

SEPTEMBER 2014 NEWSLETTER

Superintendent: D. Hansen Trustees: M. Nardini & P. DiFrancesco Pastor: Rev Martin Vallely
Principal: C. Martino Principal Assistant: A. D'Ascenzo Secretary: D. Simpson Assoc. Pastor: Rev Mike Downey

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome back to all our students, staff and parents, as well as the new families and staff that have joined our wonderful school community. I pray all are refreshed and invigorated by the summer holidays and the enthusiasm for the new school year. We begin a new and exciting journey together for the year of 2014-2015. I thank Mrs. Simpson, our secretary, for all her hard work in setting up for the new school year. Thank you to Mr. Gonzalez, Mrs. Velenosi and our summer student Alberto DeSantis, for making sure our school is spotless and oh so shiny! Thank you to our dedicated staff for committing to set up the classrooms and preparing all materials so that everything is ready for the first week! A big thank you to Mr. Turcan for cleaning up our school property and trimming all our bushes and weeds!

Welcome to our new staff members: Ms. Ciotti, FDK, Mrs. Grisc, ECE, Ms. Tomasevic, PPT, Mr. Piant, EA. Welcome to our new Before and After Team, Miss. K. Perron and Mrs. K. Clark. We strive to maintain and embrace our Catholic Community of Faith, believing in learning for all in a safe and caring school community. We work diligently with Father Martin Vallely, Pastor, Father Michael Downey, Associate Pastor and Wes Moga, Youth Minister, to celebrate our faith. Our Board Theme this school year is Catholic Education: Exploring the Paths of Joy. We have so much to celebrate and be joyful for!

Prayer for September

*Jesus, Our brother and friend,
You have given us many examples of how to serve faithfully.
We can serve You in big ways and in small ways.
We serve You by loving everyone in our class and in our school.
We serve You each day when we know kindness here and at home.
We are Your disciples when we show others what Jesus would do!
Amen*



SEPTEMBER 2014 BELL TIMES

8:35 a.m. ENTRY BELL 9:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. - Recess

11:20 a.m. - 12:20 p.m. - Lunch 11:20 to 11:50 students remain in class / 11:50 until 12:20 outside play time

12:20 p.m. - ENTRY BELL 1:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. - Recess 3:05 p.m. - DISMISSAL

PARKING CONCERNS

We have a limited number of parking spots and student safety is **First and Critical at All Times!** When you arrive to drop off students, please park your car. We do not want any cars parked along the front. This can be a very dangerous situation. Follow the entrance into the parking lot and exit out by the opposite end, near front door. Only one flow of traffic is permitted. **Please be reminded that the driveway in front of the school cannot be used for PARKING, STOPPING OR IDLING as this is the bus zone as well as the fire route.** Traffic flow enters the driveway at the east end of the school and leaves by driving slowly in front of the school and exiting at the west driveway. If a babysitter or other caregiver is picking up your child, please inform them of the expectations. No cars should be parked behind the wheelchair accessible parking in the far west lot. Please be considerate and follow the procedures for everyone's safety, not just your convenience.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS/ENTRY

Sign in book is located in the front foyer. Once you have signed in, see Mrs. Simpson for a visitor tag. Lunches, forgotten items, are to be dropped off at the front office. We ask that visitors do not wonder around the school. Student safety is first and all visitors are strangers to students.

School begins promptly at 8:35. All students should be in line with their classmates. If a student is late, do not ring the buzzer if announcements are on, wait until announcements are over. All students, if late, must report to the office and will be given an admittance to class slip. Dismissal is at 3:05. All students are to leave the playground immediately following the bell and using the sidewalk on the far side of the school to get to the major crossing area. Our school crossing guard will be on duty in the morning and at the end of the day!

SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE



Please join us at the Open House on **Thursday, September 18th from 5 - 7 pm**. We will be having a BBQ catered by **PIG OUT!** Order forms will be sent home soon. We will also have **FROGO EXPRESS, a yogurt truck on site.**

UNIFORM SWAP

Gently used school uniforms will be available no charge at the school barbeque. If you have any uniforms to donate, please send to the school office **before Wednesday, September 17th**. **Uniform is mandatory. McCarthy is our school supplier. We sell crests in the office.**



STUDENT AGENDAS

Students from Grades FDK-8 will once again be provided with an agenda book to assist in recording assignments, tests, reminders for each day. To enhance the communication between home and school a parent is requested to please sign the agenda each evening to ensure the contents of the entries have been reviewed and completed.

In turn, the teacher will also be signing the agenda book each day as well to ensure it is being maintained each evening. Parents may wish to send notes to school and are encouraged to do so using the plastic pouch found at the front of the agenda book. Please refer to the insert in the front of the agenda, particularly pages 2–8 that are specific to St. Clare. Please read these pages with your child/ren and sign and date the form on page 8.

Special thanks is extended to our Catholic School Council for their continued financial support of the agenda books for each student. As a result of the CSC's donation, families are not required to supplement the purchase. We do however encourage all families to support your Catholic School Council so that efforts similar to this can continue at St. Clare.

