

McCulley Messenger

Empowering Inspiring Making a difference

SEPTEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER



DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA
Achieving Success Together

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www.dsbni.on.ca/Schools/EIMcCulley

Principal: R. De Luca-Gates
Secretary: T. Hampson

Superintendent: S. Mark
Trustee: A. Bradnam

From the Principal's Desk...

On behalf of our entire staff, I would like to welcome back all students, and offer a special welcome to new students and their families. I hope you all had a safe and relaxing summer filled with good times with family and friends.

Since we left in June, we have had several staff changes other than those that were already announced. As Mrs. DiDomenico has extended her leave of absence, we welcome back Ms. Jones who will be covering the JK/SK a.m. class until she returns. We also welcome back Mrs. Hannigan who will be in for Mrs. Chilcott who will be on maternity for this school year. I am sure you all join me in congratulating the Chilcott family on the birth of baby Chase. Mom and baby are doing well!

Thanks go out to Mrs. Gardner and the rest of the caretaking staff for the amazing job they did preparing the school for us. Secondly, thank you to all teaching and support staff for their work in preparing their classrooms, as well as for the work they have done in planning for the upcoming school year. Thirdly, thanks to Mrs. Hampson for her work in organizing all that has to be done before school opens, and lastly, thanks to the McCulley families who took care of our school grounds during the summer. We appreciate everyone's efforts!

It is our hope that we can continue to foster a strong connection between home and school., as this is essential in ensuring student success. As a staff, we have been working together planning for the year ahead and we are anticipating a productive and fun-filled year. I strongly encourage you to come to our Open House on September 22nd to meet your child's teacher, as well as other staff with whom he/she will have contact. Get involved in your child's education, and you will both reap the benefits. When you have concerns, please consider contacting your child's teacher before contacting the office. This will ensure that you have all of the facts. All parents/guardians are also encouraged to get involved in School Council. More information, including nomination forms, is included in this newsletter.

Please read this newsletter carefully as it contains a great deal of important information with respect to procedures. Keep this in a safe place for reference throughout the year. We need your co-operation to ensure the safety of your children.

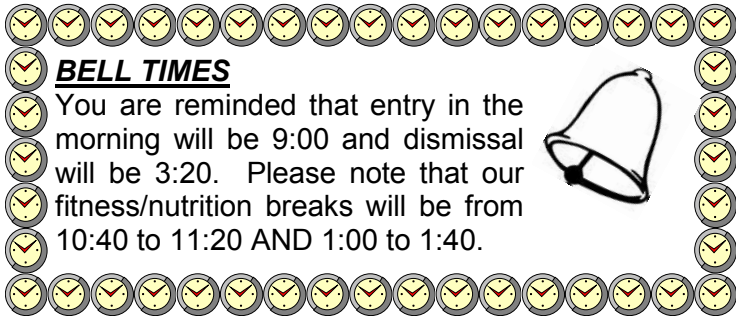
I wish all students, parents and staff a wonderful school year.

Mrs. De Luca-Gates

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION 2011-12

JK/SK a.m.	Ms. Jones
JK/SK p.m.	Mrs. Hannigan
SK Full Day	Ms. Favotto
Grade 1	Mrs. McMullen Mrs. C. Stewart
Grade 1/2	Mrs. Resney
Grade 2	Mr. Bueckert
Grade 3	Mrs. L. Stewart
Grade 3/4	Mr. Davison (and FSL) Mr. Gopal (and phys. ed.)
Grade 4/5	Ms. Winstanley
Grade 5/6	Mr. Shanahan
Grade 6	Mrs. Upton (and music) Mrs. McMahon
LRT	Mrs. Ditto
Teacher Librarian	Mrs. McMullen
Priority Schools Teacher Librarian	Mrs. Falk
E.A.'s	Miss Hopcroft Mrs. Friesen Ms. McKnight Ms. Merritt
Youth Counsellor	Ms. Clarke
Secretary	Mrs. Hampson
Caretaker	Mrs. Gardner
Principal	Mrs. De Luca-Gates

Please note that school organization is subject to change.



BELL TIMES

You are reminded that entry in the morning will be 9:00 and dismissal will be 3:20. Please note that our fitness/nutrition breaks will be from 10:40 to 11:20 AND 1:00 to 1:40.



OPEN HOUSE...

