

Little Mountain Elementary School Newsletter



October 12, 2016

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Dear Parents:

Wow, Mid – October already! There doesn't appear to be enough hours in a day or days in a month to keep up with the busy life of an elementary aged child.

September was a busy month with the children settling into their classes, building a bond with their teacher and classmates, being enthused and challenged with new curriculum and studies, completing in-class assessments so that teachers can plan accordingly, completing a School – Wide Write at every grade, joining the school Soccer Teams at the Intermediate Grades, raising money for the Cops for Cancer and the Terry Fox Foundation, participating in the Terry Fox Run, and being part of five different after-school programs.



With October upon us, the critical component for success remains communication – student, parent and teacher. This month's newsletter contains a list of tentative dates for activities at our school this year. Hopefully this will help you plan for upcoming events and adjust your schedule accordingly. As a school we will continue to keep you apprised of forthcoming events during the year and possible changes that need to take place because of unforeseen circumstances. This communication will be in both a monthly newsletter format and a weekly reminder/event update on our school's website. Please also look for monthly classroom newsletters that will arrive home throughout the year.

Communication between the school and home will also take other forms, both formal and informal. Establishing an open line of communication is crucial for your child's success throughout the school year. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher if you have questions and/or concerns about their progress. Please also feel free to contact Mr. Chater or myself if you have questions, concerns, and or suggestions/ideas of how to improve events that we undertake at the school. It is important for us as a school to debrief activities we undertake, both as a staff and as a school community and make adjustments where necessary.

Until next month...

Gabe D'Archangelo

Dates to Remember:

Thursday, October 13 – School Photo Day

All students in our school will have their individual pictures taken today. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for this event.

Monday, October 17 - PAC Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - Library

Thank you to those parents who attended our first PAC meeting in September. We had a great turnout and we are looking forward to this next meeting. Please join us as we discuss items that are relevant to you as an LME Parent. Our meetings are held in the Library and remember, child-care is provided.

Friday, October 21 - Provincial Professional Development Day

Our school will be closed Friday, October 21st, as teachers attend conferences around our district or in other districts around the province. Conferences that our staff attend are designed to give teachers practical strategies to “close the gap” in their classrooms, with tools to develop student thinking skills, ways to adjust curriculum planning for diversity, and to learn about the role that belief systems play in motivating both at-risk learners and high achieving students.

Tuesday, October 25: Parent Volunteer Orientation

Parent volunteers are welcomed and cherished by the staff at our school. Having another person(s) to work with children on specific activities is an invaluable resource that many of our staff took advantage of last year. For those parents who are interested in volunteering in our school (classroom, library, field trips, etc.) this year please join us in the Gym, on October 25th, at 6: 30 p.m. for a Parent Volunteer Orientation. At this session we will be discussing roles, responsibilities and expectations for parent volunteers. Please note that anyone who is planning on volunteering at our school this year **MUST** attend this orientation session. Please contact the school office to let us know you will be in attendance.

Thursday, October 27 - School Hike # 1



All of our students, Kindergarten to Grade 6 will be going on one of 2 hikes on October 27th (Permission Slip and Information to follow from classroom teacher). Please remind your child that it is imperative that they put forth their best effort when they are on these school-wide excursions. Please also ensure that your child is adequately prepared for their trip. Please dress your child in layers, with appropriate footwear for walking. Taking into account the time of year, it would not be unusual for it to be chilly in the morning, when we start our hike. Please do not send your child in a winter parka, but, wearing a sweatshirt and a light wind-breaker would be appropriate. In addition, having your child bring warm gloves would also make their morning more comfortable. If you are interested in joining us for this field trip, please feel free to contact your child’s teacher to make arrangements. Remember, we require

that all parent volunteers have their criminal record checks completed AND have participated in our Volunteer Orientation before volunteering with our school.

Monday, October 31 - School Spirit Day

Mrs. Janzen/Mr. Chater’s Grade 6 students will be sponsoring our first Spirit Day of the year on October 31st. All of our students are encouraged to dress in “black and orange” colors on this day. All participating students will have their names entered to win a prize at the proceeding assembly.

Thursday, November 10 - Remembrance Day Assembly – 10: 30 a.m.

Each year the Federal Government directs every school in the country take the time to focus one assembly on remembering the sacrifices our soldiers have made and continue to make in strife-filled places far from home. At Little Mountain, we take this responsibility seriously and try to make it as solemn, as respectful and as enlightening for our students as we can. If at all possible, please take the time to join us in the gym for this assembly. The assembly will begin at 10: 30 a.m. and we ask that you arrive in advance of that time. Poppies will be provided to all of our students.