PARISH CONNECTION:

Liturgy times at St. Francis Parish: Saturday: 5:30 pm; Sunday: 8:30 am, 10:00 am—Children's Liturgy, 11:30 am —Children's Liturgy

RCIA:

Is the Catholic Faith a curiosity to you or someone you know? If you might be interested in exploring the Catholic Faith and Church, perhaps with a view to joining it and being baptized and confirmed as a Roman Catholic, there is a programme for that purpose here at Saint Francis Xavier Parish, called the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) process. It involves weekly meetings for most of the year, and will begin on **Thursday, September 25th, at 7:30 P.M.** For more information, please call the Parish Rectory and ask to speak to Father Martin Vallely, as soon as possible. Call 905-662-8593. Or E-Mail pastor_sfx@bellnet.ca.

CATHOLIC YOUTH ORGANIZATION ATHLETICS CALLING ALL COACHES!!!!

Please consider volunteering your coaching expertise to assist with coaching some of our school teams. The more coaches we have available, the more teams we will be able to field during the different seasons this year. Although a teacher must be part of the coaching staff, parents are most welcome to take on a head coach position. We welcome parent coaches of all skill levels...our focus is to provide our students with access to athletic programming to help them stay active and learn the value of effective team play! Please contact the school office if you are interested in volunteering in this capacity for the 2014–2015 year.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Communication between home and school is a key component for student success and I encourage parents to speak with child's teacher early in the year to address any concerns and/or share information. As always, I am here to support all members of our community in creating the best possible learning situation for our students. If you have a concern, please call the school or send a note, appointments are needed. Protocol should always be followed: teacher first and address the concern.

Reporting Periods for this School Year, 2014-2015. Progress Report: November 12th; Term 1: February 10th; Term 2; June 23rd

ANAPHYLAXIS ALERT / UPDATE:

All parents need to be aware that there are children in our school with a severe life threatening food allergy (anaphylaxis) to peanuts and nuts. This is a medical condition that causes severe reaction to specific foods and can result in death within minutes. Although this may or may not affect your child's class directly, we want to inform you so that you will choose to send foods to school with your child that are free from nuts and nut products.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Education and supervision are paramount in dealing with issues regarding food allergies. Guidelines for all children include:

- 1) Review, recognize and understand the meaning of the no nuts symbol in our school.
- 2) No trading and sharing foods, food utensils and food containers.
- 3) Hand washing before and after eating is highly encouraged.
- 4) The use of food in crafts and class parties may need to be restricted depending on the allergies of the students.

In the interest of ensuring a safe school environment for all of our children, St. Clare of Assisi school asks that parents send snacks/lunches that are **peanut/nut free**. This requires extra vigilance and label reading on the part of the parent initially, but it is our experience that over time, students also gain awareness of this issue from classroom education as well as broader school initiatives. For more information on snack/lunch ideas as well as Birthday treats, please refer to the school website at:

www.hwcdsb.ca Please note that Tim Horton's products are baked in a facility with nuts and are therefore **not** nut safe. Similarly, any product which states "may contain traces of nuts" is also **not** a nut safe product and should not be sent to school as a snack for your child. Letters will be sent home to children in classes where there are specific concerns which require the support, understanding and cooperation of all parents and students. We thank you for keeping our school nut safe! Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. For more information, please contact the Principal.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

If you wish, you may send a special treat for your child's birthday. **Please remember that due to peanut and nut allergies, we can not accept any baked goods.** Examples of treats that may be sent are: Dare cookies, fruit snacks, Bear Paws, Nestle chocolate bars such as Smarties, Kit Kat or Aero Bars. **ALL TREATS SENT TO SCHOOL MUST HAVE A LABEL, PEANUT AND TREE NUT SAFE.** As always, we encourage the reading of labels to ensure the nut safety of any foods coming into the school. Throughout the year we will continue to raise student and parent awareness on this issue in the interest of providing a safe school environment for all of our children. I thank you in advance for your continued support and cooperation.
ALLERGIES ARE LIFE THREATENING AND ALL MUST BE AWARE!

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS & POLICE CHECKS, UNIFORMS & DRESS CODES, APPOINTMENTS, ABSENCES &/OR LATES.

Please refer to the inside of your child's agenda for above information.

BUSSING OF STUDENTS

In the event that you require assistance from the Consortium staff during start up phase, all you need to do is call the contact centre 1-800-691-6402 or 905-523-2318 and provide them with the details pertaining to your inquiry. All telephone calls to the Board Office will be re-directed through the contact centre during the start up phase. **IF THE NATURE OF YOUR CALL IS AN EMERGENCY SAFETY ISSUE, PLEASE NOTIFY THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR OF THAT IMMEDIATELY."**

Students are permitted only to ride the school bus if they have been assigned a seat. Please do **not** send notes to school informing us that your child will be riding the bus to a friend's house if your child is not a bus student. Further to this, if your child does ride the bus, they are to use their assigned stop unless you have made alternate arrangements through the Transportation Services.

