



GATESTONE FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

Key Events this Month

Friday, February 14th Valentine's Day

Monday, February 17th, Family Day

Thursday, February 27th, Olympics Day

Monday, February 24th, School Council

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Gatestone Newsletter

February 2014

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

LOOKING AHEAD TO FEBRUARY

Gatestone continues to be a busy school in February. Here's a few of things happening this month:

- Junior and Senior Boys and Girls Basketball seasons are well underway in athletics;
- A Valentines Day Dance for Grades Six to Eight;
- TipOFF Anti-bullying App Assembly;
- Primary Choir;
- Gatestone Winter Olympics.



TIPOFF

In November, Gatestone became part of TipOff, an anti-bullying app that allows students to anonymously report bullying. The report is shared with the school so action can be taken. We will be holding an assembly to make students more familiar with the app. The app is available from Google

Play or the Apple.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

Our first Family Movie Night was a wonderful success. Over 300 people attended the viewing of Monsters

University. Thank you to Student Action, led by Ms. Whitley and Mrs. Johnson, for their work at the front door and with refreshments. We hope to have more movie nights in the future.

STARTING YEAR FOUR AT GATESTONE

While reflecting on the my three years at Gatestone, I looked back to the vision communicated in the March 2011 Newsletter. It read: *I intend to work with Staff to:*

- ✓ Create an Information Technology (IT) plan focused on not just bringing more computers into the school but to build the 21st century skills or fluencies our students will need to succeed in our information based society and economy;
- ✓ Sustain and extend the superb curricular (in-class) and extra-curricular (out-of-class) programming;
- ✓ Review, with the goal of strengthening, our partnerships with parents and the community at large;
- ✓ Ensure that every Gatestone student feels valued and included in our school.

The success we have had in fulfilling this vision is a testament to the outstanding staff at Gatestone. As a group, they are dedicated to their profession and committed to their students. I feel privileged to work at Gatestone.

Bill Torrens, OCT
Principal

DETERMINING A REPORT CARD GRADE

Determining a report card grade will involve teachers' professional judgment and interpretation of evidence and will reflect the student's most consistent level of achievement, with special consideration given to more recent evidence of learning.

Growing Success

(2010)

For more information, please see:

[http://
www.edu.gov.on.ca/
eng/parents/
reportCard.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/reportCard.html)

TERM ONE REPORT CARDS

The *Elementary Provincial Report Card* will be coming home on Wednesday, February 12th for B-Day JK/SK students and Thursday, February 13th for the rest of the school.

It is a four-page report.

1) The first page is the student and school information and the evaluation of the student's **Learning Skills**.

2) The second page is the evaluation of the student's **achievement** in Language, French (Grades 4—8), Mathematics and Science and Technology, with both marks and comments outlining strengths and next steps for improvement.

3) The third page is the evaluations and comments for Social Studies, Health, Physical Education and The Arts (Dance, Drama, Music

and Visual Arts), as well as having a section for the student's comments on the Report.

4) The final page contains an explanation of the achievement marks, the signatures of the teacher and the principal and a section for comments by the parents or guardians.

LEARNING SKILLS

The development of Learning Skills and work habits is an integral part of a student's learning. The 6 Learning Skills and Work Habits are:

1. Responsibility
2. Organization

3. Independent Work
4. Collaboration
5. Initiative
6. Self-Regulation

It is important to remember that, for the most part, teachers will assess achievement and learning

skills separately.

Some students may be working very hard and effectively, yet not be able to achieve at the provincial standard, others with poor work habits and/or learning skills may achieve well.

ACHIEVEMENT MARKS

A (80—100%) The student's achievements have surpassed the provincial standard, usually showing a very high degree of sophistication or complexity. *Very few students will achieve this level.*

B (70—79%) The student's achievements meet the provincial standard, as outlined in curriculum documents. *Students achieving at this level are doing very well.*

C (60—69%) The student's

achievement approaches the provincial standard. *Students at this level are progressing fairly well, but should try to "bump it up".*

D (50—59%) The student's achievement falls much below the provincial standard. *Students at this level are falling significantly behind and interventions will be required.*

R (less than 50%)

The student has not demonstrated the required knowledge or skills. A plan

for support and improvement will be developed for any students receiving an R.

I (Insufficient evidence) The student, through illness, absence or other circumstance, has not presented enough evidence of achievement to assign a mark.

OUT OF CATCHMENT

Gatestone remains closed to out-of-catchment students, including those students with siblings already attending Gatestone.

Families moving out of Gatestone's catchment may continue until the end of the school year, but will have to register and attend school at their home school in September 2014.

If there are questions or concerns, please contact Mr. Torrens directly.

INSIDE NUTRITION BREAKS

The decision to have the students go outside during Nutrition Break is dependent on the weather conditions and the condition of the grounds. Safety is our first priority and either the Principal or Vice-Principal will check the conditions before sending the students outside for break.

We keep the students in when the temperature is -15 degrees Celsius or lower, with or without the wind-chill.

February's Skill: Organization

Organization is our learning skill for February. According to the Ministry of Education, student demonstrating organization does the following:

- Devises and follows a plan and process for completing work and tasks;
- Establishes priorities and manages time to complete tasks and achieve goals;
- Identifies, gathers, evaluates, and uses information, technology and resources to complete tasks.

