

Parliament Oak News for September 2009

From the Principal's Desk . . .

A very warm welcome back to all our students, staff and their families as the 2009-2010 year begins. We hope that everyone had a safe and relaxing summer and is looking forward to the challenges of this new year. I am very excited to join the Parliament Oak community. I have received an overwhelmingly warm welcome from both the staff and parent community. Thank you so much. I look forward to working with you to ensure a successful school year for the students of Parliament Oak School.

Learning is a shared responsibility. Our teachers will do their very best to teach each student and students need to do their very best to learn. Every student needs support and encouragement from their parents, too. A co-operative home-school partnership can make such a positive difference. Keep in touch with your children's teachers; read over the student agenda daily; consider volunteering in the school; help out on a class trip; attend school council meetings and come out to special events.

To keep you informed about the many activities and events at Parliament Oak, a school newsletter will be sent home/emailed each month with the youngest in the family. If you do not receive one during the first week of each month, please ask your child about it (or check the backpack!). If you have questions or concerns regarding your child, please do not hesitate to call the school. See you on the 30th at our Open House.

⇒ Bell Times

Morning

Entry 8:45

JK/SK Dismissal . 11:15

Break 10:30 - 11:05

Afternoon

Break 12:45-1:35

Dismissal 3:15

⇒ New to Parliament Oak

We would like to welcome Mr. G. Sarkasian (Gr. 4/5), Mr. S. Pawlik (Gr. 7/8) and Mr. J. Brunton (E.A.) to the Parliament Oak staff.

⇒ Student Safety

Your child's safety is very important to the staff of Parliament Oak School.

LUNCH POLICY: Please see the Lunch Form Insert accompanying this newsletter. Please complete the form in its entirety. All students staying for lunch at school will be eating their lunch in their classroom and attendance will be taken on a regular basis. If your child is not present during that time, a parent will be notified immediately. Please be aware that eating lunch at school is a privilege and all lunch rules are expected to be followed.

PLEASE CHECK IN AT THE OFFICE: All guests of Parliament Oak School, including parents, are asked to check in at the office. Guests will be asked to sign in and wear a name badge. If a staff member sees a guest in the hallway who does not have a badge, he/she will be directed to the office to sign in. We have a number of new staff to the school who do not know all of the parents. This measure is put in place for the safety of your children.

EXTERIOR DOORS: Please be aware that after the 8:40 a.m. bell and the 12:35 p.m. bell, all exterior doors (except for the front doors) will be locked.

STUDENT ENTRY/EXIT: All students will be expected to enter and exit through their divisional doors. Classroom teachers will greet the classes at their appropriate doors to bring them into the school. Parents who walk their children to school are asked to walk them to their assigned entry instead of through the parking lot doors. Students should not enter the school prior to the entrance bell.

We request your cooperation for the safety of all students.

⇒ Attendance Procedures



To ensure the accountability and safety of our students, it is imperative that parents call the office when their child is going to be absent. There is an answering machine if you wish to leave a message before the school opens. If a child is absent and no call is received, we use our call-back system to account for these children.

⇒ Picture Day

School photographs will be taken throughout the day on Wednesday, October 7th. Additional information will be sent home regarding this. Please try to avoid this date for appointments for your child, as we would like all students to be present for their picture.

⇒ Milk Program

This year the milk program will run by milk cards only. The cost of the card will be \$10.00 and the student receives 14 milks. You may purchase a card by submitting a cheque or cash to the school. Please place your cheque/money in an envelope with your child's name, grade and specify if your son/daughter would like white or chocolate milk. The envelope will be delivered to the office and the milk card will be distributed to your child. We will not be ordering extra milk. We will only be ordering the exact amount of milk needed per week based on the amount of milk cards sold. Students will not be allowed to purchase milk if they bring money to school, so please remember to order your milk card. Monthly draws will be held!!

Drink milk, love life.

⇒ Confidential Information Sheets

During the first week of school you will receive a computer printout of your child's information on file. Please check this and make any changes, fill in any missing information, and return it to the school promptly. In the interest of health and safety, it is important that students' medical and personal information is updated each year. The health card number is very important. **Please let us know if the information changes during the school year!**

⇒ Lunches at School

It is best to start the year off right with students bringing their own lunch/snacks to school with them in the morning. If you must deliver a lunch on the odd occasion please ensure that your child knows that it is coming, have it here before our nutritional break and make it your child's responsibility to pick it up at the office during the break. Print your child's name clearly on the lunch bag. We will not interrupt instructional time to deliver lunches. The school day has been organized to allow most students to go home during the second nutritional break. Unless children are involved in an activity that requires them to be at school during that time, they are expected to eat lunch at home. Working parents might consider arranging for a neighbour to supervise children over the break period. For those students who must stay, a signed lunch form is required. These forms will be sent home. Please return them promptly.

