

McCulley Messenger

Do your best, do what's right!

SEPTEMBER 2009 NEWSLETTER



DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA
Achieving Success Together

16 Berkley Dr., St. Catharines, L2M 6B8
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Principal: R. De Luca-Gates
Secretary: T. Hampson

Superintendent: S. Mark
Trustee: M. Heit

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

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 relaxing summer filled with good times with family and friends.

Since we left in June, we have one more new staff member to welcome. Ms. Jones will be teaching our morning JK/SK class. We welcome her to the McCulley community. Congratulations to Mrs. Ferretti (formerly Ms. Fry), our new music teacher, on her marriage this summer.

I am sure that you would all agree that the school looks fantastic. Firstly, thanks go out to Mr. Groff and the rest of the caretaking staff for the amazing job they did preparing the school for us. Secondly, thank you to all teaching 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 the McCulley families who took care of our school grounds during the summer. We appreciate everyone's efforts!

Our School Council sponsored a Welcome Back breakfast for staff and also provided a treat for all students on the first day. We thank them for their generosity. All parents/guardians are encouraged to get involved in School Council. More information, including nomination forms, is included in this newsletter.

Research clearly indicates that a strong connection between home and school 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 24th 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.

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

I wish all students, parents and staff a wonderful school year. Here we go!

Mrs. De Luca-Gates

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION 2009-10

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| JK/SK a.m. | Ms. Jones |
| JK/SK p.m. | Mrs. Butler |
| SK full day | Ms. Favotto |
| Gr. 1 | Mrs. Resney |
| Gr. 1/2 | Mrs. Chilcott |
| Gr. 2/3 | Mr. Bueckert |
| Gr. 2/3 | Mrs. Stewart |
| Gr. 3/4 | Mr. Davison |
| Gr. 4/5 | Mr. Shanahan |
| Gr. 5/6 | Mr. Gopal |
| LRT & ISP | Mrs. Ditto |
| Literacy Coach/Lib. | Mrs. McMullen |
| PREP. | Ms. Burton Mrs. DiDomenico Mrs. McMahon Mrs. Ferretti |
| E.A.'s | Mr. VanBreda Mrs. Fleming Miss Hopcroft Mrs. Wiens |
| Secretary | Mrs. Hampson |
| Caretakers | Mr. Groff Ms. Sewell |
| Principal | Mrs. De Luca-Gates |

Please note that class organization is subject to change before the end of September. We will keep you posted of any proposed changes.

PICTURE DAY...

Pictures will be taken throughout the day on Tuesday, September 29th. 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.



OPEN HOUSE...

This year's "Meet the Staff Open House" will take place on **Thursday, September 24th from 6 to 7 p.m.** Hope to see you there!

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING...

Our first School Advisory Council Meeting of the year will take place on **Wednesday, September 30th at 6 p.m.** Please note that childcare will be available. In order to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate in the election of their representatives on the Council, elections will take place at this meeting. Any parents interested in serving on the Council are asked to complete and return the attached self-nomination form to the office by Friday, September 25th. **You do not have to be a member of Council to attend meetings – all parents are welcome to attend!**

INFORMATION SENT HOME...

Your child should have come home with 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 11th.

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.

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 8:50 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 new 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.

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.

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.



PLEASE KEEP OUR STUDENTS SAFE!

1. When visiting the school, sign in the new 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** 8:35 a.m. Supervision of students by staff begins at that time and, to ensure safety, we do not want students alone on the playground.
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.

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 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.

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 has increased this year, however, a portion of each organizer is being subsidized by the school. **The cost to you is \$7.00.** If your child loses or destroys his/her organizer, we will have to order a **replacement** and the cost for that will be **\$10.00.** Please have your child bring this money (**cash only**) to their homeroom teacher as soon as possible.



LOCKS AVAILABLE...

Students in grades 3 to 6 may use a **combination lock** on their locker. Dudley combination locks are recommended. These are available at the office for \$5.00 (cash only, please). Teachers will keep a record of the combinations. Students are encouraged **NOT** to share their combinations with their classmates.

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.

ALLERGY ALERT...



Please be advised that we have a student 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!

WORLD MILK DAY AND MILK ORDERS

We are proud to be celebrating World Milk Day the week of September 28th, along with over 40 other countries. All students in grades SK (full day) to grade 6 will receive a free white milk through the sponsorship of the Ontario Dairy Industry on one day during that week—a notice will go home the day before. Milk order forms for October / November will be going home on World Milk Day (September 30th). Thank you in advance for your support.



NEW - BREAKFAST CLUB

This year, our Nutrition Program will look a little different. We are offering a Breakfast Program instead of a Morning Meal Program. Our Breakfast Program will run from 8:15 to 8:40, after which time the children will be expected to go outside with the rest of their friends until the bell rings at 8:50. Over the summer, we have had some alterations done to our nutrition room. We would like to thank Mr. R. Cole and his staff from the DSBN for their work on the plumbing, cupboards and electrical outlets. We would also like to thank Nickerson's Appliances and Niagara Nutrition Partners for subsidizing the cost of our new stove.



We are looking for some reliable volunteers to help run this program. Remember, this program is offered to **ALL** students. So if you can spare some time, please let Mrs. Hampson, our school secretary, know by calling the office at 905-934-7344 or by dropping in and introducing yourself. Even if you are unable to donate your time, we would appreciate your support financially. 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. We hope to get enough volunteers to start up the Breakfast Club no later than the end of September.

TERRY FOX RUN...

On Friday, September 25th, 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 29th 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.



CHARACTER TRAIT FOR SEPTEMBER IS RESPECT

Respect is an attitude of caring about people and treating them with dignity. Respect is valuing ourselves and others.

You are practising respect when you....

- ✓ treat everyone the way you would like to be treated
- ✓ treat your property and the property of others with special care
- ✓ honour other people's need for time and space to themselves
- ✓ speak courteously to everyone
- ✓ honour the rules of your family, school and country
- ✓ expect respect for your body and your rights

I am respectful. I treat others and myself as we deserve to be treated. I show courtesy to everyone.

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, 2009. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH.**



For all plans **except the \$3.50 basic plan**, you may also enroll online at www.insuremykids.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.

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.

SIX SIMPLE STEPS TO HELP KEEP US HEALTHY

1. Wash your hands often using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Ensure hands are washed:
 - after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
 - after shaking hands
 - before eating
 - before putting in contact lenses
 - before touching your face
2. Avoid touching your face as much as possible.
3. Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow and throw out used tissues right away.
4. Do not share objects that have been in other people's mouths; e.g., toothbrushes, drinks and water bottles, unwashed utensils, lip products, and mouthpieces of musical instruments.
5. Stay home if you feel sick and talk to your doctor. Staying home will help prevent the spread of infections.
- 6..Frequently clean common surfaces such as keyboards, doorknobs, countertops, etc.



EARLY RELEASE DAY . . .

Friday, September 25th, 2009 is an early release day. All students will be dismissed at 12:00 p.m. on this day. The **afternoon JK/SK** program is cancelled for this day.

A FEW IMPORTANT REMINDERS...

...Students are not to bring skateboards, scooters, rollerblades, wheelies, cell phones or any electronic devices (including MP3 players) to school.
...Nutrition/Fitness Break and netiquette forms need to be returned as soon as possible.



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!


SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER DRAW

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

Question: *What do parents/ guardians and their child need to do in the student organizer?*

Answer: _____

Signature: _____

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

