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

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ST. THOMAS "WILDCATS" FEBRUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

The month of February promises to be a very busy one at St. Thomas the Apostle CES. As always, the school continues to meet the unique learning needs and interests of all students while providing experiences and opportunities in the classroom and co-curricular life.

February marks the end of Term One for staff and students. This is an ideal time for students to pause and reflect on past effort and determination as a 'mid year check-in'. While looking back, students can celebrate successes and consider ways to build upon them....going from good to great and then excellent to extraordinary.

Some reflective questions for students to ponder when looking back on the past term:

"Have I put forth my full effort when attempting to learn or do new things?"

"Have I reached out for help when I was confused or found something difficult to do?"

"When the learning became difficult, did I stick to it or did I quit?"

The last question speaks to *resilience*. The development of resilience in all students is more important than ever, especially when we consider this ever changing world around us. Resilience is the ability to adapt and respond to adversity, challenge and stress in a healthy, productive way. It is for this reason that much attention is given to the concept of self-regulation at our school, aligning well with the school board's focus on mental health and wellness for all.

SHROVE TUESDAY

The Catholic School Council in partnership with the STTA Student Council will be serving pancakes to classes on Tuesday, Feb. 28, 2017.

ST. THOMAS BASKETBALL TEAMS

Congratulations to the Junior and Senior Boys' Basketball Teams who continue to demonstrate great drive, skill and sportsmanship on the court. Thanks to Bianca and Delaney, student coaches, and Mrs. Anderson and Mr. Stechey for dedicating time to supporting and refereeing.

ST. THOMAS VOLLEYBALL TEAMS

Congratulations to the Junior and Senior Girls' Volleyball Teams for their great play as well. Thanks to Miss Romeo, Mrs. Macleod and Mrs. Fallis for their time in coaching. Special thanks to Mr. Stechey for dedicating tremendous time and effort in officiating on both Monday and Tuesday evenings throughout both seasons.

PROVINCIAL FAMILY DAY

Monday, February 20, 2017

On October 11, 2007, the Government of Ontario announced the creation of a province-wide statutory holiday known as Family Day. This day will occur each year on the third Monday in February for the purpose of emphasizing and celebrating the importance of families taking time together. As a result, Family Day this year will be Monday, February 20, 2017.

Accordingly, school will be closed. Enjoy the time!

MARCH BREAK

The March break will begin on Monday, March 13, 2017. School will resume on Monday, March 20, 2017.

McMASTER UNIVERSITY THIRD YEAR NURSING STUDENT PLACEMENTS

We have been blessed once again with the opportunity to work with nursing students from McMaster University. Their work will continue to focus on nurturing positive climate and wellness.

The nursing students plan on looking at the importance of daily physical activity in our lives.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FREE THROW

Congratulations to the students who participated in the KOC Free Throw Challenge.

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/189536--STTA-and-the-KOC-Free-Throw-Challenge>

LEARNING COMMONS

The Book Fair was a stellar success, thanks to the many efforts of volunteers and Mrs. Byrne.

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/200973--STTA-Book-Fair->

FAMILY LITERACY WEEK EVENTS

On January 26, 2017, we held our annual Snuggle Up and Read event. Once again it was a huge success! We thank all parents, grandparents and all family members who took time out of their day to come to our school and spend time with their children, reading and playing games.

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/201006--STTA-Snuggle-Up-and-Read-Day>

SCHOOL LOCKDOWN

On a rare occasion, there may be a lockdown of our school. A lockdown is defined by the Hamilton-Wentworth Police as "the restriction of movement during the time of a potentially serious violent incident that could endanger the lives of students and staff."

We are required to practice this lockdown a minimum of two times each year. We held a Lockdown Drill in first term. Students and staff followed procedures

with precision, ensuring the security and safety for all. We will be practising a second drill in the second term. These drills ensure safety and security for all.

VALENTINE'S DAY

Students are encouraged to dress in red, white and pink on Tuesday, February 14, 2017. This is a dress down day for the staff and students. Fun activities will be planned by student council on that day.... details to follow in the coming days....including the annual Cake Raffle.

GROUNDHOG DAY

February 2, 2017 is Groundhog Day. The school will participate in a KAHOOT created by William.