⇒ Student Agenda Program & Activity Fees

Every student in grades 1 to 8 will receive a Student Agenda. This is a valuable tool which is designed to help the students keep track of assignments and stay organized, as well as ensure that they are aware of the guidelines and expectations at Parliament Oak. Parent and teacher guidance is essential to the success of the student in using the agenda. Please help us help your child develop these important skills. This week, a notice will be sent home with the option to pay for a number of school related activities (including the purchase of the student agenda) in one payment.

⇒ Information Home

A school calendar showing holidays, early release and professional activity days for the coming year will be sent home this week. Student Accident Insurance forms will also be sent home. Remember to send those insurance forms directly to the company. Do not return the envelope to the school. We encourage you to purchase this low cost student accident insurance that will protect your children from accidental injuries, particularly dental injuries. It is strongly recommended for students participating in extra curricular sports.

⇒ Character Education

As a school and community, we know how important it is that we develop positive character and life skills among our youth. The character trait we will focus on for September will be **RESPECT**. At the end of the month we will recognize those students who have consistently demonstrated this character trait. Further information about the various traits we will be focussing on will be sent home later in the month.

⇒ Early Release Days

Two Early Release Days and four full day Professional Activity Days have been set aside this year to allow staff to focus on curriculum implementation. With the tremendous amount of curriculum change taking place, this is a critical necessity. On Friday, September 25, 2009 and Friday, February 12, 2010 we will be having Early Release Days while Friday, October 9, 2009, Friday, November 13, 2009, as well as the afternoons of Friday, December 4, 2009 and Wednesday, April 21, 2010 have been designated as Professional Activity Days. On the Early Release Days we will dismiss students at 11:40 a.m. School bus services and crossing guards will be in place to accommodate this. Please mark these dates on your calendar.

⇒ Construction Update

Due to a construction zone around our school, you will temporarily be unable to park in our parking lot. However, there is parking available on Gage, Regent, Centre, and King Streets. We appreciate your understanding as the repairs to our roof are completed. The anticipated completion date is the third week of September. During this time, you will only be able to access the school by the front entrance. These measures will help to keep your child safe while this work is underway.

⇒ Crossing Guard Update

As you know, we have been working throughout the summer to advocate for crossing guards at five intersections in proximity to Parliament Oak Public School. Due to both high traffic and unfamiliarity of tourists with our streets, we feel that crossing guards are essential for ensuring a safe walking route for your child.

Although Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Council will not provide crossing-guards for our students during the first week of school, (September 8-11), they have agreed to perform a "warrant", which will assess the need for crossing guards on **September 15**. The raindate for this study will be September 16th. *I would like to encourage you to accompany your child on the walk from your home to Parliament Oak during the warrant period, to assist in demonstrating to NOTL Town Council the great need for crossing guards for our school.*

I will communicate any information that I receive pertaining to both the warrant process and NOTL Town Council's decision regarding crossing guards as soon as possible.

Thank you to our School Council for advocating for the crossing guard and to Mr. Mike Aitken for presenting our "case" at the July NOTL Town Council meeting.

⇒ Snack Shack

The Snack Shack will begin selling healthy food products beginning September 21st. A notice will be sent home closer to the date indicating the products that will be sold.

⇒ Parliament Oak Marathon Club

This year, our school will participate in the Niagara Falls Marathon! Students who log 40 km by the Marathon date (October 25) will run the final 2 km of the marathon with other schools. Be sure to listen to announcements and sign up dates during the first week of school. You can read about the Schools Challenge at www.niagarafallsmarathon.com Training will start the second week of school, so get your running shoes ready!



⇒ School Council News

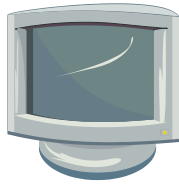
Coming this year: Parliament Oak's "**Nutrition Corner**" will be a new regular in the monthly newsletter. You will find nutrition know-how on several topics throughout the year – if you have any nutrition questions we can answer or thoughts you have on the topic that you'd like to share please pass them on, through the office, and we will use them to help put our monthly information together.

