



# The Bear Essentials



ALEXANDRA PUBLIC SCHOOL

January 2012

## *A Message from Ms. Currie...*

We hope that you all enjoy a safe and restful holiday season. We are looking forward to all of the challenges and opportunities that a new year brings. We would like to thank all who supported our many holiday celebrations and activities in December. Our school community did a tremendous job of collecting food, clothing, toys and toiletries for Community Care.

As we begin a new calendar year, we are well into the final portion of the first term of the school year. We have only nine weeks before the March Break and yet, this is a very important part of the school year, with the presentation of many new skills and concepts, particularly in Math.

Please remember to review with your child, on a regular basis, their educational goals to support their learning with us. Thank you!

## **What is...Problem-based Mathematics Instruction?**

### **Gallery Walk, Bansho, and Congress**

Problem-based instruction provides a context that grounds abstract mathematics. It allows students to engage in mathematical reasoning and critical thinking that leads to questions and understanding of important and foundational mathematical ideas. Prior to working on a mathematical problem, students are engaged in a short activity that leads mathematically to the problem. During problem-based mathematical instruction, students solve mathematical problems, often with a classmate or group of students. The solution illustrates what students know and understand. The teacher will encourage students to explore, notice patterns, develop efficient strategies, and generalize mathematical ideas. New learning is acquired as students view, discuss, make connections, and see mathematical relationships in the solutions that are presented.

During a gallery walk, students look at the solutions of their peers. This may include asking and answering questions or writing comments and/or

questions. Bansho comes from the Japanese lesson study. It means board writing. A math congress comes from the research of Cathy Fosnot. In both instructional strategies, student work forms the foundation for mathematical learning. Students explain their mathematical ideas to the mathematical community and justify and defend their thinking. Students see themselves as part of a mathematical community in which all thinking is both honoured and productive.

### **RESOURCE**

The Ontario Education Resource Bank (OERB)



Children who will be four years of age or older by December 31 are eligible to enroll in Kindergarten starting September 2012.

Going to school for the first time is a major step for children and their parents. At the DSNB, families start that journey together at the 'Kindergarten Countdown' open houses. Families can visit our school, meet the kindergarten teacher, and receive a gift bag filled with fun learning resources and information that will help children develop school readiness skills.

Mark your calendar for **Thursday, February 2, 2012 from 4-6 p.m.** for our Kindergarten Countdown open house. Visit [www.dsnb.org](http://www.dsnb.org) and click on "Kindergarten Registration" for all the details!

### **Reminders for the 2012 calendar...**

Friday, January 20<sup>th</sup> - PD day

Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup> - Early Release Day

Monday February 20<sup>th</sup> - Family Day

## French Immersion Information Night

The DSBN is making some changes to its French Immersion Program for September 2012. Students who are currently in grade 3 and 4 now will have the opportunity to attend Extended French in grade 4 or 5 at Alexandra. The information night for students and parents in grade 3 and 4 will be on Monday, **January 30 at 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. in the Alexandra gym**. We will be able to answer all of your questions on that night.

The information night for grade 6 students and their parents entering into the grade 7 French Immersion program will be on Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. at Queen Mary.

## Cold Weather Alerts at DSBN

Winter is a time of wonder for many children; many enjoy the crisp air, the freshly fallen snow and participating in a whole host of exciting winter sports and activities.

Although we feel it is important for students to spend some time outside each day exercising and socializing with their peers, there are times when bitterly cold temperatures and other inclement weather conditions require that we keep children inside.

Because Niagara is such a large geographical area, and weather conditions may vary from one municipality to the next, the decision whether or not to hold recess outdoors is made by the individual school principal. When making this decision, principals will often consult with neighbouring schools, talk with parents as they arrive in the morning, and if the decision to send children outside is made, will equip yard duty staff with walkie-talkies so that they can communicate with the office to sound the bells to bring students in earlier.

The health and well-being of our students is a top priority at the District School Board of Niagara, and if it is determined that the weather conditions pose a risk to their safety, students will be kept indoors. Extreme cold weather alerts issued by the Niagara Region are often good indicators that students will stay inside.

Even when temperatures are not low enough to necessitate an indoor recess, it still may be quite cold outside. Here are a few tips to help ensure that your child stays warm during the cold winter months.

- Try to send children to school with plenty of layers, such as long underwear, sweatshirts, sweaters and pullovers. Layering their clothing will allow them to add or remove items depending on the weather.
- Students should have a warm winter coat that repels the snow, sleet and rain, while blocking the wind.
- Warm socks and boots will keep their feet warm and dry in the snow and slush.
- Hats are one of the most important parts of dressing warmly in the winter. A thick winter hat will keep students from losing too much of that essential body heat.
- Put on a good pair of gloves or mittens that are water-resistant as well. Gloves will keep kids' hands toasty warm and protect their skin from becoming damaged by the wind and chill.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

There may be times during the school year where inclement weather or other situations could cause transportation cancellations or school closures. At times when student transportation has been cancelled and schools remain open, the decision of whether or not to have children in school on that day rests with the parent or guardian.

**Should you decide not to send your child to school in the event that transportation is cancelled but schools remain open, or if your child is ill or late, please ensure that you call your child's school to inform them of your child's absence.**

Information about transportation cancellations and school closures will be available as soon as it is available through the following channels: websites: [www.dsbn.org](http://www.dsbn.org) or [www.nsts.ca](http://www.nsts.ca)

### Subscription Features:

DSBN Facebook or Twitter

NSTS Transportation Delay or Cancellation Alerts

**Phone:** Niagara Student Transportation Services 905-346-0290 Voice Auto Attendant

### Radio Stations:

#### Television Stations:

CKTB (610 AM) St. Catharines CHRE (105.7 FM) St. Catharines

WAVE (94.7 FM) Hamilton CHTZ-FM (97.7 FM) St. Catharines

CKOC (1150 AM) Hamilton CKEY (105.1 FM) Niagara Falls/Fort Erie

CHML (900 AM) Hamilton K-LITE-FM (102.9 FM) Hamilton  
CHAM (820 AM) Hamilton GIANT FM (91.7 FM)