William, the Quizmaster, will monitor from Headquarters (Mr. Younger's computer in the office) and engage participants throughout, including commentary. Ask your children that evening how the event unfolded!

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

The next school council meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 6, 2017 at 7:00pm in the Learning Commons. All are welcome to attend!

LEGION OF MARY

Representatives of the Legion of Mary have been visiting Grade 2 and 7 students, teaching them about the Rosary and leading in prayer.

WELCOME SISTER MARGARET

We welcome Sister Margaret from Notre Dame Convent. Sister Margaret visits the school every Tuesday and Thursday morning to read with students from Kindergarten to Grade 3.

DENTAL SCREENING GRADE 2

A reminder that Dental Screenings will be available for all Kindergarten and Grade 2 students on February 13, 2017. We thank the Public Health representatives who will visit the school on this date to support our students.

VISION SCREENINGS

Statistics suggest that one out of seven children are sitting in classrooms with significant and undiagnosed vision problems. With this in mind, the school is happy to partner with the EYE-MAC Initiative.

Through the leadership of Dr. Sabrin from McMaster University, colleagues will visit the school once a week and provide vision screening tests for those students who return active permission forms. Together, we can ensure healthy vision for all children, ages 4-14.

INDOOR SHOES

It is imperative that children have "indoor shoes" to wear indoors during the winter months. Wet floors, fire alarms and general safety concerns necessitate this request. Slippers are not to be worn during school time.

PIZZA SECOND TERM

Term 2 Pizza: Cash-on-line orders due Thursday, February 2, 2017. Term 2 pizza orders will commence Wednesday, February 8, 2017. Thanks for supporting.

IMMUNIZATION REMINDER

If your child's immunization information is not complete, Public Health and Community Services will be sending you a letter requesting that you update your child's immunization information. Hamilton's Medical Officer will inform certain parents that their children will be officially suspended from school until various conditions are met.

Free Immunization clinics are provided by Public Health and Community Services for families which do not have a family doctor. Call 905.540.5250 for more information.

<https://www.hamilton.ca/public-health/clinics-services/vaccines-and-immunization-clinics>

FAREWELL MRS. FALLIS AND WELCOME BACK MR. MACDONALD

We wish Mrs. Fallis nothing but the best as she leaves STTA this month for the birth of her baby and the start of her maternity leave. It is also with excitement that we announce that Mr. MacDonald will be returning as the occasional teacher taking over the Grade 6/7 classroom.

WINTER WEAR YELLOW WALK DAY

Staff and students are invited to wear yellow clothes on February 1, 2017. All of HWCDSB is celebrating this day which promotes active transportation (walking, cycling, rolling) to and from school.

HAMILTON BULL DOGS GAME

Grade 5-8 students will be attending a Hamilton Bull Dogs game on February 8, 2017. Permission forms were sent home. Payment is available via School Cash Online. Thanks for your support.

HWCDSB CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL BREAKFAST

The board will be hosting the annual breakfast for each school Principal and CSC Representative to celebrate the success of the council system on Friday, February 3, 2017.

DEACON ROSS

Welcome back, Deacon Ross. He will be visiting classrooms in the coming weeks.

HAPPY 100TH DAY

On February 13, the Kinder-Primary classes will be celebrating our 100th day by engaging in a variety of activities grounded in mathematics and the concept of 100.

REPORT CARDS GO HOME

Report cards for students (SK-Grade 8) will be released to students and parents on February 15, 2017. Students will be encouraged to celebrate and build upon current successes while also responding to areas in need of improvement. Learning Skills and Work Habits remain a focus as always since these are lifelong traits that have an impact on all future endeavours. As always, STTA thanks all parents for the collaboration in charting the journey ahead for their children into the second term.

FEBRUARY AWARD ASSEMBLY

Please join us for our monthly award assembly on Tuesday, February 28, 2017.

FIRST RECONCILIATION

We celebrate as the Grade Two students receive the sacrament of First Reconciliation during the evening of February 21, 2017 at St. Thomas the Apostle Church. All are invited. Thanks to Mrs. Horzelenberg, Mrs. Caiella and Miss Pollice for preparing the students. Thanks mostly to all parents, the children's first and foremost teachers, for ensuring that home is filled with prayer and grounded in our Catholic faith.

