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"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

MARCH - 2017 NEWSLETTER "WILDCATS"

Prayer to be a Better Person

Lord, help me today to think of the feelings of others as much as I think of my own. If I know there are things which annoy people with whom I live and work, help me not to do them. If I know there are things which would please them, help me to go out of my way to do them. Help me to think before I speak, so that I may not thoughtlessly or tactlessly hurt or embarrass anyone.

If I have to disagree with anyone, help me to do so with courtesy.

If I have to argue with anyone, help me to do so without losing my temper.

If I have to criticize anyone, help me to do so with kindness.

If anyone has to criticize me, help me to accept it with grace.

Help me all through the day to treat others as I would wish to be treated.

Amen

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

We begin by again thanking staff, students, parents, guardians and families for contributing to the wondrousness that is St. Thomas the Apostle CES. Each month, we are continually reminded of how special this school remains and what a blessing it is to be part of this tremendous community.

Ash Wednesday marked the beginning of the very important season of Lent. Lent is a time for "Spring Cleaning", a cleaning of our hearts, our minds, as we continue our spiritual journey and grow closer to God. Lent is a time of going beyond ourselves and doing things that will make a difference for others.

Students were challenged to make Lenten Promises and these promises were offered as a gift during our Ash Wednesday Liturgy at the Church. This is a time for us to ask God for His forgiveness for our human

weaknesses. During these days of Lent, we strive to be even better Merchants of Hope for those around us.

May God continue to bless each of you with His wisdom, knowledge and grace throughout the month of March.

MARCH VIRTUE - COURAGE

As members of one global family, we are committed to the common good and we are responsible to one another. At times it takes courage to speak out on behalf of others, especially others whom we may not know because they are far away. We must ask ourselves, "How can we be our brothers' and sisters' keepers wherever they live?"

"Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge justly, defend the rights of the poor and the needy." (Proverbs 31: 8-9)

On a more local level, do we always stand up for the marginalized or those being unjustly treated? Do we show courage in speaking out and standing up for those around us who are being mistreated. It takes 'courage' but each one of us can make a difference. As Tolkien said, "Even the smallest person can change the course of the future."

Congratulations to February's Award Winners:
<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/223243--February-Award-Winners->

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Mrs. Fallis on the birth of her son, Thomas:

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/222976--Congratulations-Mrs-Fallis>

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Krish on winning Gold and the BASEF Award at the HWCDSB Science Fair. His project title: Developing a transdermal calorimetric test patch to identify iron loss in sweat using diisopropylbenzene dihydroperoxide and 3'3'5'5' tetramethylbenzidine

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/223734--STTA-Congratulates-Krish>

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWS

The Catholic School Council would like to thank the many parents for their help with Shrove Tuesday and the Pancake Extravaganza. A special thanks to Sunset Grill in Waterdown for donating the pancake batter. If you get a chance, stop by Sunset Grill to give their restaurant a try and to say thanks for their generous donation.

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/223298--STTA-and-Shrove-Tuesday>

Thank you, Catholic School Parent Council!
Next meeting: April 3, 7:00pm in the Learning Commons. All parents welcome.

QUIDDITCH

The STTA Quidditch League is well underway. Students who are participating have been placed in one of four 'houses': Gryffindor,

Hufflepuff, Slytherin and Ravenclaw. All games and points won will go toward the final 'Quidditch Cup'. Well done to all players for their sportsmanship as each 'house' flies about in pursuit of the elusive 'Golden Snitch.'

MARCH BREAK

Monday, March 13th to Friday, March 17th.
Students return to school on Monday, March 20th, 2017.

UPDATING OUR FILES

We are in the midst of preparing our school organization for September 2017 over the next couple of months. If you have moved or are planning a move to a new address, please notify the school office (905)523-2328. Also, if any of your contact information has changed, please let Mrs. Rath know so that she can update our files.

SIGN IN PROCEDURES

For the safety of our students, all visitors and parents must report to the office. Access to classrooms is only granted through the office. Please do not go to the classrooms without checking in at the office. Mrs. Rath will be happy to call your child/children down to see you for any of your concerns. Classrooms should not be interrupted at any time by a parent visitor at the classroom door. Meeting opportunities should be scheduled with the classroom teacher in advance; a phone call or note in the agenda will initiate the necessary contact. Thank you as always for your cooperation.

LOST AND FOUND

You are kindly asked to label every clothing item, including boots and snowpants. Thank you for your support. There are currently many items in search of their rightful owners.

