



HAMILTON-WENTWORTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

ST. THOMAS SCHOOL

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

Principal: Mr. D. Younger
Superintendent: Mr. M. Hucal
Principal Intern: Mrs. C. Horzelenberg

Trustee: Mrs. C. Cornale,
Pastor: Very Rev. W.L. Lobsinger, EV, PP
Secretary: Mrs. M. Rath

ST. THOMAS "WILDCATS" OCTOBER – 2017 NEWSLETTER

HOW TO OBSERVE THANKSGIVING

Count your blessings instead of your crosses;
Count your gains instead of your losses.
Count your joys instead of your woes;
Count your friends instead of your foes.
Count your smiles instead of your tears;
Count your courage instead of your fears.
Count your full years instead of your lean;
Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.
Count your health instead of your wealth;
Count on God instead of yourself.

~~Author Unknown.~~

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

With October being the month where expressions of our gratitude are offered, I must begin this newsletter by thanking staff, students and the parent/guardian/parish communities for a successful start to the school year. It has been heartening to observe students transition smoothly to new classrooms and new grades with great resilience, especially to those who experienced reorganization. Staff members have started the year by setting expectations, developing routines and raising the level of expectations where student achievement is concerned. Parents/guardians have been working closely with staff on many levels to ensure that good work habits and routines are in place early. These measures will ensure that your child's success is inevitable throughout the 2017-2018 school year. As always, a strong partnership with the home will remain critical. Relationships and connections remain at the core as we all work together as Merchants of Hope for one another. As a Catholic community, we will be most successful when we model our thoughts, words and actions after Jesus Christ. On behalf of the entire staff, we sincerely look forward to serving the school community this 2017-2018 school year. St. Thomas the Apostle CES truly is a special place to lead, learn, love and leave a legacy!

D. Younger
Principal

SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM

Please remember to use SchoolConnects Safe Arrival System for absences and early dismissals:
<https://parent.schoolconnectsweb.com/parentportal33/login/default.aspx?hwcdsb>

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

The first meeting of our Catholic School Council took place on Monday, September 25, 2017. Thanks are extended to the parents who were able to put their names forward to join our Catholic School Council and help shape the school experience that your children will receive at St. Thomas the Apostle CES. During this meeting the council determined the following Council Membership composition.

Chair: Mr. Doma
Co-Chair: Mr. Behie
Secretary: Mrs. Data
Treasurer: Mrs. Benak
Councilors: Mrs. Maan, Mrs. Perini-Parkes, Mr. Sneyd, Mrs. Santin-Duffy, Mrs. Hammond, Mr. Gilmore
Community Rep: To Be Filled
Parish Rep: Seminarian Paul
Teacher Rep: Mrs. Horzelenberg, Mrs. Richardson

A sub-committee has been formed to plan for the annual Groove-athon; please contact Mrs. Horzelenberg if you are interested in joining the committee.

Next meeting: Monday, November 6, 2017

ALL parents/guardians are welcome!!!

STUDENT COUNCIL

Congratulations to all grade 8 students who took the time to create posters and a speech in their quest to seek a position on Student Council. The entire class was gracious and showed support for each other.

This year, our grade 8 student council representatives are:

President: Evan

Vice-President: Maggie

Treasurer: Kate

Secretary: Sofia

Religion Representative: Johnathan

Sports Representative: Christian

Spirit Representative: Katrina

St. Thomas the Apostle CES looks forward to the influence of its new Student Council Executive.

INTERNATIONAL WALK TO SCHOOL DAY 2017

Wednesday, October 4th marks International Walk/Bike to School Day (also known as "Wear Yellow Day"). The goal of this event is to promote school spirit, environmental conservation, and healthier habits.

As part of the event, students may:

- Wear a yellow t-shirt or sweatshirt with uniform bottoms to show their participation

If participating, please discuss with your child(ren) the safest route to walk or bike to school. Students are encouraged to travel in groups and to follow pedestrian and bicycle safety rules. Students biking to school are reminded to wear a proper fitting bicycle helmet.

