

DECEMBER 2011

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Parents, siblings, grandparents and friends are most welcome to join us for *our Holiday Season Concert called "Shine a Light"* in the Gym on the following dates:

Wednesday, December 14 at 1:15 p.m. (*DRESS REHEARSAL only however families with small children are welcome to be our audience!*)

**Thursday, December 15 at 1:15 p.m. or
Thursday, December 15 at 6:30 p.m.**

We will be collecting canned goods for **Project Share** for all performances. We would love to see you there! A very special thank you to Mr. Wiens, Mrs. McCarthy and Mrs. Shakespeare for organizing this special event!

OUR 'FIRST EVER' FAMILY PASTA EVENING!

What a success! Thank you to all our School Council members who planned this event just to welcome and bring our families together as a school community. The food, supplied by Antipasto's, The New Food Box on McLeod Rd., Tim Horton's by Niagara Square and McDonald's, was absolutely delicious. We received rave review from everyone! School Council worked tirelessly to provide families with door prizes from Vincor, White Oaks, Country Basket, McDonald's, Vision Clinic, Catherine Smith (Pampered Chef representative). We were so fortunate to have many of our Westlane Secondary students volunteer for our event and they made it all the more fun. Thank you to Chris G. (Westlane student) for being a wonderful Master of Ceremonies. EVERY family even went home with a door prize! Remember that this was not a **fundraiser** but more of a 'fun raiser' to encourage families to meet each other. A BIG thank you to Mrs. Nokes for her amazing organization skills!

PEACETREE CLUB FOR OUR JUNIOR STUDENTS

We are so pleased to introduce to you our new club for Junior students called the PEACETREE CLUB (meeting each Thursday during morning nutrition break). Students will be involved in finding out about different cultures, festivals and faiths. Students will also have the opportunity to teach others about their own culture and faith. We will be talking about the importance of peace in the world and ways we can work together to achieve this. We will be learning new crafts, songs and participating in activities that are common in other cultures. Sounds like fun!

FITNESS BREAK DURING THE WINTER

Please be advised that students going outside for fitness break will be the rule rather than the exception. Please ensure that your child wears appropriate clothing for the weather. Sometimes parents will send a note requesting that their child remain indoors because they have a cold however, if a student is ill, the best place for your child is to be at home.

SPORTS REPORT

We are very proud of all our sports teams. *Go Knights!* Thank you to our parent volunteers for taking time out of your busy day to drive our teams to their games. Our Intermediate Girls' Volleyball team just completed their season! Our ladies played a strong season winning 4 of their 7 regular season games. This put them in third place qualifying them for the quarter finals against Cherrywood Acres. Kate S. Durdan School did an exceptional job winning their quarter final match. Our ladies lost their semi finals against John Marshall on November 14 and are also playing in the DSBN tournament on December 2. Overall a great season ladies! Our team members are:

Kiana M., Chloe N., Mohini R., Madison C., Haleema K., Ajean P., Manisha R., Charmi S., and Yvonne Y. Congratulations to Haleema, who was awarded a medallion at our Celebration Assembly, as our Most Valuable Player! Thank you to our coaches: Miss Storr, Miss Pantelich and Miss Wilmott for their dedication to our team!

INTERMEDIATE CO-ED SOCCER TEAM

The following students participated in the Intermediate co-ed soccer tournament this fall for Kate S. Durdan Public School. They did a fantastic job representing our school, demonstrating excellent sportsmanship and working hard enough on the field to earn a spot in the semi-finals. The team played a hard-fought game, but game up short to Greendale in overtime 3-2. Team members: Austin, Madison, Marmik, Joey, Emma, Alyssa, Lucas, Kiana, Mile, Stefan, Ryan, Sydney, Ratko, Ibrahim, Ajean, Sandip and Tyler. Thanks to Ms. Hodgins for helping Mrs. Cahill with the coaching, and to Hayden for his duties as manager and photographer!!

