



170 Skinner Road
Waterdown, Ontario
LOR 2H7
(905) 523-2328

"A proud feeder school to St. Mary Catholic Secondary School"

SUPERINTENDENT: M. HUCAL
PRINCIPAL: D. YOUNGER
PRINCIPAL INTERN: A. CAIELLA

TRUSTEE: C. CORNALE
PASTOR: VERY REV. W.L. FATHER. LOBSINGER, EV, PP
SECRETARY: M. RATH

ST. THOMAS "WILDCATS" - JANUARY 2017

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the staff of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Elementary School, this opportunity is taken to thank each of you for your generous donations and support of the Christmas initiatives that took place at school this year. Your generosity, support and kindness helped to make our Christmas Season special and memorable. Countless families will have benefitted from your generosity and corporal acts of mercy. Best wishes at this time are extended to each of you for a new year filled with joy, health, hope and peace! The new year is God's gift and blessing to us. We welcome the days and weeks to come and look forward to the challenges and learning opportunities that the year brings. We strive to work in partnership with you to always make learning a successful and rewarding experience for your children. May God bless you throughout 2017.

A PRAYER for the NEW YEAR:

Dear Lord,
As we begin a new year,
We turn our thoughts to how we can
Touch and be touched, love and be loved,
Forgive and be forgiven, heal and be healed,
So that the goodness of our lives becomes
A shared blessing for others;
We ask that Your grace fill us
With the courage and conviction to
Be Merchants of Hope for those
With whom we live and work
And those we teach.
Amen.

<https://vimeo.com/181403388>

SCHOOL LITURGY

On Friday, January 17, 2017, at 9:30 am we will celebrate the Eucharistic Adoration as a school community in our school gym. Please keep this date in mind and join us.

JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION for 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR

Parents wishing to register their child in Junior Kindergarten (FDK Year One) for September 2017 are asked to contact the school's Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Rath, to make an appointment (905)523-2328. Mrs. Rath will schedule an appointment in February for you to visit the school, complete the necessary forms and submit the required documentation.

If your child is currently in Junior Kindergarten (FDK Year One), you do not need to register him/her again.

Parents/guardians will need to provide:

- Baptismal Certificate
- Birth Certificate
- Proof of Residency
- Proof of up-to-date Immunization
- Immigration papers, if applicable

Age of Admission: Children are required to be 4 years of age on or before December 31, 2017.

VOLUNTEERING AT SCHOOL AND FOR TRIPS

Parents/guardians require a Vulnerable Sector Screening Form to volunteer or help with trips. You can get a letter from the office that will ensure a reduced rate. Once you receive the completed Vulnerable Sector Screening Form, please give it to the office staff to take a photocopy for Board records. If you have not completed any of the above for this school year, please contact Mrs. Rath at the Office for further direction. Your assistance with this process is greatly appreciated.

ATTENDANCE

Parents/guardians are asked to call the school prior to 9:10 a.m. on every day of an absence. Please provide a reason for the absence and if your child is ill, please advise of the symptoms your child is experiencing.

Please note that our answering machine is available to receive messages outside of school hours.

DRESSING FOR WINTER WEATHER

Winter is upon us! Please ensure that your child comes to school prepared for cold weather with a hat, mittens, scarf, boots and a warm coat (snow pants where necessary). Please label your child's clothing so that there is no confusion. Also, ensure that your child has a pair of indoor shoes. Wearing boots of any kind indoors is not permitted.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

When schools are closed or buses cancelled due to extreme weather conditions, details will be announced through the following Hamilton and area media outlets:

- 900 CHML/Country 95.3 FM/Y/108 FM
- 1150 CKOC/K-Lite 102.9 FM/820
- CHAM/WAVE 94.7 FM
- CH Morning Live (Channel 12)
- CBC Hamilton - www.cbc.ca/hamilton
- The Hamilton Spectator - www.thespec.com
- Twitter - <https://twitter.com/HWCDSB>
- Facebook - www.facebook.com

Parents/guardians should take notice of the following guidelines:

- In the event of impending severe weather conditions, parents should consider the safety of their children in deciding whether or not to send them to school
- Parents should stay tuned to the Hamilton and area radio stations for weather reports and School Board announcements
- Parents, who in spite of bus cancellations, drive their children to school, should ensure that their children can get into the school and will be required to make the necessary arrangements for the safe return home of their children at the end of the day or in the event of an early closure. Buses which do not run in the morning will not run for the rest of the day.