This year's "Meet the Staff Open House" will take place on **Thursday, September 22nd from 5:30 to 7 p.m.** Hope to see you there!



INFORMATION SENT HOME...

Your child is bringing home a package of items for you to read, complete and sign. Please read over the material carefully and send back all forms promptly.

Please read both the front and back of the Student Verification Form carefully. Make any necessary changes in the right hand column, Please ensure that you have SIGNED the back and return it to your child's teacher by Friday, September 9th.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Any parents interested in serving on the School Advisory Council are asked to complete and return the attached self-nomination form to the office by Monday, September 19th. **School Advisory Council Elections will take place on Thursday, September 22nd at 7 p.m.** Our first School Advisory Council Meeting of the year will take place on **Wednesday, September 28th at 6 p.m.** Please note that childcare will be available. **You do not have to be a member of Council to attend meetings – all parents are welcome to attend!**

COME TO THE OFFICE!

Please remember to report directly to the office when visiting the school. We do not interrupt classes for lunches, messages, etc. This will ensure that the learning process is not disrupted. If you are dropping off an item, such as a backpack, lunch or homework, it ***MUST*** be labeled with the child's name. All before and after school arrangements, including lunchtime plans, ***MUST*** be written in the student's agenda for the teacher. We *will not accept over-the-phone messages.* (Exceptions will be made for **EMERGENCIES ONLY!**) As part of our Safe School Policy, the front door will be the only unlocked door during the school day.

EARLY RELEASE DAY...

Friday, September 23rd is an early release day. All students will be dismissed at 12:10 p.m. on this day. The **afternoon JK/ SK** program is cancelled for this day.

ENTRY / DISMISSAL & STUDENT PICK UP

Please ask your child(ren) which door they have been instructed to use for entry and dismissal. This will become routine for students quickly in September. If you are picking up your child from school for the second fitness/nutrition break or after school, we ask that you wait outside their exit door or instruct them where to meet you. This is for the safety of all children -- remember that you are a stranger to most students in our school. Also, for safety reasons, only the office door will be unlocked during the day, and all visitors must be acknowledged at the office. Students are expected to go directly home once dismissed, unless they are remaining for a school activity. We want to ensure all of our students arrive home safely. Please remind your children of this policy.


ABSENCES, LATES, SIGNING IN & SIGNING OUT

Your child's safety and whereabouts are very important to us. Because of this, it is essential for us to know when your child is going to be late or absent from school. Please **call the school** before 9:00 a.m. to let us know. Please note that we have an answering machine to take your message after school hours. **Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.** Any unexplained absence will be checked using our call-back system. This means, with any unexplained absence, we will be calling home and/or work to find out where your child is.



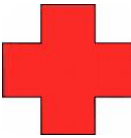
Being on time for school is an important habit to teach your child. We stress the need for every student to be at school on time in order to not miss important lessons or information being shared. **Students who are late must report to the office to obtain a late slip to give to their teacher.** Students who may need to leave the school during school hours must be signed out by a parent or guardian at the office. There is a binder in the office for sign-out purposes. When you return your child to school, you must accompany them to the office to sign them back in.

PICTURE DAY...
 Pictures will be taken throughout the day on Wednesday, September 28th. A reminder notice will be sent home later in the month. Class pictures will be individual student pictures organized into a "composite". Individual student photos can be purchased, however each student will receive a complimentary copy of the class composite.



PHONE SYSTEM
 Please note that you may leave a voice mail for a specific staff member. You may access their voice mail by name or by extension number. If you know the extension of the person you are trying to reach, you can enter it as soon as the machine answers. To dial by name, you can press 1 as soon as the machine answers, and begin spelling the last name of the staff member. We encourage parents/guardians to use this feature.

MEDICATION, PRESCRIPTION DRUGS...
 If your child requires medication at school, an **Authorization of Administration of Oral/Topical Medication (signed by a physician)** form **MUST** be completed. Forms may be obtained from the school office. The completed form and medication must be given to the office. Medication must be clearly marked with the child's full name. Please note that students are not to keep medication in their backpacks or lunch bags.




MEDICALERT: No Child Without
 Our school is involved in the Canadian MedicAlert Foundation's **No Child Without** program. There is no cost for students who attend our school and are between the ages of 4 and 14 to join MedicAlert through this program. If your child has a medical condition, allergy or is required to take medication on a regular basis, then you should consider this program. A child's MedicAlert identification can alert school staff, friends, coaches and others about your child's medical condition should an emergency occur. For further information, consult the brochure that has been sent home or go to www.nochildwithout.ca. Please note that in order to register your child you will need a *No Child Without* brochure from the office.