Friday, November 11 - Remembrance Day – School Closed

All schools in Canada will be closed on November 11th in recognition of Remembrance Day. Please take a moment at 11:00 a.m. on this day to stop, reflect and appreciate how lucky we are to live in a country where our children have every opportunity to grow up and achieve their dreams.



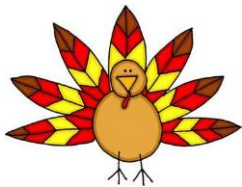
ITEMS OF INTEREST

“Man’s Best Friend”

Is not always child's best friend... much as we pet owners and dog lovers would like to think! There has been an increase in the presence of dogs in our school yard lately and while some people and children love them, there are many children (and adults) who are highly fearful of them. It is understandable that people feel they want to acclimatize their pets to being around children; however, it can happen that a dog can be provoked or spooked and can snap at a child unexpectedly. The start and end of the day is a busy, noisy, hectic place with 360 students and numerous parents present - which could easily contribute to an unexpected reaction from an animal. In light of this and in support of those who have difficulties being around dogs, we respectfully request that you leave your family pet at home when dropping off or picking up your child from school. Thank you for your understanding and anticipated cooperation with this request.

Student Expectations

During the first week of school, all of our students reviewed expectations for appropriate behavior and to achieve success, both in the classroom and around the school. Under the headings, Take Care of Myself, Take Care of Others, and Take Care of This Place, students strengthened their knowledge and understanding of their rights and responsibilities at school to ensure their success across the curriculum. To coin a phrase that I have used at the school, **“they have an understanding of what it means to be a Student in Good Standing”**. This mythical student is one who exercises his/her rights in an appropriate manner and consistently fulfills the expectations that have been placed before them both in the classroom and in our school. If your child is in danger of not being in Good Standing, you will be contacted, by your classroom teacher in an effort to together develop a plan of action that will ensure your child will be able to meet the realistic expectations placed before them.



“Gobble- Gobble”

On Friday October 7th, our students took part in a “Turkey Trot” – a fun way to make our regular running event take on more meaning for the students. All of our participating students had their names put into a draw for a turkey and all of the fixings. The following student names were drawn: Mila D., Abbie H., William J., Damien L. Wyatt M., Riley T., Delaney W.

Walk/Jog Fitness Program

Our School-wide Walk/Jog Physical Fitness Program is well underway. Our focus is on having each student improve their physical fitness level as the year progresses. The majority of participating classes will be outside Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 11:30 am. Parent support and participation has a positive impact on the student incentive and energy towards this program. This year we hope that parents will join us on a regular basis by volunteering their time to support our endeavors while at the same time getting some valuable exercise time. Parent participants can walk, jog, run or ride their bikes with our students. If you are not able to volunteer your time by participating, you still play a significant role by ensuring your child is prepared for this activity. By asking your child - 1) Is it ‘walk/jog’ day? 2) Do you have the necessary clothing and shoes? 3) Did you bring home your sweaty clothing? - will ensure that your child is successful in this activity. Having a change of clothes (shirt, shorts/sweatpants, socks) is an expectation of all of our students for hygienic reasons. In addition, we will be participating in inclement weather and being able to change into dry clothing is important. We will only cancel on a particular day if it is “heavy rainfall” or the conditions are dangerous.

Please Sign In!

This is just a quick reminder that ALL adult visitors to our school need to check in at the office before going to their destination in the building. In this way we have an opportunity to keep track of who is in the building in case of an emergency and it also gives Ms. Heemskerck an opportunity to meet and touch base with the parents of the students in our school. In addition, please keep in mind that teaching/learning time is critical for all of our staff and students. If it is imperative that you speak with your child’s teacher, please keep in mind that the best time to do this is in the morning, prior to 8: 15 am and/or after 2: 15 pm. If this is not possible, please notify the office of the pressing situation and we

will make every effort possible to ensure that you have the opportunity to talk to the staff member in question. Thank you for your cooperation with this procedure.

Please be Aware....

