud (FDK)

Tuesday, March 4, 2025

Pancake Tuesday
Indigenous Education Workshops with Guest
Tim McGregor

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Ash Wednesday: Mass @ 9:00

Thursday, March 6, 2025

The Big Crunch (AM)

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)

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Morning Star School Rosary/Father Adam
French Concours

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

Grade 7/8 Trip to the ROM

Friday, March 28, 2025

Grade 3: Swim to Survive

Thursday, April 3, 2025

Miss. West Chess Tournament (at OLMCY)

Friday, April 4, 2025

Grade 3: Swim To Survive

Monday, April 7, 2025

Grade 7 Vaccination clinic

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Morning Star School Rosary

Friday, April 11, 2025

Grade 3: Swim to Survive (Final class)

Sunday, April 13, 2025

Palm Sunday

Thursday, April 17, 2025

Holy Thursday: Stations of the Cross

Friday, April 18, 2025

Good Friday

Sunday, April 20, 2025

Easter Sunday

Monday, April 21, 2025

Easter Monday: No School

A prayer for the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Grant, we pray, almighty God, that,
always pondering spiritual things,
we may carry out in both word and
deed that which is pleasing to you.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your
Son, who lives and reigns with you in
the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for
ever and ever.*

Amen