CROSS COUNTRY

During the fall season the cross country team participated in two meets at Queenston Heights where they ran against all DSBN schools from Niagara Falls. The top runners in their division then ran at Fireman's Park, against all DSBN schools. Congratulations to all team members for running so hard and trying their best! The following students made it on to the DSBN meet: Conner, Avery, Quintin, Jaden, Connor, Ryan, Madison, Kiana and Stefan. Great job Knights!

WESTLANE SECONDARY SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

Grade 6-8 families, mark your calendars for January 17, 2012. **Westlane Secondary School** invite you as their guest to view their awesome facilities and programs, talk to their great teachers and meet their wonderful students on *Tuesday, January 17, 2012* from 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Also please check out "**The Next Step - Grade 8 Guide to High School**" which has been posted on the DSBN Guidance and Career Education Website. The direct link is www.dsbnet.edu.on.ca/Guidance, then under the Student/Parent column on the right click on "*Grade 8 Guide to High School*".

GRADE 8 GRADUATION

Many parents have been asking about our Grade 8 graduation plans for the end of the school year. Please mark your calendars for Tuesday, June 26, 2012. We will begin with our dinner at CLUB ITALIA at 4:30 p.m. Graduates' dinner will be subsidized by the school for a certain amount to be determined in May, 2012, however the cost per guest for dinner will be \$30.00 per person (buffet meal). Just a heads up if you are making any plans. Bring as many guests for dinner as you wish. The Grade 8 Dance will follow at Club Italia shortly after our ceremony.

REMINDER 'CHECKLIST' FOR YOU

- ❖ remind myself that I am welcome at any School Council meeting and the next one is scheduled for Tuesday, January 24, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. at Kate S. Durdan School.
- ❖ remind myself that Friday, December 23rd, 2011 is the last day of school before our Holiday Break.

CONTACT INFORMATION

It is absolutely important that we have all the correct information in our Trillium data base in case we may need to reach you during the day. Please let us know *immediately* if you

- ❖ have a new telephone number either at your home or place of employment
- ❖ have lost your phone or have no more minutes on your cell phone so that we could adjust contact information accordingly
- ❖ have moved addresses or

- ❖ are planning to move anytime during the school year so that we can have your emergency contact numbers updated as well.

A quick call to the school or dropping in to let us know will be fine for us.

THANK YOU EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS OF NIAGARA! (EFN)

We are so thrilled that EFN has financially supported another Multicultural Event at our school called GONRAH DESGOHWAH WHITE PINE DANCERS (First Nations Storytelling, Dance and Drumming) on Friday, December 2, 2011 at 1:15 p.m. in our GYM. When learning about a new culture, we must always start from the beginning. White Pine Dancers will introduce our students to the people who have lived beside them for the past 500 years in a flowing and vibrant performance of dance story and song. EFN has provided our school with \$500.00 towards this performance. Please note families, that we have previously asked for a loonie donation from each student to offset the cost of the Ballet Creole performance. However, since Ballet Creole had cancelled their performance, we have been fortunate to have the WHITE PINE DANCERS come in their place. The loonie will be used for this performance. We just can't wait until December 2, 2011!

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

When a book is overdue, a notice will be sent home. If you are unable to find the book, an additional note will be sent home requesting you to pay the replacement cost of the book. We are pleased to announce that DSBN Libraries are now providing at home, 24/7 digital access to the school library catalogue. By connecting to the following website, <http://destiny.dsbnet.edu.on.ca> and clicking on our school name, you will have full access to the resources available in our school's library. Students are able to view the entire library collection, along with a brief synopsis of every resource and additional features such as student-created reviews. In addition, Destiny Quest will allow you to easily find the newest library purchases and a list of the Top Ten most popular materials among library patrons. We hope that you will find DSBN Destiny Library Manager to be helpful when completing assignments or when exploring library materials for leisure reading. This is just one more way that we are achieving success together through access to our school library collections! Thank you, in advance, for your support!

Miss Smiljanic, Teacher Librarian

PARENT ENGAGEMENT MATTERS!