STTA VISUAL ARTS MASTERS

Thanks to Mrs. Legace-Gagnier and Miss Romeo for their time and talents each Thursday evening from 3:30-5:00 when students gather with them in the STTA Gallery for an exploration of the fine arts and the classical masters.

STTA LEGO CLUB

Thanks to Mrs. Horzelenberg and Mrs. Caiella for this unique club that nurtures mathematical and mechanical and architectural thinking.

STTA SKYPE CLUB

Thanks to Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Horzelenberg for exposing students to networking with fellow children from across the globe in virtual conversation.

STTA CODING CLUB

Thanks to Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Horzelenberg for teaching students about programming/robotics.

CONFIRMATION ENROLMENT WEEKEND

February 18-19 is Confirmation Enrolment Weekend at the church for all students receiving the sacrament of reconciliation this school year.

2016/2017 MAJOR SCHOOL FUNDRAISER

February marks the kick-off month for this school year's major fundraiser. This year, in honour of the Health Action Team's ongoing mission to support healthy living, chocolates will NOT be sold. Instead, the school is in the planning stages of the STTA [Math-a-Ment-a-Move-athon](#).

Students will be invited to collect pledges from family members in their pursuit of maintaining active and ongoing participation in a series of activities that involve:

- M**athematical Learning
- M**ental Wellness
- M**ovement and Physical Activity

Much like circuit training, the students will join together with fellow students from other grades in a series of interconnected and continuously flowing activities (still in the planning stages) that last two hours in steady duration.

Pledges collected by students will fund the following items which will support the entire population:

1. Book Room Leveled Books (for independent reading) (approximate value: \$3500.00)
2. Charging Station with 10 ipads and keyboard cases (approximate value: \$7500.00)

Thank you in advance for your support.

VIRTUAL SUPPORTS

Everyone is reminded to continue visiting the LMS (Learning Management System) 'My Class' to see their child's virtual classroom. You will find a plethora of information about what's happening along with resources and links to great supports in the home. A huge note of appreciation is extended to our Teachers and ECEs who spend countless hours updating the sites and loading many posts as communication of learning and items of information. <https://hwcdsb.elearningontario.ca/>

QUOTES FOR THE MONTH

(in honour of Valentine's Day)

What does love mean? A group of professionals posed this question to a group of 4-8 year olds. The answers they got were broader and deeper than anyone could have imagined. Some are as follows:

'When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth.' - Billy, age 4

'Love is what makes you smile when you are tired.' - Terri, age 4

'If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend you don't like.' Nikka, age 5

'Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen.' - Bobby, age 5

And the final one comes from a contest to find the most caring child. The winner was a four year old child whose next door neighbour was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed into his lap, and just sat there. When his Mother asked what he had said to the neighbour, the little boy said, 'Nothing, I just helped him cry'.



Learning Skills and Work Habits	Sample Behaviours
Responsibility	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fulfils responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment; • completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to agreed-upon timelines; • takes responsibility for and manages own behaviour.
Organization	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Independent Work	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • independently monitors, assesses, and revises plans to complete tasks and meet goals; • uses class time appropriately to complete tasks; • follows instructions with minimal supervision.
Collaboration	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group; • responds positively to the ideas, opinions, values, and traditions of others; • builds healthy peer-to-peer relationships through personal and media-assisted interactions; • works with others to resolve conflicts and build consensus to achieve group goals; • shares information, resources, and expertise and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions.
Initiative	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looks for and acts on new ideas and opportunities for learning; • demonstrates the capacity for innovation and a willingness to take risks; • demonstrates curiosity and interest in learning; • approaches new tasks with a positive attitude; • recognizes and advocates appropriately for the rights of self and others.
Self-regulation	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sets own individual goals and monitors progress towards achieving them; • seeks clarification or assistance when needed; • assesses and reflects critically on own strengths, needs, and interests; • identifies learning opportunities, choices, and strategies to meet personal needs and achieve goals; • perseveres and makes an effort when responding to challenges.