The School Council will also continue to raise money through the recycling campaign. Beginning September 21st parents can drop off their recyclable materials to an area outside of the gym. Our first School Council meeting will be held in the library on Tuesday, September 29 at 7:00 p.m.

⇒ Parliament Oak's Website

If you have lost your newsletter, or if your child has not brought it home, please check out our website:

<http://www.dsb.edu.on.ca/Schools/ParliamentOak/>. Our website includes current and past newsletters, our code of conduct, school council information, a school year calendar, bell times along with a wealth of other information.



Meet the Teacher Open House

Join us on Wednesday, September 30th, from 6:00 - 7:00 PM, to meet the Parliament Oak staff and tour the school.

Please encourage your child to make the introductions and remember, this is not an appropriate time for an interview. These can be arranged for a more private time with the teacher.

⇒ Intermediate Girls Volleyball



Bump, set, spike! All Intermediate Girls who would like to play volleyball are invited to try-outs starting on Tuesday, September 15th during the first nutrition break (10:30 a.m.) All interested girls in grades 7 & 8 should attend the practice wearing appropriate physical education clothing. Looking forward to another

exciting year.

⇒ Niagara Regional Public Health

Hepatitis B Immunization

The Hepatitis B/ Meningitis immunization program for grade 7 students and the Gardasil immunization for Gr. 8 girls will occur again in the schools. The vaccine is given in two doses, four months apart. The first dose will be given on Friday, September 18. Consent forms will be sent home very soon and should be returned promptly.



Immunization

Have you checked your child's immunization to make sure it is up to date? If you're unsure if your child requires any needles, you may call the Health Department at 688-3762, ext. 7396, and speak to a public health nurse.

⇒ School Organization and School Safety

-Arrival after 8:30 will ensure supervision of students by staff on the school yard. Arrival prior to 8:30 means students may be alone on the playground. Students cannot be supervised in the school as this is teacher preparation time.

If you would like to speak to a teacher before school, please call in advance to make an appointment as teachers often have yard duty.

- Appropriate dress for the season is required at all times. No profanity or obscene pictures will be allowed. If students do not wear appropriate dress they will be asked to change immediately. If students cannot change, a large t-shirt will be provided for the day.

-Lost and Found will be located by the computer lab.

-Volunteers are welcome at Parliament Oak to assist staff in the class or with programs throughout the school. Approach any staff member for the area of interest in which you wish to help.

-Our Code of Conduct can be found in the student organizer as well as on our website. Please review this with your child as a proactive measure and to establish a framework of understanding between home and school.

-Kindergarten Dismissal will be made by the teachers. Please respect this organizational and safety requirement. Do not take your child from the school yard.

-Walking across the parking lot is not safe and will not be permitted unless accompanied by a parent.

-Bicycles, skateboards and roller blades must be walked on school property. Students are not allowed to ride their bicycles, skateboards and roller blades on school property based on a recommendation by the Niagara Regional Police. Bicycles must be locked in the bike racks. If a student is younger than grade 4, it is recommended that he/she be accompanied by an adult to and from school.

-With a number of bussed students at Parliament Oak School, there is school bus loading zone on King Street in front of the school. Please have a close look at the signs so you won't receive an unwanted ticket. The safe loading and unloading of our bus students is very important. This area is not for parking

⇒ Parliament Oak Staff for 2009-10

Our staff this year:

Mrs. A. Inglis	JK/SK
Miss. M. Masson	JK/SK
Mrs. A. Bereczky	Grade 1/2
Mrs. J. Jackman-Burton	Grade 2/3
Mrs. L. Pyle	Grade 3/4
Mr. G. Sarkasian	Grade 4/5
Mrs. J. Andrews	Grade 6/7
Mr. S. Pawlik	Grade 7/8
Mrs. I. Giesbrecht	FSL
Mrs. Z. Hamdani	LRT/ISP
Mr. J. Brunton	Educational Assistant
Mr. R. Bissell	Head Caretaker
Mr. A. Iggulden	Night Caretaker
Mrs. D. Ciazynski	Administrative Assistant
Mrs. C. Hadfield	Principal

Thank you to the amazing staff of Parliament Oak for making the beginning of the 2009-10 school year successful. The staff have worked very hard to ensure that the school is ready and inviting for all students in spite of the construction we are having. Mr. Bissell and Mrs. Ciazynski have also worked very hard in preparation for your children. Thanks!