PARKING LOT REMINDERS...
 We ask all parents and visitors to please respect the following guidelines:


- Please park only in designated parking spots.
- Please follow the directional arrows
- Please do not block the drive-through.
- Please do not block the entry/exit route for the bus.
- If dropping off or picking up a child, please park your vehicle in a designated parking spot. If there are no spots remaining, please park on Berkley Drive (north side) or park at the plaza. For safety, students are to use the walkways on either side of the parking lot when arriving on school property.

PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH ANYONE WHO MAY BE PICKING UP YOUR CHILD(REN).

ALLERGY ALERT...
 Please be advised that we have students with a **severe nut allergy** in our school. Please do not send any nut products or anything containing traces of nuts to school with your child. Thank you for your co-operation!



NO DOGS, PLEASE!
 Due to allergies, fears and children's safety, we are asking parents to please refrain from bringing pets on school property. By doing this, you will be helping make our school a safe environment for all children.



SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER DRAW

My child(ren) _____
 Class(es) _____
 and I have read the newsletter.

Question: *What is the date of our Open House?*

Answer: _____

Signature: _____

Please answer the question and return this ballot to the office for a chance to win a prize!

STUDENT ORGANIZERS

Given today's information-rich environment, using an organizer is a necessary life skill, helping students to manage information and self-track. The students at McCulley have been provided with school organizers. Teachers will be using these as one way of communicating with you about homework and upcoming events and assignments. They also contain important information, such as our Code of Conduct. All students are being trained to use the organizer to help with planning their work. The cost for the organizers is being subsidized by the school and our School Council. **The cost to you is \$2.00.** If your child loses or destroys his/her organizer, we will have to order a **replacement** and the cost for that will be **\$5.00.** Please have your child bring this money (**cash only**) to their homeroom teacher as soon as possible.



LOCKS

Students in grades 3 to 6 may use a **combination lock** on their locker. Dudley combination locks are recommended. These are NO LONGER available at the office, but can be purchased at various local stores. Teachers will keep a record of the combinations. Students are encouraged **NOT** to share their combinations with their classmates.

MILK ORDERS

All students in grades SK (full day) to grade 6 will have the opportunity to purchase milk which will be served during the second nutrition break. Milk order forms for October / November will be going home on September 21st. Thank you in advance for your support.



CHARACTER TRAIT FOR SEPTEMBER IS OPTIMISM

Optimism is the ability to look at the bright side of any situation and expect the best possible outcome from any event. People who feel optimistic live their lives expecting positive outcomes and events. Optimism is powerfully motivational, and is one of the cornerstones of success.

Part of the power of optimism is the result of changing the outlook of the little voice in your head. Positive self-talk expands your ability to achieve, to learn, and to accomplish. An optimistic belief in yourself and your capabilities to positively impact situations, even ones that appear negative, fuels your success. Try gently moving your mind into positive, optimistic thoughts whenever you find yourself feeling negative.

William Arthur Ward said "If you can imagine it you can achieve it. If you can dream it, you can become it"

PIZZA DAY WILL BEGIN ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16th. MORE INFORMATION WILL BE SENT HOME SHORTLY.

IMMUNIZATION...

Have you checked your child's immunization to make sure it is up to date? If you're unsure if your child requires any needles, you may call the Public Health Department at 905-688-3762, ext. 7396.



BALANCED SCHOOL DAY

You will receive a copy of the Balanced School Day times in the package that is being sent home to you today. For younger children especially, please consider packing the food sent to school with your child in two packages, with an indication of which one is to be eaten during the first break and which one is for the second break. Some students have difficulty knowing how much to eat when they see the food they have brought to school and eat everything during the first break. We also ask that students are provided with healthy snacks.

PLEASE KEEP OUR STUDENTS SAFE!