FAMILY LITERACY DAY

Family Literacy Day is a national awareness initiative created by ABC Life Literacy Canada in 1999 and held annually on January 27 to raise awareness of the importance of reading and engaging in other literacy-related activities as a family.

Taking time every day to read or do a learning activity with children is crucial to a child's development. Even just 15 minutes a day can improve a child's literacy skills dramatically.

Barbara Reid, award-winning Canadian author and illustrator, is named Honourary Chair of Family Literacy Day 2016!

<https://youtu.be/k0SF5XG1AkA>

As part of our literacy focus, a **SNUGGLE UP AND READ DAY** has been planned for January 26, 2017.

On this day, staff and students from FDK-Grade 8 are invited to wear their pajamas to school and participate in this event. Parents, guardians and grandparents are invited to come to school (9:30-10:30) and snuggle up with their child (FDK-Gr 3) to read their favourite books.

Mrs. Richardson will also be coordinating the annual STTA Book Swap for this day..more details to follow.

Remember to check out TumbleBook Library, a completely free online catalogue of read aloud books that are sure to delight both young and old alike. Free access is possible through the Hamilton Public Library with an active library card.

<http://kids.hpl.ca/digital-media/tumble-books>

JANUARY AWARDS CEREMONY

The January Award Ceremony will be on Tuesday, January 31, 2017 at 12:40pm in the gym. All are welcome.

January foci will be the virtue of 'Community', the Seven Habit 'Think Win Win' and, as always, the school motto 'Lead, Learn, Love and Leave a Legacy'.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

St. Thomas the Apostle Before and After school program is a school-based Catholic Child Care program designed to support and complement the programs of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School. We provide care for children attending school all day from ages 4 to 12 years of age. The program offers a variety of activities which includes recreation and games, arts and crafts, reading, music, time to work on homework and free time for the children to pursue their own interests in a safe, friendly environment. Please contact the program through the main office of the school (905) 523.2328 or the Before and After School Program (905) 525-2268 Ext. 2628 for more details on how they can support the child care needs of your family.

We wish Miss Carm all the best as she goes on Maternity Leave and we congratulate Miss Sydney who will be acting supervisor.



PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY DAY:

A reminder that Friday, January 27, 2017 is a Professional Activity Day; No school for the students on this day.

GRADE 8 GUIDANCE - High School Choices

The Grade 8 students have begun their preparations for high school and will be completing their course selection and registration forms shortly. Please keep in mind that Catholic Education and the Christian community experience does not end with Confirmation in Grade 7. The religious education and training as well as the community experience offered by St. Mary CSS, our Catholic feeder high school is one that is unparalleled. Last year, many of our Grade 8 students made the choice to attend St. Mary Catholic Secondary School. We hope and pray that our families will continue to make this choice. St. Mary CSS has been very proactive in meeting the needs of the Flamborough community-often fine tuning their level of service to meet the unique needs and requests of our community. We have enjoyed and flourished in the community building days hosted at St. Mary Catholic Secondary School and will continue to do so in the weeks and months ahead.

The Grade 8 option sheet and registration day is scheduled for Friday, January 13, 2017. St. Mary CSS staff will help guide our grade 8 students through this process during the school day.

CYO BASKETBALL AND VOLLEYBALL

All the best to the Junior/Senior Boys' Basketball Teams and the Junior/Senior Girls' Volleyball Teams. League play commences in January. Visit http://cyo.on.ca/?page_id=133 to see full schedules. Thanks to our coaches!!!