Students who cannot walk or bike to school will still be included in this event. Students who ride the school bus and **walk to and from their bus stop** are still participating ☺

If your child will be walking or riding a bicycle home from school rather than riding the school bus, please write a note in your child's agenda to help staff facilitate dismissal time.

GROOVE-A-THON

Dust off your Groovy Shoes! Groove-a-thon is back! Support St. Thomas the Apostle School. The Groove-a-thon, sponsored by the CSC, is scheduled to take place during the school day on Tuesday, October 31, 2017 and promises to be a fun filled day for all. Funds raised will support various initiatives still to be determined by council. More information is forthcoming from the CSC. The student council will partner with this event by helping to organize Raffle Baskets. Non-perishable goods are invited to support St. Mary CSS's 'Halloween 4 Hunger' initiative.

TEAMS AND CLUBS

The co-curricular life at St. Thomas is alive and well. To date, some of the teams and clubs currently in action: AV Team, Robotics Team, Flag Football Team, Health Action Team, Student Council, Visual Arts Masters, Recycling Enviro Ambassador Team, Cross-Country Team, Junior Girls Basketball Team, Senior Girls Basketball Team, Thanks to the many staff members providing their time to coach and/or mentor.

ALLERGIES

We are asking your cooperation in continuing to keep St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School safe for all our children. We have a number of students who suffer from life-threatening food allergies to nuts, peanuts, and nut products. The classmates of these students have taken home letters asking you to please not send your child with a snack or lunch that contains any nuts or nut products. Should these students come into contact with any of the above mentioned foods - or the residue left when someone else has been in contact with the food - the student can go into anaphylactic shock - a potentially life threatening situation. Since the time to prevent shock from occurring is only minutes, we want to do everything within our power to avoid this situation. I'm sure we can count on your support for the specified measures. We want all of our children to be safe and healthy, and these measures will help ensure this. Hence, we continue to strive towards maintaining a NUT SAFE school.

One classroom has a child with a significant allergy to eggs. Caution in this class is exercised. You would have received a letter if your child is in this class.

A gentle reminder as we approach the Halloween season of treats: please be extra vigilant with the selection of school snacks.

INHALERS AND EPINEPHRINE AUTO-INJECTOR

Students who require an inhaler to support breathing due to Asthma and students who require an epinephrine auto-injector in the event of an anaphylactic reaction are required by legislation to carry these devices on them at all times. A personal pouch worn around the waist or arm is a typical solution. An extra inhaler or epinephrine auto-injector must also be kept in the office. Please ensure that the appropriate forms have been completed and submitted to the office if these devices have been prescribed to your child.

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/180619--STTA-and-Administration-of-Medication-Policy>

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

When a child brings medication to school (prescription and non-prescription), it **MUST** be kept in the office in a secure location. If the medication is prescribed, it must be kept in the original container with the appropriate Pharmacist

labels. The label will describe the name, DIN, dosage, dosage limits and administration instructions. If the medication is over the counter, it must also be kept in the original container along with a signed note from the parent/guardian regarding administration instructions.

When medication is dispensed at school, each incident will be recorded in a log.

This policy is in place to ensure the safety of all children at school. Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

Please see the link below to access the forms required for completion:

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/180619--STTA-and-Administration-of-Medication-Policy>

CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS

October 5 is World Teachers Day and October 25 is World Child Care Worker/Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day. Thanks to these professionals for providing the best opportunities possible for all learners.

REMINDER AS WE APPROACH COLD AND FLU SEASON

The best way to prevent or reduce the spread of influenza and many other illnesses is through personal protection:

- Wash hands well and often with soap and water for at least 15 seconds.
- Cough and sneeze into your upper sleeve or a tissue, not your hand. Dispose of tissues immediately.
- Clean commonly touched surfaces like door knobs, light switches, phones and computer equipment often.
 - If you have a fever and influenza-like symptoms, stay at home until you no longer have a fever and are well.

If your child is sick and not able to go to school, report your child's absence to the school and let them know if your child has flu symptoms. Flu symptoms include a fever and any of the following symptoms:

- Cough
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches
- Chills
- Shortness of breath
- Vomiting and diarrhea which are common in children.

