

OCTOBER 2011



OUR “*MEET OUR STAFF*” OPEN HOUSE WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

Teachers and staff have commented on how much they enjoyed meeting everyone! It is always a great opportunity for our students to ‘show off’ their classroom environment to their parents. We continue to thrive with your partnership supporting us in every way and along the way

WELCOME!

Please welcome Rohaina Saqib, our new School Settlement Worker. She will be at the school every Thursday morning and her role is to:

- Provide resources about our school, community and government services available in many different languages. She can also access many supports for families by providing pamphlets and information in many languages.
- Deliver workshops to parents and youth about school and community resources.
- Help school staff with information about newcomer communities and issues.

The **Settlement Worker in Schools** (also referred to as **SWIS**) is a joint program in partnership between the District School Board of Niagara, the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the YMCA of Niagara and Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The SWIS Niagara Team will contact newcomer parents to provide them with information and refer them to other community services. For more information we welcome you to contact our school at 905 356-0488 to make an appointment.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION FOR GRADES 1-8: A SUMMARY FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning. Teachers use **assessment** to gather information about students’ strengths and needs as learners and to provide feedback to improve student learning. **Evaluation** is used to judge how well students are meeting the curriculum expectations. Marks are assigned during the evaluation process and these are included in a student’s report card grade.

Evidence of student achievement for evaluation is collected over time from three different sources – observations, conferences, and student products. Student products could include tests or exams and/or assignments for evaluation. Assignments for evaluation do not include ongoing homework that students complete in order to consolidate their knowledge and skills or to prepare for the next class.

Determining a Report Card Grade – Grades 1-8

Before making a decision about the grade to be entered on the report card, teachers consider:

- all evidence collected through observations, conversations, and student products;
- equity for all students, by ensuring that test/exams and assignments for evaluation are completed whenever possible, under the supervision of a teacher;
- assignments for evaluation must not include ongoing homework that students do in order to consolidate their knowledge and skills or to prepare for the next class;
- assignments for evaluation may involve group projects as long as each student’s work within the group project is evaluated independently and assigned an individual mark, as opposed to a common group mark;
- when appropriate, the impact that missing assignments will have on the student’s grade when they fail to submit major assignments; and,
- that bonus marks may not be included when determining report card grades.

Late and Missed Assignments for Evaluation (Grades 7 and 8)

Students must understand that they are responsible not only for their behavior in the classroom and the school, but also for providing evidence of their achievement of the curriculum within a time frame specified by the teacher, and in a form approved by the teacher. There will be consequences for not completing assignments for evaluation or for submitting assignments late.

Each teacher will use his/her own professional judgment, including the consideration of specific individual circumstances, when determining if a late penalty will be applied. Before a late penalty is applied a teacher will use strategies to support students to meet their responsibilities including, for example:

- asking the student to clarify the reason for not completing the assignment;
- helping students develop better time-management skills;
- taking into consideration legitimate reasons for missed deadlines;
- providing alternative assignments or tests where, in the teacher’s professional judgment, it is appropriate to do so;
- deducting marks for late assignments; or,
- the full value of the assignment may be deducted if the assignment is not submitted.

Deduction of Marks

For major assignments for evaluation, teachers may impose mark deductions for lateness, after considering individual student circumstances.

A 5% per day deduction **up to a maximum of 15%** of the assignment may be deducted.

For example, if a student earns 80% on a major assignment for evaluation, and it is handed in one day late, the mark on that assignment is 75%.

If the assignment is two days late, the mark becomes a 70%

If the assignment is three days late or more, the mark becomes a 65%.

Academic Dishonesty – Cheating and Plagiarism

In our schools, we strive to help students develop integrity, a strong work ethic, responsibility, learning skills and work habits needed for success beyond school. Academic dishonesty hinders students from developing these attributes and is not condoned within our schools.

Cheating is defined as “any effort to defraud, deceive, or elude someone else.” Examples may include: taking a test or an examination in a dishonest way through improper access to answers, or giving or obtaining assistance without acknowledgement.

Plagiarism is defined as “the use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another without attribution, in order to represent them as one’s own original work”. Plagiarism often takes one of the following forms:

- using a quotation or sentence word for word without citing the source;
- using, without acknowledgement of the original source, diagrams, charts, graphics, etc.;
- submitting any work by another person and claiming it as your own.

Consequences

Consequences for academic dishonesty may escalate based on the following mitigating factors:

- the grade level of the student and/or course type;
- the maturity of the student;
- the number or frequency of incidents;
- the individual circumstances of the student.

