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## June 2016

### Principal's Message

As we near the end of this school year, I marvel at the growth and accomplishments of Westwind students. Students have succeeded in the variety of challenges placed before them and we are very proud of the progress they have made this year. I would like to thank our dedicated staff for their work to ensure the individual success of each student. I would also like to thank our parents for working to support the school and your child (ren) throughout the year. I bid a fond farewell to any families that will be leaving our school and wish you all well. To our returning families, have a wonderful summer holiday and I look forward to seeing you all in September.



### Staffing News

It is the time of year that we have to say farewell to a few dedicated staff members and thank them for their efforts to support student learning at Westwind. We would like to extend our sincerest best wishes to staff – Christine O'Mara, Erin Taniguchi, Adam McCarthy, Tammara Smith (LTO), Jo-Ann McCulloch (LTO), Andrea Dignam (LTO), Cathy Evans (LTO), Kaylah Singh (maternity leave) and Kristi Gainforth (maternity leave.), who all head off to face new adventures elsewhere. We will miss you all at Westwind!

In September we will be welcoming a few new faces: Erika Busing and Amel Oueslati, who are returning from leave, and Sandra Mahoney and Saham Keshmirzadeh, who will be new to Westwind.

### School Support Personnel

This year our students and staff have had the benefit of working with individuals who have enhanced our school through the various services they have provided: Early Learning Assistants –Mrs. Espinoza De Mares, Ms. Ren, Ms. Dvor-Lahav, Ms. Perera, Ms. Nichols, Ms. DeYoung, Ms. Vafaii, Ms. Berard, Ms. Demone, Ms. Marston and Ms. Alhamdani in our Extended Care Program and our Lunch Monitors - Mrs. Mariscak, Ms. Perera, Mrs. Wijeratne and Mrs. Van Adel. Thanks to each of you for your exemplary support of our school.



Let me take this opportunity to thank our wonderful team of parent and community volunteers that come to Westwind on a regular basis to help out in so many areas. You have truly made a difference in the lives of our students and school community. Thank you!

Our sincere appreciation is also extended to our community and school partners and individuals who have given generously to our school for various programs: Starbucks and Mike McNeely. We are very blessed to be working in partnership with such wonderful folks and community organizations.

### **Extra-curricular Activities at Westwind**

Students were offered a myriad of extra-curricular activities to choose from this year. Not only did these activities provide a source of sheer enjoyment, but students were also able to explore their interests, sharpen their skills, enhance their social and emotional development, learn leadership skills and increase their technological capacity. I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to staff who continue to go above and beyond to volunteer their time before school, at lunch recess or after school to support our students. Many thanks to the coaches, teacher advisors and to staff who organized or provided support for school events.

### **Fundraising**

On May 4<sup>th</sup> we held our Fear Factor assembly where many staff faced a variety of fears in front of the student body. It was a fun filled event. Thanks to Mme. Kelly and Mrs. Taniguchi for their leadership of our Fear Factor Read-a-thon. Our students read approx. 340,000 minutes and we were successful in raising \$6, 905.00. Congratulations to all students who were involved in this fundraising drive. Thanks Westwind families for your generous donations!



This year School Council forwarded approximately \$18,000 to our school account to support families in need, Arts, Literary, Science workshops, cultural concerts, special education materials, kdg. outdoor materials, playground games and friendship benches. We greatly appreciate this amazing support provided by our parent community to enhance the learning and recreational experiences of our students.

### **Lost and Found**

Our Lost and Found continues to grow. Please remind your child to check the table outside the office hallway on a regular basis for their missing items. Lost and Found items will be on display until Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup>. They will then be bagged and sent to a local charity.

### **Planning For September**

#### **Kindergarten**

On February 9, 2016, The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board approved changes to the delivery of French instruction in kindergarten, introducing a 50% English, 50% French delivery model for all students in both years of kindergarten. The Two-Year Bilingual Kindergarten program will be implemented beginning in September 2016. All children, including those currently enrolled in Junior Kindergarten, will receive 50% of their instruction in English and 50% of their instruction in French next year. Grade 1 becomes the entry point for the Early French Immersion program as a result of this change.