If you require

- Information about the flu, visit www.hamilton.ca/flu or call 905-546-CITY (2489)
- Flu clinic details, visit www.hamilton.ca/flu

PIZZA DAYS

Pizza orders have been tabulated for each Wednesday during the first term. The Grade 8 students would like to thank you for your orders. Special thanks to Mrs. Shannon for orchestrating. The first pizza day will occur on October 4, 2017. Gino's is the provider.

SCHOOL CASH ONLINE

School Cash Online is available for all families. The system is designed for a seamless payment process without cash transactions. To register:

<https://hwcdsb.schoolcashionline.com/>

CYO CROSS COUNTRY

We are wishing all of our runners from grades 1-8 luck as they prepare for their race at the CYO Cross Country event held on October 11, 2017 at Marydale Park. This year we have many students going to the event to represent the St. Thomas community. Let's go Wildcats!



THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

There is no school for children on Mon., Oct. 9, 2017.

Monday marks the day where we all take the time to thank God for our many blessings. Staff members at St. Thomas CES wish you a happy and blessed Thanksgiving.

PARISH CORNER

We are extremely proud of the strong partnership between school and parish. Don't forget to visit the parish website for updates and events. We look forward to Seminarian Paul's visit on October 3 and Father Ross' visit on October 19 to celebrate the Rosary liturgy and visit classrooms.

<http://www.stthomaswaterdown.com/>

PILGRIMAGE

On Sunday, October 15, 2017, students of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board will be participating in our twelfth annual Pilgrimage "Walk with Christ-Justice for the Poor," an event that will raise money to support development projects in Uganda, Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

In addition, funds will be set aside for Holy Childhood Society and Development and Peace Emergency Appeal Fund. Staff of the secondary and elementary schools are working with teams of students to plan the event.

The pilgrimage raises our awareness of the injustice of world hunger, and inadequate health care, shelter, and education.

As a Catholic school community, the pilgrimage gives us the opportunity to do what the Lord asks of us: to act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8).

Grade 7 and 8 students are being called to participate in the pilgrimage. Pledge forms and participation forms were sent home and we ask that you return these as soon as possible. Thank you for your continued support. Special thanks to Miss Monaco for orchestrating.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

To ensure the safety of all students at all times, personal electronic devices are not permitted at school. If a student is observed using a personal electronic device at school, the device will be confiscated and placed in the school safe. The device will need to be retrieved by a parent or guardian.

It is important to revisit the concept of Social Networking Safety and personal devices in the hands of minors. Devices in the hands of our children must be treated with great care and oversight since, in essence, these seemingly harmless devices can bring great injury to the user and others. This is true even when our children promise to show great care since they can't control what lurks on the internet. This is coupled with the permanence of the virtual world. In other words: what is released to the internet can NEVER be erased.

As the year progresses, a Bring Your Own Device initiative will begin. Students will be invited to bring a device to school to support learning. The use of these devices will be during the instructional day under the strict supervision of staff.

Our greatest objective at St. Thomas the Apostle CES is to provide the best learning opportunities possible for all students in a safe and secure environment that is grounded in Christ's love. It will take the strong partnership of parents and staff to remain vigilant as we work to keep our children safe in the virtual world as well. The school remains committed to the ongoing education of students in this domain.

Please remember that should you ever need to contact your child or should your child need to contact you during the course of the day, multiple phones are available on school premises to ensure immediate conversation.

Thank you in advance for your understanding.

SAVE THE DATE

Mark November 9, at 7:00pm. The CSC has secured a visit from world-renowned Child Psychologist Dr. Jean Clinton who will be delivering a presentation regarding the nurture of self-regulation and resilience in children and teens to optimize well-being and human development.

SCHOOL SAFETY - FIRE DRILLS and LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Throughout the year, the school must conduct 6 fire-drills (3 in each of the fall and spring terms), and 2 lockdown procedure drills (Ontario fire Code - O. Reg. 33/97, cl.2.8.3.2 (1)(b)). Please review these drills through discussion with your children. Staff will be speaking with them to prepare for the drills. The school must also participate in one Bomb Threat Evacuation Drill per year. The school must use the term Bomb Threat in the announcement. Please review these procedures with your children to assist the school in alleviating anxiety in children.