Every year, in every school, the issue of Head- Lice, is raised by concerned parents. The questions are generally about what the school's reaction will be when it is detected in individual students. At Little Mountain, our procedure is a mirror image of what is done at all of the other elementary schools in the district. If a child has head-lice, we call the parent(s) to let them know what we suspect and we ask that when their child gets home from school, they treat it with the products available at all drug stores. We also send home an information letter to all of the parents in that particular classroom. The Provincial Medical Health Officer has designated head-lice a nuisance and not a health risk. As a school, we support this designation, but we also are aware of the importance of having this nuisance treated when it becomes evident in those few students from time to time during the school year. This year, to help with this process a small group of very knowledgeable parents will be used to check ALL of our students on two different occasions during the school year. When we do our "head-checks" the parents will check all of the students following the procedure that is set out for them by the office. Each student will be checked and the findings will be communicated to the office after the entire school is completed. Students will not know anything other than we did a lice-check that day. The office will then make any telephone calls to parents that need to be made. Our parent volunteers understand the importance of discretion in this matter and they are also aware of how fragile a child's self-esteem is. If you have any questions regarding the process or would like to be a volunteer to help with this process, please contact the school office.



Time to Register

It may only be mid-October, but our school is in the wonderful and unique position of asking parents to register as soon as possible, for Kindergarten for the forthcoming school year. We have already registered several children for next year. Students are placed on our class lists in "order of date registered" and once we have reached our maximum of 44 students, further registrations will be placed on a "Wait List". When registering please ensure that you bring with you your child's birth certificate and proof of residency (Driver's License, etc.)

Wind and Tide Pre-School

Wind and Tide registration for next year begins online, November 1st, for NEW 3 year-olds or NEW students. Current three year old children in our program, are automatically moved to the 4 year old class. Please register at www.windandtide.com or come into the school to pick up a registration form. Don't miss out on having your child experience the best pre-school program in our community.

"Literacy" update

This year, one of our school goals continues to be "to improve all aspects of our students' literacy skills". This will be addressed in the daily instruction in all of our classrooms. To help support what is taught and reviewed in the classroom, we expect ALL of our students to be participating in our Night Reading Program. We feel that it is not unrealistic to expect all of our students to reach at least 200 nights of reading this year. For this goal to be attained, your child will need to read 20 minutes each weeknight for the remainder of the school year. This can be accomplished by either reading alone or with you. It also counts if your child is being read to. What a wonderful way to spend a little quality time with your children.



Dismissal Expectations

In an effort to ensure that all of our students arrive safely at home directly after dismissal, it is expected that ALL students go directly home after they have been dismissed unless they are being directly supervised on the playground by a parent or guardian after-school. If a student lives close to the school, they are asked to not return to the school grounds until after 3:00 pm each day. Please also note, that students are not allowed to “wait” on the playground for a parent/guardian to arrive. If a child is to wait for the arrival of apparent/guardian, they are to do that at the school office or front entrance. This way they can be directly supervised at all times.



A Friendly Reminder.....NUT FREE School

This year we have several children who have life-threatening nut allergies. Reaction to contact (touch, ingestion, etc.) with nuts can be life-threatening to these children. Therefore, we have found it necessary to ask children to be very selective with what they bring for lunch and for snack time. We would like to have a safe environment for all of our students and therefore we are asking that you carefully monitor what your child will be eating at school each day.

The rule to follow is “If in doubt, DON’T pack it” PLEASE. We are aware that for some people it may create some difficulties with preparing what your child brings each day but making a mistake for these children with allergies could result in drastic consequences. Please

note, due to challenges in our abilities to be able to verify what is in a child’s lunch, we are NOT accepting peanut butter substitutes such as “WOW” Butter, etc. Thank you for your assistance and understanding with this matter.

A Friendly Reminder.....Cell Phones

It has been brought to our attention that several students have cell phones in their possession while at school. We understand the importance of parents wanting to ensure that their children are safe when they are not at home, however, it is also important that as a staff we know who our students are talking to when they are at school. Therefore, if your child needs to make a phone call they need to let the adults that work with them know they would like to make a phone call and then once given permission, use the SCHOOL OFFICE TELEPHONE. In addition, if you need to contact your child, you are to call the school number and we will pass on the information. It is imperative that the school is “kept in the loop” when parents and children are talking during the school day because if a child was to suddenly be missing, we would have all of the relevant information needed to find the student. If a child brings a cell-phone to school, they are to leave it either with their teacher or at the office for the school day and then pick it up at the end of the day, once they have been dismissed by their classroom teacher. In addition, students have been advised that “Play-Dates” are to be organized BEFORE a student arrives at school for the day. Students will not be given permission to use the telephone to ask permission to go to a friend’s house or vice-versa. Our belief is that parents will be making this decision before a child leaves for school in the morning so that no-one is surprised with additional children arriving home or not having a child reach their destination as was previously expected. Thank you for your cooperation with these requests.