Study after study has shown that student achievement improves when parents play an active role in their children's education, and that good schools become even better schools when parents are involved. It is recognized that parent engagement is a key factor in the enhancement of student achievement and well-being.

Students are more likely to be motivated, to earn higher grades, to have better behaviour and social skills, and to continue their education to a higher level when their parents are actively engaged in supporting their success at school. It is equally important to recognize that parent involvement takes many forms.

- ❖ Serving on Kate S. Durdan Public School Council
- ❖ Volunteering for field trips and school activities
- ❖ Meeting with the teachers
- ❖ Talking to your child about **what they are learning** during their day at school.

These are all examples of engaged parents. All these ideas are contributing to your children's education.

OUR FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

Thank you families for supporting our fundraising efforts this year! Everything we do at Kate S. Durdan School supports your child from either providing technological engagement for our students, resources that peak your child's interest or events that provide great cultural and critical thinking opportunities. All of us at Kate S. Durdan School applaud your efforts! We have one fundraiser left for this school year (our Dance-a-thon on Valentine's Day) and that will be it.

RESULTS OF OUR BOOMERANG AND WASTEFREE LUNCH SURVEY

We have received a 17% return rate (37 out of 213 families) for our survey for our interest in developing a BOOMERANG and/or WASTE FREE LUNCH program. 27 families agreed to both possibilities, 9 families agreed to BOOMERANG only and 1 family disagreed to both options. Since our response rate was less than a 70% return, we not be able to officially designate our school as being committed to supporting a BOOMERANG and/or WASTE FREE LUNCH designation. Protecting our environment for our children is a concern for all of us and we just want to do even more for our environment with your support. Presently at our school, we provide G.O.O.S. paper (meaning 'good on one side') for our students to use so that paper does not go to waste. We also support the BLUE BOX whereby students throw items such as: water bottles, juice boxes, milk cartons (rinsed), plastic containers, aluminum cans, aluminum foil., glass bottles, steel food containers, tetra film) and NO Styrofoam. We also support the GREY BOX items such as: paper, cardboard, magazines, pot it notes, newspaper, and newsprint. Since we really want to do more please consider reading our *Packing a Waste Free Lunch* flyer being sent home today with this newsletter to help with your involvement and consideration. We will be discussing even more ways we can become an even 'eco-friendlier' school at one of our next School Council meetings. All your ideas will be welcome!

MEAL PLANNING MADE EASY

Enjoy your copy of "*Meal Planning Made Easy*" especially for parents and caregivers who are looking for easy solutions to help children enjoy the pleasures of healthy eating! Remember that enjoying wholesome, tasty food together nourishes a child's mind as well as his or her health. (Courtesy of the Egg Farmers of Ontario).

OUR PRIMARY NUTRITION MONITORS!

The following students have made a commitment to assist in our Primary classrooms during our Nutrition Breaks! A Big THANK YOU goes to Ruqaya, Shayla, Grace, Chelsea, Lubnan, Erin, Sophie, Sophia, Brandon, Callum and Tara!

LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW but let's not throw any of this stuff!

The bottom line is: there are **no excuses** for throwing snowballs! We want to make our school yard *and* the walk to and from school SAFE for all our students. Should your child have an excuse for throwing a snowball, we just won't accept it. We will not 'judge' whether this was a 'good' excuse or not since there are no excuses. We only know that a snowball was thrown and that in itself jeopardizes the safety of our students.

DID YOU KNOW...

Did you know that Canadian children/youth ages 6 to 19 spend an average of 8.6 hours per day, or 62 per cent of their waking hours, being sedentary? Here are some ways to help your children meet the recommended 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity each day:

- ❖ Limit recreational screen time to no more than two hours per day,
- ❖ Encourage children and youth to play outdoors
- ❖ Play outside with your children:
- ❖ Go for walks, hikes, build snowmen, go tobogganing\Introduce your child to skates or skis so they can learn to slide
- ❖ Play catching games using a wide range of soft objects

For more information go to www.activehealthykids.ca or www.participaction.com

**Enjoy this holiday season with your family and friends and we will see you on
January 9, 2012!**