LIBRARY NEWS

Thanks to Mrs. Byrne who has organized the Forest of Reading Club. Each year, a collection of children's books are shortlisted for awards. Students have the opportunity to devour each title and vote for the winning entries. Thanks Mrs. Bryne!

STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS

Thanks to Student Council, in collaboration with CSC for planning the STTA Cake Raffle on February 14, 2017. It was a huge success. Thanks to all families for contributing delicious baked goods for the event.

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/202395--STTA-Cake-Raffle-Day>

The Student Council has also planned a 'Students vs Staff Volleyball Game' on March 9, 2017.

FIRST RECONCILIATION

Congratulations to our Grade 2 students who received the sacrament of First Reconciliation at the church in February. The students were examples of peace and prayerfulness as they opened their hearts once again to God. Let us continue to pray for our Grade 2 students as they continue to prepare for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion in June. Thanks to Mrs. Caiella, Mrs. Horzelenberg and Miss Pollice for preparing the children so well.

FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Registration for Full Day Kindergarten, Year One for September 2017 is now in full swing. Please call Mrs. Rath at 905-523-2328 to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. Most current enrolment numbers are used for classroom organizations and staffing allotments. It is best to register sooner than later. Please also let your friends and neighbours know that the registration process for September has started.

The following documents are required for registration:

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

CONFIRMATION

Please wish the Grade 7 class well as they are preparing for the Holy Sacrament of Confirmation which takes place on March 26, 2017. May the Holy Spirit guide them on this journey of self-reflection.

Preparation for this sacrament will be enhanced when the Grade 7 students participate in a Diversity Conference on March 23 and a Confirmation Retreat on March 24. Thanks to Mr. MacDonald for his time and efforts.

CAREER DAY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

On Wednesday, May 3rd at 9:30am, the school will be hosting a Career Day for our Junior/Intermediate students. We are looking for volunteers who are willing to share their careers with our students. If you are interested, please call the school and leave your name and number and Mrs. Richardson will get back to you with more details.

HEALTH ACTION TEAM (HAT)

The STTA Health Action Team continues to meet regularly under the guidance of Public Health Nurse Julie and Mrs. Caiella and Mrs. Haynes. The goal is to nurture positive climate and wellness at St. Thomas the Apostle CES. Our McMaster Nursing Students are working in tandem. The 'Get Caught Getting Active' campaign has been a huge success. Thanks to the HAT for all their work.

SCHOOL FUNDRAISER

Thanks to all families for supporting this year's major school fundraiser: "Around the World Math-a-Ment-a-Movathon" All pledges can be submitted via Cash Online. Prizes will be awarded for the top pledges after the March Break. The big event is Friday, March 10, 2017.

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/222732--STTA-Around-the-World-MATH-a-MENT-a-MOVathon>

GRADE 8 GRAD PORTRAITS

The wonderful Grade 8 students of STTA will have their grad portraits taken on March 22. Smile !

EYE MAC

Vision screenings will occur in the month of March for those students who returned signed permission forms of active consent. Thanks to our partners from McMaster University and Dr. Sabourin.

GRADE 8s TO CABLE 14

Grade 8s will be participating in an educational excursion to Cable 14 on March 28. The STTA Eyewitness News crew should find the visit very informative.

BASEF

The Bay Area Science and Engineering Fair is open to all students in Grade 7-12. Please visit the following link for more details. We strongly encourage everyone to consider. Registration is open until March 7, 2017:

<http://www.basef.ca/>

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION STRATEGY

The STTA Mental Health Team (Mr. Ippolito, Mrs. Richardson, Mrs. Duffy, Mrs. Lamparski and Mr. Younger) will be attending a full day workshop on March 31. Theme of workshop: supporting students with mental wellness and addictions.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Students from Grade 2-8 will have the opportunity to receive the sacrament of Penance on March 9 as Father Lobsinger and a team of priests visit the school. The gym will be transformed into a holy place for this sacred experience.

PARISH-SCHOOL CONNECTION

Thanks as always to our wonderful partnership with the parish friends Father Lobsinger, Father Whitfield, Deacon Ross, Justin Peters and Kendall Shepherd. We are indeed blessed.

COMING SOON: LUNCHBOX SERVICES

STTA will be piloting the services of Lunchbox <http://www.lunchboxorders.com/> In April, May and June, parents/guardians will have the opportunity to order meals online. The orders, completely voluntary and optional can be submitted weekly and online without the need for cash transactions. Lunchbox Orders is a third party provider that coordinates everything. We will monitor carefully to make decisions going forward into the new school year.

