



Gatestone December Calendar

KEY EVENTS IN DECEMBER

Primary Joy Day
Tuesday, December 16th

Winter Celebration Assembly
Wednesday, December 17th

House Meeting Day
Thursday December 18th

Winter Break
Monday, December 22nd Friday, January 2nd

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

THE MONTH AHEAD

Gatestone will be incredibly busy in December, especially in the week leading up to the Winter Holidays when we have field trips, Joy Day, the Winter Celebration, Tribes Day and a Dance for Grades 6 to 8.

In the classroom, we continue to focus on developing our students' higher-order thinking skills, critical literacy skills and problem-solving skills through rich and engaging learning tasks.

We hope that our students enjoy their month in and out of the classroom!

LEARNING SKILL OF THE MONTH:

COLLABORATION

In December, we are focusing on the learning skill of collaboration. Students who demonstrate this trait:

- accept various roles and an equitable share of the work in groups;
- build healthy peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions;
- share information, resources, and expertise and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.

The next House Meeting and Award Assembly is December 18th.

TRIBES TOKEN UPDATE:

Wentworth- 566
Dundurn- 616
Alexander- 593
McMaster- 717
Victoria- 708
Griffin- 599

SCHOOL COUNCIL

McMillian's Pick-up

Thank you to everyone who supported the school with an order from McMillians. Pick up of McMillian's orders will be on **Tuesday December 2nd** from **4:00 to 7:00 pm** in the **Gym**. Unfortunately, orders cannot be sent home with students so please make arrangements for pickup.

NOTE: The school does not have fridge or freezer space to store any items that are not picked up.

Holiday Gift Shop

The **Tenth Annual Holiday Gift Shop** for students JK through to Grade 5 on **December 10, 11 and 12th** this year. Grades 6 to 8 students will have an opportunity to shop on the afternoon of the 12th.

All items will be under \$6.00 and this is a fantastic way for students to do some holiday shopping for family members. All gifts are wrapped at school.

The Gift Shop is not a fundraiser; however, any net

proceeds will be donated to the school. A letter will be going home with your child to indicate their assigned shopping time and day.

ANNUAL WINTER CELEBRATION & JOY DAY

Our Winter Celebration is scheduled for Wednesday, December 17th from 11:30 to 1:00. Once the organizing committee has completed the final details, more information will follow.

Primary Joy Day activities will take place on Tuesday December 16th. Students will rotate between 6 stations that focus on different celebrations and traditions such as: Christmas, Ramadan & Eid-al-Fitr, Diwali, Kwanzaa, Lunar (Chinese) New Year, and New Year's Eve.

FINAL WORDS

It has been an excellent start to the school year!

I'm immensely proud of the learning happening in the school—both the curricular learning of the students and the professional learning done by Staff.

On behalf of the Gatestone Staff, I wish everyone in our school community a wonderful Winter Break.

Bill Torrens, OCT

PARENT PARKING, PICK UP AND DROP OFF

We need your help to keep our school safe.

Perhaps the most dangerous parts of the school day is immediately before and after the school day.

We need your cooperation with our parking routine to keep our students safe.

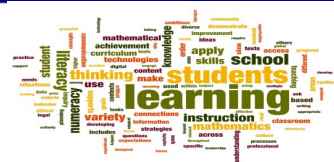
With the winter here, driving conditions worsen and the chance of accidents increase.

We do not have parking on-site for all parents who want to drive their children to school.

Since the start of the school year, parking, pick-up and drop off in the bus area and at the back is not permitted; and, **we appreciate the overwhelming support we have received.**

Please continue to use street parking whenever possible and do

not park in designated bus and fire route areas or spots at the side of the building that are for daycare drop off and pick up. Thank you



MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

This is a reminder that HWDSB Policy requires students taking oral medication at school have written authorization by parents and a physician.

Please connect with Mrs. Guyatt or Ms. Aguirre in the Office if your child needs to take oral medications at school.



SCHOOL CASH IS COMING TO GATESTONE

Over the course of the next few months, Gatestone will move to a cashless, on-line tool to collect funds for school events like pizza and trips.

More information will be forthcoming in the new year.

NEW TRUSTEE

The new school trustee for ward 9 & 10 is Mr. Jeff Beattie. He will be visiting December 19th for a school tour with our Superintendent of Student Achievement, Laura Romano.

Congratulations to Mr. Beattie on his newly elected position and we

look forward to working with him in the future.



FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Our Indigo Adopt-A-School Fundraiser garnered over \$3200 for reading materials. We have spent some of the funds on literature circle novels for our Grade Eights. Mrs. Barber and Moore are now working with the rest of the staff to use the remainder of the funds to add to our school library.

Thank you so much to Caitlin Bott and the staff at the Heritage Green Indigo for their support of our school!

As a reminder, our weekly pizza sales are an on-going fundraiser for the school. The funds raised are used in a

variety of ways. For example, the Cinderella and Frog Prince anti-bullying assembly was paid for by pizza sales, as was the cases for our new iPad minis.

We also use the pizza sales as an equity fund to ensure that all students have access to field trips by reducing the costs of trip and/or subsidizing the trip fee for some students.

School Council will decide how the funds raised through the MacMillan's fundraiser will be used in the school.

DECEMBER—A MONTH OF CELEBRATIONS

December and early January is a important time for many within our Gatestone community.

By the time we return from the Winter Break in January, members of our community will have celebrated a number of significant events. Christmas for Orthodox Christians and New Year Celebrations for our Buddhist community fall later in January. Here is some information related to the celebrations occurring in our community this month.

What is Christmas?

Christmas or Christmas Day is a holiday generally observed on December 25 (with alternative days of Jan, 6, 7, & 19) to commemorate the birth of Jesus, the central figure of Christianity.

What is Hanukkah?

Hanukkah is an eight-day Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Holy Temple (the Second Temple) in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt of the 2nd century BCE. Hanukkah is observed for eight nights and days, starting on the 25th day of Kislev according to the Hebrew calendar, which may occur at any time from late November to late December in the Gregorian calendar.

What is Kwanzaa?

Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration honoring universal African-American heritage and culture, observed from December 26 to January 1 each year. It features activities such as lighting

a candle holder with seven candles and culminates in a feast and gift giving. It was created by Maulana Karenga and was first celebrated in 1966–1967.

At Gatestone, we strive to create acceptance and understanding of different traditions.

Our annual Primary Joy Day and Winter Celebration strive to educate our students on different cultural traditions, including wintertime in Canada, rather than indoctrinate in or practice any one tradition.



CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Severe weather across the District or in any part of the District may result in the cancellation of transportation services to the entire District.

If the weather is severe enough, the General Manager of the Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System will advise the Director or Designate of the road conditions and weather conditions. The Director of Education or Designate will then decide whether

or not to cancel all school and board administrative operations.

If the conditions are determined to be unsafe, The Director of Education or Designate will then inform Corporate Communications and the General Manager of Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation System of the cancellation of all school and board administrative operations.

Corporate Communications will inform the community by contacting the media, the City of Hamilton, school-based child care providers and by posting cancellation information on the website. For more information on the Cancellation of School & Board Operations visit our Policy page at : <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/schools/inclement-weather/>



THE BACK FIELD

On the recommendation of our contractor, the back field will be closed until the field is completely frozen over for the winter and/or there is at least 30cm of snow on the field.

This is challenging for the student, admittedly, but we are being proactive and working to ensure to the best of our ability that the field is in great shape next spring.

WINTER IS HERE!

With the arrival of the cold weather, please ensure that your child(ren) has hats, coats, mitts/gloves and boots/warm shoes for going outside for Nutrition Breaks.

We strive to get our students outside as much as possible throughout the Winter, but we will keep them inside when it is raining or if we feel the weather conditions are unsafe like extreme cold or high winds.

Although we hope to not see this temperature until January, -15degrees Celsius is the temperature at which we keep our students indoors.

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

GATESTONE DECEMBER CALENDAR

LOOKING AHEAD TO JANUARY

Monday, January 5th
School Resumes

Wednesday, January 7th, Orthodox Christmas

Friday, January 23rd,
Professional Activity Day

**Gatestone
Elementary School**

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Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

1	2 MacMillan Order Pick-Up 4:00-7:00pm	3 Grade Three Trip to Battlefield Park	4 Pizza Mad Science	5
8	9	10 Holiday Gift Shop Drama Club Trip to Toronto	11 Holiday Gift Shop Pizza Mad Science	12 Holiday Gift Shop Grade 2 Festival of Lights Trip
15 Middle School Movie Trip Staff vs Stu- dent volleyball game	16 Primary Joy Day	17 11:30 Winter Celebration Assembly Hanukkah starts	18 Pizza House Meet- ing/Assembly Mad Science	19 Grade 6-8 Dance
23	24 Hanukkah ends	25 Christmas Day (Western)	26 Kwanzaa Starts	27
30	31 New Years Eve			

Winter Holidays