1. When visiting the school, sign the Guest Book located on the counter and please wear a Visitor Badge. This allows our students to identify you as a welcome visitor.
2. Please ensure your child(ren) arrive on the school yard **AFTER 8:45 a.m.** Supervision of students by staff begins at that time and, to ensure safety, we do not want students alone in the school yard.
3. Students are not to walk across the parking lot. As students enter and exit the building from the back of the school, it should not be necessary, nor is it safe for them to do so.
4. All students, parents and guardians are reminded that **all playground equipment is out of bounds before and after school.**

BREAKFAST CLUB

Our Breakfast Program will begin on Monday, September 12th. Students will be admitted from 8:20 to 8:35. Students will be dismissed at 8:50 to go outside with the rest of their friends until the bell rings at 9:00. Students will not be admitted to the breakfast club after 8:35 a.m., but upon their entry to the school at 9:00, "grab and go" bags will be available to any students who were too late to attend the breakfast club. Remember, this program is offered to **ALL** students.



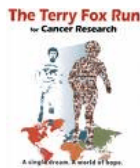
Monetary donations to our breakfast club are always welcome. Any amount is appreciated, however, any donation of \$20 or more will ensure that you receive a tax receipt. If you wish to do this, please make your cheque payable to "**Niagara Nutrition Partners - E.I. McCulley School**". Please consider sharing this information with family and friends who may be able to help us.

AN ICE CREAM SUNDAE PARTY WILL BE AWARDED TO THE CLASS WHO IS FIRST TO HAND IN ALL OF THEIR VERIFICATION, NUTRITION/FITNESS BREAK AND ACCEPTABLE USE FORMS.



TERRY FOX RUN...

On Friday, September 23rd, the staff and students of our school will join millions of students across Canada in hopes of fulfilling Terry's dream to find a cure for cancer. This year marks the 31st anniversary of Terry's run and we plan to share in the dream of curing cancer. Information and permission forms will be sent home in the near future.



LEGAL CUSTODY ORDERS

Due to circumstances, a family grouping and home situation may change. In the event of a separation or divorce, court ordered arrangements are made. By law, the school must give both parents of our students the same rights and privileges, unless there is a court order to indicate otherwise. Therefore, unless the school has an up-to-date copy of a court or restraining order on file, either parent has the right to come to the school, see and speak with the student, meet the teacher, sign out the student, etc. It is the responsibility of the parent and/or guardian to ensure that the school has an up-to-date copy of the legal documents on file and that the situation has been discussed with the Principal. Please contact Mrs. De Luca-Gates if you have any questions or concerns about your child(ren)'s safety.

ACCIDENTS CAN HAPPEN

Each year a Student Accident Insurance Plan is made available for all students on a voluntary basis. The plan provides protection for dental damage due to accidents, fracture benefits and other important coverage which is not covered under the Provincial Health Plan. Some parents may have dental plan coverage through their work, but many of these plans are limited in one way or another, while this accident coverage is not. You should compare to make sure you have the coverage you need or desire.

Under the Education Act the Board is not permitted to provide insurance coverage for accidents to pupils, therefore, the Board recommends consideration of this plan to any parent who wishes to obtain this kind of insurance. Although the policy has all the advantages of a group plan, it is essentially a direct contract between the parent and the insurance company. Details of these plans are described on the enclosed application form. If you require further information, you may contact **Reliable Life at Box 2046, Hamilton, L8N 9Z9 or call toll free at 1-800-465-0661**. If you wish to subscribe to this insurance, please complete the form and mail it **directly** to Reliable Life Insurance Company in the enclosed stamped envelope immediately, but preferably before **September 30th, 2010**.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH.

For all plans **except the \$3.50 basic plan**, you may also enroll online at www.reliablelife.com. If the enrolment form for the Student Accident Insurance Plan has not been received or it has been misplaced, please contact the school office.



AMNESTY for the RETURN OF SCHOOL ITEMS

If you have found any items at home that belong to the school, please return them to the office—no questions asked. These items can be very expensive for us to replace. Thank you in advance for your help!



VOLUNTEERS

We are looking for volunteers to assist us in many ways. If you have any talents in art, music, crafts, computers, or if you have an interest in assisting with reading, mathematics, etc., please consider volunteering at our school. Volunteer forms are available in the office. We look forward to working with many of our community members throughout the year!

A FEW IMPORTANT REMINDERS...



...Students are not to bring skateboards, scooters, rollerblades, or wheelies to school.

...Cell phones and electronic devices must be kept in the student's locker.

...Verification, Nutrition/Fitness Break and Acceptable Use forms need to be returned as soon as possible.