#### **Orientation for Kindergarten Students**

In July, parents of kindergarten students will be receiving information regarding group orientation meetings and the staggered entry dates for students. Orientation meetings will take place on Tuesday Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> and families will have the opportunity to meet the teachers, other families and tour the classrooms. Staggered entry to kindergarten programs is intended to allow the teachers, and parents time to review the intake information on the OCDSB Kindergarten Intake Form, and to learn more about the kindergarten program. Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup> will be the first day of school for SK students and all JK students who are registered for the Extended Day Program (EDP). Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup> all JK and SK students will attend school. Bussing will not be provided for kindergarten students during kindergarten orientation days on Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. **The Extended Day Program will begin on Thursday, Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> for all kindergarten children.**

### **School Council**

Thank you to School Council executive and members at large for their support and hard work over the course of the school year. Our discussions were often lively and led to important decisions that impact on your children. Through food programs, Halloween Dance, Cake Walk, Family Fun Fair and Movie Nights, there were lovely opportunities for families to come together and share good times throughout the school year. We look forward to many more community building activities in the upcoming year.

School Council elections will be held on **September 27<sup>th</sup>** and in the months following, all other meetings will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. If you are interested in being elected for a school council position, you can be nominated by another individual or you can nominate yourself. Information regarding elections is posted on the school website under School Council. If you have any questions regarding council or about anything council related, send an e-mail to [westwindpschoolcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:westwindpschoolcouncil@gmail.com) **The next council meeting will be held on June 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7pm in the school library. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend.**



### **Office News**

The school office will close at 4:30 pm on Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup> and will reopen on Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup>. Office hours will be from 8:30a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### **Planning For 2016 – 2017**

Please inform the office as soon as possible if your child will not be returning to Westwind in September. If your plans change over the summer, you can leave a message on the answering machine. It is very important that we have current enrolment figures so adjustments to classes can be made prior to the first week of school.

### **First Day of School**

The first day of school for students in Grades 1-6 is **September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016**. Teachers will be in the school yard at the back of the building with signs indicating their name, grade and room numbers. Teachers will have class lists with them. Other staff will be available to support parents in locating the appropriate class. In the event of rain, we will move indoors. There will be signage at the main entrance indicating where classes will be congregating. When the bell rings, students will line up with their teachers and proceed to their classrooms. At the end of day, bus students will be taken to the bus lines and loaded on the appropriate bus. All other students will proceed to the gate by the parking lot to be picked up.

### **School Supplies**

A common list of school supplies has been developed for students in grades JK-3 and grades 4-8 by the Board. This list of supplies is voluntary. If you choose to purchase the supplies listed please send them in with your child during the first week of school. If you have a child in kindergarten, the following items may be omitted from the list: 12 pencils and 1 metric ruler. The list is located on our school website.



## **Class Placements**

Though our planning is well underway for next year, it is not finalized until the first day of school, due to incoming registrations late in August. As a school team we put a great deal of thought and time into organizing classes. We consider a variety of criteria, putting the academic and social needs of each student as the highest priority. We also aim for a balance in classes – this includes gender, learning style, academic ability, work habits, social, emotional and behavioral needs and group dynamics. As in previous years, combined grades classes will be included in our organization next year. Combined grades offer many positive experiences for children. Appreciating that much consideration has gone into the placement decisions and that we are trying to meet the needs of almost 600 students, our plan is to maintain the class organizations when they have been finalized.

## **Voluntary School Fee**

This year, we were very grateful to receive financial support from parents through student fees. Funds collected were used to provide a Science presentation for our students. For the upcoming school year, the \$20.00 voluntary school fee for students in Grades 1-6 will be used to support Science or Arts presentations. For kindergarten students, the \$20.00 voluntary school fee will be used to cover the cost of special craft materials and resources to support inquiry and play-based learning in the kindergarten program. If you have more than one child attending Westwind, the voluntary school fees will be capped at \$30.00.