STUDENT SAFETY and ACCESS to the SCHOOL

Access to the school is provided via a remote access camera. Please use the front doors for security monitoring purposes. You will be greeted by someone at the main office and asked the nature of your visit along with a request to report to the office to check in.

For our families that are using the Before and After Care program, please note that entry to the school is granted by the supervisors of the program and the expectation is that you report to the appropriate room, pick up your child/ren and exit the building. It is not appropriate to wander the building in an effort to access your child's classroom at this time since all classrooms are locked when staff members depart for the day. The custodial staff cannot afford to dedicate time to open doors for you as we are in a building that requires cleaning in a large number of areas and the focus of the cleaning effort is to clean, not permit classroom access. First and foremost, this is a security issue and we want to ensure that our custodial staff are safe during the afterhours.

For our families who have children participating in clubs and after school team practices, our club supervisors and coaches have been instructed to escort the team/club members to the middle door off of the parking lot. This will take place to ensure that the children are picked up at the end of the practice/event session by a parent or guardian waiting in the Kiss and Drop lane.

Please do know that these requests are made in the interest of building security and student/adult safety.

GRADE 8-MONTREAL TRIP ON-LINE REGISTRATION

Grade 8 parents, on-line registration and payment for Montreal is open. The students have each been assigned a username and password at <http://www.explorica.ca/my-account>. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Shannon.

HEAD LICE - Reminder

Head lice is not a reflection on the state of cleanliness; it is a reoccurring problem that is easily transmitted. Head lice spread easily through direct head-to-head contact and indirectly by sharing things like hats, combs, hairbrushes and headphones. Head lice that live on people do not live on pets such as cats

and dogs.

When checking for head lice, use a bright light. Use a magnifying glass if you have one. Spread the hair with a comb and look at the scalp. Lice crawl very fast, but they do not fly or jump. Also, look for eggs on the hair close to the scalp. They are often found on the hair behind the ears or where the hair meets the neck. Look for open sores and scabs on the head.

For more information, contact Hamilton Public Health Services (905)546-2489 or <https://www.hamilton.ca/public-health/health-topics/head-lice>

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

The next Catholic School Council (CSC) has been scheduled for Monday, January 16, 2017 at 7:00pm in the Learning Commons. Mrs. Caiella will be providing an overview of the Ministry's new 'Creating Pathways for Success' initiative for FDK-8. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FREE THROW CHALLENGE

Stay tuned for the annual Knights of Columbus Free Throw Challenge on Saturday, January 14, 2017 from 8:30-11:00am in the STTA school gymnasium. Top 'throwers' from the school will be competing in this regional competition. The school-level competition will be Wednesday, January 11, 2017.

SCHOOL CASH ONLINE

Thank you again for everyone's patience as we continue to perfect the cash online system. Our continued efforts will ensure a seamless and accountable way to track payments and maintain financial integrity. optional.

PIZZA TERM TWO

Term 1 orders end Wednesday, Feb. 1. Stay tuned for information regarding Term 2 orders.



THE LAST WORD(S) (to lead us into 2017)

"The beginning is the most important part for that is the time character is being formed."

-Plato

"The object of a new year is not that we should have a new year.

It is that we should have a new soul."

-G.K. Chesterton

"Maybe this year...walk through the rooms of our lives not looking for flaws, but potential."

-Ellen Goodman

"Decide that you are not going to stay where you are."

-J.P. Morgan

"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."

-Dr. Martin Luther King

"Stay away from what might have been, and look at what can be."

-Marsha Petrie Sue

"Everyone who got where he is had to begin where he was."

-Robert Louis Stevenson

"Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbours, and let each new year find you a better man."

-Benjamin Franklin

"Start doing what's necessary; then do what's possible: suddenly you are doing the impossible."

-St. Francis of Assisi

"For last year's words belong to last year's language and next year's words await another voice."

-T.S. Eliot

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; all things have become new."

-2 Corinthians 5:17

"For I know the plans I have for you...to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you hope and a future."

-Jeremiah 29:11