Tentative Order Plans:

Monday: **Quesada**

Tuesday: **Subway**

Thursday: **Swiss Chalet**

Friday: **Booster Juice**

All items comply with healthy eating regulations.

More information will be forthcoming. Thanks in advance for your collaboration / patience.

CHESS TOURNAMENT

Thanks to Mr. MacDonald, Mrs. Haynes and Mr. Stechey for providing opportunities for students to hone their skills in chess. The system-wide tournament is March 28.

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/223397--STTA-Chess-Club>

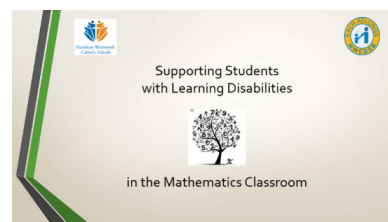
NON-UNIFORM DAYS

March 10: Active Wear for Math-a-Ment-a-Movathon

March 20: Bring in the Spring - Spring Colours!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

On March 3, staff members gathered together to professionally learn about mathematics instruction and children with learning disabilities. Materials and resources explored can be found at: [March3_2017_PD Day Sharing](#)



FINAL THOUGHTS

In the spirit of the school's commitment to the mental health and wellness for all, the following is taken from the chapter on Anxiety from the Ministry's Supporting Minds document:

Although different signs of anxiety occur at different ages, in general, common signs include the following. The student:

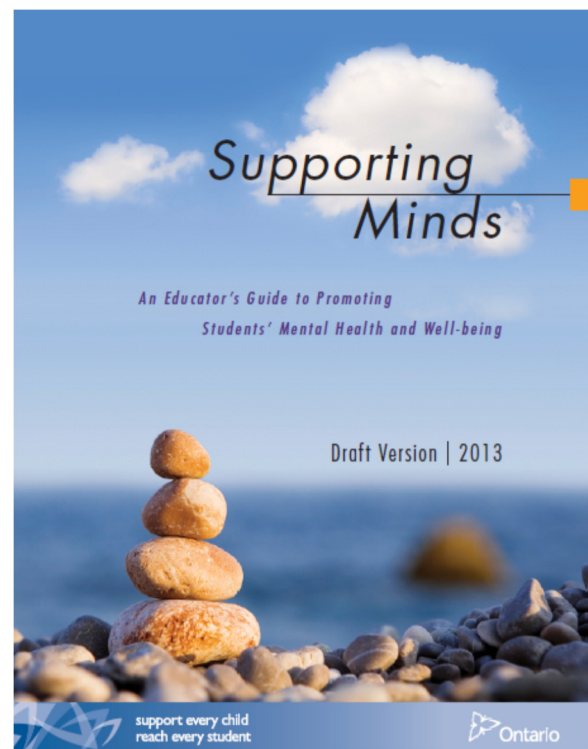
- has frequent absences from school;
- asks to be excused from making presentations in class;
- shows a decline in grades;
- is unable to work to expectations;
- refuses to join or participate in social activities;
- avoids school events or parties;
- exhibits panicky crying or freezing tantrums and/or clingy behaviour before or after an activity or social situation (e.g., recess, a class activity);
- worries constantly before an event or activity, asking questions such as "What if ...?" without feeling reassured by the answers;
- often spends time alone, or has few friends;
- has great difficulty making friends;
- has physical complaints (e.g., stomach-aches) that are not clearly attributable to a physical health condition;
- worries excessively about things like homework or grades or everyday routines;
- has frequent bouts of tears;
- is easily frustrated;
- is extremely quiet or shy;
- fears new situations;
- avoids social situations for fear of negative evaluations by others (e.g., fear of being laughed at);
- has dysfunctional social behaviours;
- is rejected by peers.

(Based on information from: CYMHIN-MAD, 2011; Hincks-Dellcrest-ABCs, n.d.)

Note: This list provides some examples but is not exhaustive and should not be used for diagnostic purposes.

- Create an environment where mistakes are viewed as a natural part of life.
- Provide predictable schedules and routines
- Provide advance warning of changes in routine.
- Provide simple relaxation exercises.
- Get plenty of sleep
- Get plenty of vigorous exercise
- Encourage children to take small steps towards accomplishing a feared task.
- Engage in relaxation exercises which include Christian Meditation, decompression walks, fidget toys and deep 'belly' breathing.

(Based on information from: CYMHIN-MAD, 2011; Hincks-Dellcrest-ABCs, n.d.)



Good for all, essential for some. Let's all work together to ensure healthy, promising and happy futures for everyone.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/SupportingMinds.pdf>