



ALEXANDRA SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

January 2011

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I am so glad to be the new principal at Alexandra! My first few days have been very exciting. I have been getting to know the students, teachers and parents. Thank you for the warm welcome. I have heard so many good things about Alexandra and I so look forward to being a part of it. The Bear Dens are a very special part of our school as are the weekly assemblies. The intramurals are fun for the students and basketball tryouts are in full swing. The Bump It Up walls are amazing. I'm finding out that there are so many different ways to get involved here. Please don't hesitate to come and introduce yourself to me when you're in the building. I think 2011 will be an excellent year!

Mrs. Klassen

Family Literacy Day

Family Literacy Day is on Thursday, January 27th. This is a day when adults and children can spend time reading and learning together and to encourage families to spend at least 15 minutes enjoying a learning activity as a family. The staff has some exciting activities planned for the students on that day.

The New Provincial Report Card

The new provincial report cards for grades 1-8 will be arriving home on February, 9, 2011. On this report card, students in grades 1-6 will receive letter grades (e.g., A, B, C, D) and students in grades 7 and 8 will receive percentage grades (e.g., 84%, 72%, 67%) to indicate how well they are achieving the curriculum in each of their subjects.

The Learning Skills and Work Habits are the same as the ones that are on the Progress Reports. These are essential skills that will help students to be successful in both school and also as an active member of their community.

The new Learning Skills and Work Habits are:

Responsibility;
Organization;
Independent Work;
Collaboration;
Initiative; and,
Self-regulation.

There are a few changes that you will notice in the subject-specific boxes

- ❖ Language (English) - Oral Communication and Media -----Literacy are now two separate marks
- ❖ Health and Physical Education students will receive both a Health mark and a Physical Activity mark

- ❖ The Arts – Drama and Dance are being reported as two separate marks

If a particular subject or strand is not part of a student's program this term, then the NA box will be checked. This subject or strand will be reported on in June. Finally, we hope that you are also pleased to see the excellent work that our teachers are doing to ensure that the comments are written in parent-friendly language. Each comment will identify strengths that your daughter or son is demonstrating and some next steps that will help their learning during the next term.

2010-11 School Year Reporting Timelines

February 9, 2011 Grades 1-8

Term 1 Elementary Report Card
Junior Kindergarten Progress Report
Senior Kindergarten Term 1 Report Card

June 28, 2011 Grades 1-8

Term 2 Elementary Report Card
Junior Kindergarten Term 2 Report Card
Senior Kindergarten Term 2 Report Card

At any time throughout the year, parents/guardians are invited to communicate with the school about their child's progress and achievement.



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Extended French Information Night

The DSBN is making some changes to its Extended French Program for September 2011. **Students who are currently in grade 4 now will have the opportunity to attend Extended French in grade 5 at Alexandra. The information night for students and parents in grade 4 will be on Wednesday, February 9th at 7:00 here in the gym.** We will be able to answer all of your questions on that night.

Extended French will still be offered in September 2011 to students who are currently in grade 6 and it will be at Queen Mary as usual. This will be for grade 7 entry. **The information night for grade 6 students and their parents will be on Thursday, February 17th at 7:00 p.m. at Queen Mary.**

Dental Screening

A Public Health registered dental hygienist is scheduled to visit our school February 9th, 2011 to assess students in grades JK, SK, 2, 4, 6, 8. During this time the registered dental hygienist will perform a visual assessment of each child to determine his/her dental needs. Parents will be contacted if their child requires immediate dental care. Public Health dental programs may financially assist children who do not have access to required

dental care. If your child is not in one of the targeted grades and you would like him/her to take part, please call the Public Health dental program at 905-688-8248 ext. 7399 or 1-888-505-6074 ext. 7188 or email michael.solanki@niagararegion.ca.

Monday, January 31st is a PA Day. There will be no school for students on that day.

Pizza Day is Wednesday, January 26th.

Math at Home

Mathematical literacy is just as important as reading literacy and just as you support your children by reading together you can also do math together.

- ❖ Model a positive attitude towards math
- ❖ Advocate how a good understanding of mathematics will help make sense of the world in the same way that effective reading does
- ❖ Math will turn up in the most unexpected places, learn to use those opportunities to help your child understand mathematics

With young children

- ❖ Identify the interesting math that lies in many

of the stories that you read together

- ❖ How many ducks are there now?
- ❖ How long would it take to drive 80 km?
- ❖ Are there enough chairs for everyone? How did you know?
- ❖ Help your child to understand how numbers can be taken apart and recombined
- ❖ I can't carry all 12 books. If I make 2 trips how could I move the books? (6 and 6, 7 and 5, the 4 big books and then the 8 small books)
- ❖ Look for opportunities to have your child estimate time
- ❖ How long will it take for us to clean your room together? Let's guess and then see how close we are.
- ❖ Encourage your child to explore money

With older children

- ❖ Play board and card games with your child
- ❖ Look at sports statistics and discuss them
- ❖ Share when you use mathematics; cooking, building, measuring, shopping



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Comprehension Strategy: Retell the Story

When parents ask their children what happened in school that day, the response is usually one of two things. Either they are given a play by play synopsis or they are given the single word answer “nothing”. The strategy of retelling is similar.

Retelling a story helps readers recall what is happening in the story they are reading. It allows a reader to stop and monitor their understanding. A retelling usually includes characters, setting problems, and the solution or the main ideas of the

text. It involves telling what is important without telling too much. Many times children struggle with the concept of weeding out what is important. Often they either provide every single detail or they give a vague description that is hard to follow. Use the following strategies to help your child be successful in retelling.

How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When reading with your child, stop to think about what you are reading. Model this process aloud. Stop and reread if you can't remember.

2. When reading with your child, stop and have your child tell you what is happening in the story using the words: *first, next, then, last and finally.*

3. Use the following questions to prompt your child to think about the story being read:
Who were the main characters?
What problem did the main characters experience?
How was the problem solved?
How did the story end?
What happened first, next, and last?

4. Allow your child to become comfortable with the strategy of retelling by retelling events they are familiar with. This is where you can help your child focus on weeding out minor details by centering their attention on what's important. Use some of the following prompts or come up with some of your own:
Tell me about the last time our family went out to dinner.

Tell me about what you did at school this week.

Tell me about a time when you went to a birthday party.

Tell me about the first time you lost a tooth.

MS Read-a-Thon

Alexandra students will be participating in the MS Read-a-Thon this year. It will begin on **Wednesday January 19th**.

Students will collect pledges and read everyday at school from 11:05-11:25 and track their minutes read. Students are also encouraged to track their minutes read at home

(this can be done independently or with a partner). This will be done every day until **Wednesday February 2nd**. All pledge forms are due back at school no later than **Wednesday February 9th**. This is an opportunity to foster your child's love of reading and develop their literacy skills. Your child will learn the importance of community involvement, social responsibility and disability awareness. Also, through reading, your child will be helping those living with multiple sclerosis. Please visit www.msreadathon.com for more information.

KINDERGARTEN COUNTDOWN

Do you know a child who is turning 4 or 5 in 2011? Help them get ready for their big first day of school with the DSNB's Kindergarten Countdown Open House!

Parents and children are invited to our KINDERGARTEN OPEN HOUSE on Thursday, January 27, 2011 from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Families can tour our school, meet the kindergarten teacher, receive a gift bag filled with fun learning resources and information that will help children develop school readiness skills, and register for the coming school year.



Go to www.dsnb.org/kindergarten for more information.