Once again, we are seeking your support in the development of this learning skill.

Please consider ways that your child (ren) can work on their organizational skills at home. For example, they can develop a plan for completing a task in the home, like cleaning their room, and then act on that plan.



FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN (FDK) REGISTRATION

Kindergarten Registration begins on Monday, February 3rd. Please visit Mrs. Guyatt in the Office to register your child.

When registering your child, please bring the following documents:

- Proof of birth
- Health card
- Proof of address

In September 2014, we will begin Full Day Kindergarten (FDK). FDK is five days-a-week, all day program.

We are projected to have four classes, which means that over the Summer a fourth classroom will be built on the south side of the building by the side entrance.

We also expect to add four Designated Early Childhood Educators to support the learning in these classrooms.

FDK does mean that we are completely closed to out-of-catchment in the coming year.

PLOWING, SALTING AND SANDING

Staff from HWDSB will clear, salt and/or sand the following areas:

- The walkways from the City sidewalk to the school;
- The school steps and portable steps;
- Walkways to the portables;
- Ramps to schools and portables;
- An area outside of entrances and Fire Exit Doors;
- Fire Exit stairs and ramps.

When there is an accumulation of 5 cm of snow, parking lots and sidewalks are plowed by approved contractors arranged through Facilities Management. General salting and sanding of the parking lot is also done by contracted staff prior to the commencement of the school day when deemed necessary by the Facility Management staff.

Head Caretakers may salt or sand isolated areas on the parking lot on an as needed basis. Playgrounds will not be plowed or otherwise cleared. Head Caretakers will check the condition of the grounds early in the morning and during the school day to sand and/or salt isolated slippery areas that may occur due to changing temperature.

BUILDING LITERACY SKILLS AT HOME:

Last year, Mrs. Utjesinovic, our former Literacy Improvement Project Teacher, developed the following information to summarize the key ideas shared during a parent session on Family Literacy Day, 2013.

There is research evidence supporting the idea that children's reading improves when parents also teach their children to read, using similar strategies to those used in the classroom (Leithwood, 2010).

Therefore, here are a few strategies parents can use at home to help their children improve their reading.



For Word Decoding and Phonics: Knowing how to use sounds to read words

Parents can.....

- ✓ For a younger reader, help your child learn letters and sounds of the alphabet. Occasionally point to letters and ask your child to name them;
- ✓ Encourage your child to write and spell notes, e-mails and letters using what he/she knows about sounds and letters;
- ✓ Talk with your child about the "irregular" words such as **said**, **are**, and **was** that he/she needs to recognize at sight.

Vocabulary: Knowing new words

Parents can.....

- ✓ Engage your child in conversations everyday. If possible, include new and interesting words in conversation;
- ✓ Read to your child each day. When the book contains a new or interesting word, pause and define the word for your child;
- ✓ Help build word knowledge by classifying and grouping objects or pictures while naming them
- ✓ Play verbal games and tell jokes and stories.

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness: Knowing that letters make sounds

Parents can.....

- ✓ Do sound-related activities, such as helping your child think of a number of words that start with the m/ or ch/ sound, or other beginning sounds;
- ✓ Make up silly sentences with words that begin with the same sound, such as "Nobody was nice to Nancy's neighbor";
- ✓ Use computer games designed to build your child's phonemic skills;
- ✓ Read books with rhymes. Teach your child rhymes, short.

Fluency: Knowing how to read at a steady rate

Parents can.....

- ✓ Support and encourage your child. Realize that he or she can be frustrated by reading;
- ✓ Check with your child's teachers find out their assessment of your child's decoding skills;
- ✓ Read aloud to your child to provide an example of how fluent reading sounds.

Comprehension: Understanding what you have read

Parents can.....

- ✓ Hold a conversation and discuss what your child has read;
- ✓ Ask your child probing questions about the book and connect the events to his or her own life;
- ✓ Help your child go back to the text to support his or her answers;
- ✓ Discuss the meanings of unknown words.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

**GATESTONE
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL**

**BILL TORRENS
PRINCIPAL
KELLY SWEETING
VICE-PRINCIPAL**

**127 GATESTONE DR.
STONE CREEK, ON
L8J 3Z5
(905) 573-7731
(905) 573-3127**

**GATESTONE@
HWDSB.ON.CA**

**HTTP://
SCHOOLS.HWDSB.
ON.CA/GATESTONE.**

**HTTPS://
TWITTER.COM/
GATESTONESCHOOL**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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2	3 FDK Registration Open	4	5	6 Pizza Sub Forms Due	7	8
9	10 TipOff Assembly Grades 5-8	11 Sub Day	12 JK/SK B Reports Go Home Caribou Math Contest	13 JK/SK A to Grade Eight Reports Go Home Pizza	14 Valentines Day Activities and -Dance	15
16	17 Family Day (No School)	18	19	20 Pizza Sub forms due	21 Grade Eight Graduation Pictures	22
23	24	25 Sub Day SPCA Cupcake Fundraiser	26 SPCA Cupcake Fundraiser	27 Pizza Winter Olympics Day	28 Winter Olympics Make-up Date	

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Key Dates in March

- March 3rd, Superintendent Visit
- March 7th, Professional Activity Day
- March 10th to 14th March Break