PARENT CONFERENCE

Saturday, November 4, 2017

7:30am-1:30pm

Bishop Ryan Catholic Secondary School
1824 Rymal Road East, Hamilton, ON

This annual conference is free to all parents/guardians and includes a celebration of the Holy Eucharist, an engaging guest speaker, a multitude of enlightening breakout workshops and complimentary breakfast/lunch. Highly recommended by past participants.

BEFORE and AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The St. Thomas Catholic Elementary School Before and After School Program strives to: Provide quality supervision of our students, encourage the development of a strong partnership between home, school, and parish, foster the spiritual, physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth of children. The Morning Program begins at 7:00 am and ends at 8:55am. The After School Program runs from 3:30pm to 6:00pm. Please contact the school should you be interested in registering your child for care.

HEALTH ACTION TEAMS

As part of the school's commitment to the health and wellness of all, a Health Action Team was established last year. In partnership with Public Health, the Health Action Team meets regularly to ensure physical and mental wellness for the entire community. The team is comprised of students, staff and Public Health Nurse Julie.

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY THIRD YEAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

This year, St. Thomas the Apostle CES will continue to benefit from the presence of four McMaster University Third Year Nursing Students. Their project is titled: Nurturing Positive Climates and Wellness. They will work closely with the school's Health Action Team.

<https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/236923--STTH-Welcomes-Third-Year-McMaster-University-Nursing-Students>

PARENTING AND FAMILY LITERACY CENTRE

If you are caring for a young child and are interested in meeting other parents/caregivers in a friendly, playful environment, please consider visiting the St. Thomas the Apostle CES Parenting and Family Literacy Centre. Facilitated by Miss Patty, you and your little one will be able to engage in play, games, songs, gym time and story time with others daily, 9:00am - 1:00pm.

SCHOOL ENTRY AND PHONES

The school is asking for your cooperation and patience. During the school day, please enter through the front doors. If you are visiting or calling, please be patient if you are not immediately granted access to the school or your call goes to the answering machine during these time frames:

9:10-9:25 O'Canada, Prayers, Announcements

10:40-11:20 First Nutrition Break

1:20-2:00 Second Nutrition Break

There will be slight delays in responding to your request for access or your phone call; however, every effort will be made to respond as soon as possible.

SEPTEMBER AWARD RECIPIENTS

St. Thomas the Apostle CES held the first monthly awards assembly on Friday, September 29, at 2:40pm in the gym. Staff recognized the accomplishments of three students in each class for their dedication to the Virtue Focus- Reverence, School Motto- Lead, Learn, Love, Leave a Legacy, and the 7 Habit Focus- Values for the month of September. One student from each class was also selected in a Virtue Voucher draw.

Throughout the month, if a student is observed in the act of being a 'Merchant of Hope' for others, her/his name is entered for the draw. Thanks to Student Council Vice-President Maggie and Treasurer Kate for emceeding the assembly and presenting the certificates and virtue voucher prizes.

Congratulations to the award winners for the month of September.

October's foci for students:

Virtue - Justice; School Mission - Lead, Learn, Love, Leave a Legacy; 7 Habits - Be Proactive

LEARNING SKILLS AND WORK HABITS

Please take some time each night at the dinner table to discuss each of these learning skills and work habits. The development of each lays the foundation for success in lifelong learning: Self-Regulation, Responsibility, Organization, Initiative, Independent Work and Collaboration. Specific lookfors to support your conversations can be found at: <https://stth.hwcdsb.ca/180763--STTA-and-Learning-Skills--Work-Habits>
Ask your child to try to define each and come up with specific ways to support the development and demonstration of each.

STTA THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE

Please consider sending non-perishable food items for our Thanksgiving Food Drive. Student council will be collecting daily. All items will be sent to the Good Shepherd.

We must restore hope to young people, help the old, be open to the future, and spread love. Be poor among the poor. We need to include the excluded and preach peace.

-Pope Francis