Teachers consider the factors above as part of their professional judgment in cases of suspected academic dishonesty. Consequences for cheating and plagiarism are based on the factors outlined above and may include one or more of the following:

- redoing part or all of an assignment;
- completing an alternative assignment;
- a loss of marks;
- a mark of zero; and,
- suspension.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Please note the following:

Progress Reports will be going home on Tuesday, November 15, 2011 and **Parent/Teacher Interviews** will be held on: Thursday, November 17 from 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. Please note that your child’s teacher may suggest to you that a telephone interview may be an option for you. Details about the interview process will be sent home closer to the end of October.

Term 1 Report Cards will be going home on Thursday, February 9, 2012. Parent teacher interviews will be scheduled only on an ‘as needed’ or requested basis before or after these report cards go home.

Term 2 Report Cards will be going home on Monday, June 25, 2012.

Details regarding JK/SK reporting/ interviews and parent observations will be shared through the classroom JK/SK newsletters.

HALLOWE’EN

We will be celebrating Hallowe’en once again this year. On Monday, October 31st, students (JK to Grade 8), staff and parents are encouraged to dress for Hallowe’en. Since some parents may be on the look out for costumes or costuming ideas, we want to make it very clear that everything we do at Kate S. Durdan School is violence free. That means that costumes depicting blood and gore and any type of weaponry will not be allowed. Now everyone can begin their creative search. *Students who choose to wear masks will be allowed to do so only with their parent/guardian’s written permission*, with parents knowing that we will be planning a Hallowe’en parade around the neighbourhood as well as walking up and down the school stairs. Student safety will be paramount. Details about the parade as well as alternate activities provided for students who do not usually celebrate this day, will be shared with you as the day approaches. The Intermediate students will be having a dance that afternoon inviting Intermediate students from Forestview School as our guests. But the most important thing now is to be creative, be thoughtful and adhere to our K Kate S. Durdan School violence free Hallowe’en when thinking about a costume! Details will follow.

OUR CROSSING GUARDS

Our two crossing guards ensure student safety while crossing Kalar Road.. Their primary responsibility is to ensure safe access across Kalar Road **FIRST**. For students who also cross Coventry Road, students are requested to **wait** until the Crossing Guard can get to Coventry Road. For some reason, students seem to cross

Coventry Road without waiting for the Crossing Guard. The Crossing Guards request that students wait until they get there. Please enforce this at home as well with your children.

MORNING ARRIVAL

Please encourage your child to arrive at school between 8:10 a.m. and 8:25 a.m. when supervision is available.

WALT?

Have you heard your children talking about **WALT?** Read on to discover more ...

A quick bit of theory...

We want to encourage our students to be more actively involved in their learning because research shows that students are more motivated if they understand not just the task but also the learning objective of the task. Learning is more effective if students are asked to help create the success criteria (i.e. *How will we know we've achieved this?*) because they can be clear about how their work will be judged and what the teacher wants to see in the finished task. By inviting students to help create the success criteria, we are involving them in their own learning and encouraging them to evaluate their performance. Students need to know why they are learning something so that they can see how their work fits into the 'bigger picture'.

In order to make this theory 'student -friendly' we are introducing **WALT**. The main benefit for the students is that by focusing on the learning objective, they begin to fully understand that they are learning rather than doing. At home, we hope our students will describe school activities as '[We were learning to](#)' rather than '[We did.....](#)'.

WALT is short for “We Are Learning To...”

These are the learning objectives for the lesson. You can help us by asking your child '**What did you learn today?**' rather than '**What did you do today?**'

WASTE REDUCTION AND PACKING LUNCHES

Parents, teachers, and students can not only help the environment but also their wallet and their health by making good eco choices when it comes to packing lunches and snacks for school.

TYPICAL/TRADITIONAL LUNCH (DISPOSABLE)

sandwiches , fruits, pretzels, chips and other snack foods sealed in plastic bags

prepackaged chips, cookies, fruit bars, granola bars, cheeses, and fruit leathers, yogurt, and puddings

disposable juice boxes, juice pouches, and water bottles

plastic forks and spoons

paper napkins

reusable lunchboxes and disposable paper and plastic bags

A WASTE-FREE LUNCH (REUSABLE)

sandwiches and other main dishes, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, and treats in a reusable lunch container

cloth napkins

stainless-steel forks and spoons

reusable drink containers

reusable lunchboxes

Waste-free lunches are not only a wise environmental choice, but they are less expensive as well. In our Kate S. Durdan School November 2011 Newsletter we will sharing ideas for lunches and introducing a concept called "BOOMERANG LUNCH". Stay tuned.