The school fee is optional and should you wish to contribute, cash or cheques will be accepted. Cheques should be made payable to Westwind Public School. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the school office at (613) 831-7840. Thank you for your support.

## **Extended Day Program**

We have over 90 students registered for the Extended Day program. If you forwarded your registration form and have not received a confirmation please contact the Extended Day Program office at (613) 239-2378. If you are new to the area and you are interested in the Extended Day program, you may contact Eleanor Heap at the Extended Day office for a registration form.

## **School Year Calendar 2016 -2017**

First Day of School	September 6, 2016	Family Day	Feb. 20, 2017
P.A. Day	October 7, 2016	March Break	Mar. 13 – Mar. 17, 2017
Thanksgiving	October 10, 2016	Good Friday	April 14, 2017
P.A. Day	November 18, 2016	Easter Monday	April 17, 2017
Christmas Break	Dec. 24, 2016 – Jan. 8, 2017	P.A. Day	May 19, 2017
P.A. Day	January 30, 2017	Victoria Day	May 22, 2017
P.A. Day	Feb. 17, 2017	P.A. Day	June 9, 2017
		Last Day of School	June 29, 2017

In keeping with Board guidelines, we will be adopting an Adjusted Monday to Friday calendar for next year. This will ensure that any instructional time and teacher planning time lost resulting from School Holidays and Professional Activity Days taking place on Mondays and Fridays throughout the 2016-2017 school year, will be addressed. A copy of the Adjusted Schedule will be posted on the school website.



## **HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH READING, WRITING, AND MATH**

The summer brings with it many exciting activities. While it is important to rest, rejuvenate, and recharge our

batteries, students also benefit from remaining involved in academic pursuits. In this newsletter you will find a list of activities you can do with your child to help reinforce the many skills they have developed this past year.

A new Ministry of Education website is now available for the parents of Ontario's elementary school children. The site, called abc123, gives parents practical ideas on fun and everyday ways to help their children with reading, writing and math. It features easy-to-read tip lists and provides other valuable resources parents can use to help their children.

Parents can also find out what the government is doing to reach every student in a section called 'How We're Helping'.

This is just the beginning. The site will be refreshed regularly with new information and useful links to other government programs and external sites.

The site can be accessed through the Ministry of Education homepage at [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca) or directly at [www.ontario.ca/abc123](http://www.ontario.ca/abc123) or view full text at: <http://www.ontario.ca/abc123>

### **SUMMER LEARNING TIPS**

Studies have indicated that continuous learning over the summer helps students get a better start for the next school year.

Here are some tips for parents to encourage summer learning:

#### **Math**

- purchase logic puzzles or crossword puzzle books
- have children keep track of their allowance (1) how much they spend (2) how much they save
- help children set up a lemonade stand. Let them set prices and make change
- complete jigsaw puzzles with your child
- if your child is a sports fan, encourage them to collect information on player statistics and read games results in the newspaper
- on family trips, teach children about maps, directions and distance



#### **Geography / History**

- encourage children to pick up brochures about cities or towns visited while on vacation to learn about the history and culture of the region
- visit historical sites, local zoos, science centres, museums, art galleries and other points of interest

#### **Writing**

- encourage children to record their daily activities and thoughts in a notebook during their vacation
- encourage children to write to grandparents, relatives and pen pals weekly

#### **Reading**

- visit the Public Library once a week to sign out books or magazines
- as a family, pick a topic to follow for a few days, learn as much about the topic as you can through television, internet, newspapers and magazines
- have children write a grocery list each week and take them to the grocery store; let them find the items by reading the signs in the aisles and the product labels
- as a family, read 20 minutes everyday (parents and children)
- for younger children, teach them rhymes, short poems and songs; have them read rhyming books to practice the language sounds

- have children read signs and notices in the neighborhood
- have children re-read familiar books to practice words and expressions they already know and can read comfortably