PUBLICATION OF NAMES/PHOTOS/ WORK OF STUDENTS

From time to time teachers will display samples of student work, announce names of students over the PA to recognize achievements, include names of students in newsletters, website (first name and last initial only) etc. as part of our celebration of student success.

In the event a parent wishes to decline their child's recognition of these achievements we ask that the parent make this request in writing and send it to Mrs. Martino directly. The respective teacher(s), coaches will be informed of this parental decision and your request will be strictly adhered to.

STUDENT VERIFICATION FORMS

It is extremely important that we update our school records each year. Student Verification Sheets will be sent home shortly. If you have had a change of address, phone number or emergency contact please let the school know ASAP. Please continue to update this information as needed during the school year.

CASUAL DAYS

Occasionally there will be Casual Days during the year. On these days, students are permitted to wear clothing other than school uniforms. However, regular school dress code applies: Length of bottoms (maximum 4 inches above the knee), no profanity, excessive skin, etc. A loonie or toonie is collected from the students that participate to support a specific charity.

REGISTRATON FOR SCHOOL - 2014

Please contact Mrs. Simpson for an appropriate registration time. Documents needed at time of registration: child's Baptismal certificate; child's birth certificate; proof of residency; if child and/or parents were born outside of Canada, immigration papers for both child and parents.

COUNT YOURSELF IN!

Did you know that every time you move to a new home, you must re-designate your Catholic school support? Otherwise the education portion of your property taxes will automatically default to the public school system. The number of Catholic ratepayers is also a strong indicator of support for the Catholic school system. To vote for Catholic Trustees you must be registered as a separate school ratepayer. We urge you to check your property tax bill to ensure that your support is directed to the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board. We also encourage you to share this information with family and friends who are Catholic but do not have children in the school system. If you need help checking or changing your school support designation, please call the Assessment Department at 905-525-2930, Ext. 2188, or email webmaster@hwcdsb.ca

MILK COMMITTEE



If anyone is interested in joining the milk committee to assist in maintaining this program at our school, please call the school to indicate your intent to participate. Many thanks in advance for all of those moms who will be continuing their work on this committee. There is nothing like a refreshing carton of cold milk with lunch! Our milk program will begin **Tues., Oct. 14th** and order forms will be sent home shortly.

PIZZA MONDAYS



Our Pizza Mondays lunch program will continue starting after Thanksgiving on **Tues., Oct. 14th** and order forms will be sent home shortly.

SUNSHINE FUND

Three years ago, the School Council voted to establish a Sunshine Fund in order to recognize events that occur in our school community. We would like to send cards to celebrate births and sympathy cards to acknowledge deaths. If you would like these events recognized, please inform the School Council Chairperson via the school office.

PARENT CONFERENCE 2014

The 22nd Annual Parent Conference at the new Bishop Ryan Secondary School will be on **Saturday, November 1, 2014., 7:45 am - 2:30 pm**. It is open to all parents of students in our Board and will feature outstanding workshops, displays and a dynamic keynote speaker. Registration pamphlets will be available at the school in September. Please plan to attend.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

We were blessed with a wonderful Catholic School Parent Council last year and many incredible volunteers. We pray for the same hearts and hands to help us out. We encourage all Parents/Guardians to come and be a part of the school community. Our first meeting will be held on **Monday September 22nd** in our School Library at **6:30 pm**.

A reminder that, under the guidelines from the Ministry, School Council elections will be held in September. **ALL** positions are open because terms are one year in duration. Please consider forwarding your name to be part of the election process for our 2014-2015 Catholic School Council. Positions/roles on the council will be determined at the first meeting of the new Council to take place in September of 2014. You can make a difference!

Parents/Guardians interested in holding a position on council shall submit a brief paragraph outlining why they wish to stand for office to the Principal by **September 18, 2014**. This information shall be posted for the parents/guardians of children in the school prior to the election (if an election is necessary). Voting day is scheduled for **Monday, September 22, 2014**. Ballots will be available in the school office from **9:00 a.m. to 11:20 a.m.** and **1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

The election of parent members shall be by secret ballot. Positions available will be filled by the top vote getters to the number required. In the event that the required number of candidates can be met based on submissions, those applicants will be acclaimed to the school council. We invite all parents to consider joining the council this year. Election packages will be sent home with the youngest /only student during the first week of school.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board does not provide accident insurance coverage for student injuries that occur on school premises or during school activities. Some injuries incur medical, dental or other expenses that are not covered by provincial healthcare or employer group plans. As a parent or guardian, you become responsible for these expenses.

We do make available the insuremykids® Protection Plan for students exclusively through Reliable Life Insurance Company.

Participation in such a programme is voluntary and the costs are to be paid by the parent or guardian.

This program offers a variety of plans and benefits at affordable prices. Benefits included are:

- Dental expenses (resulting from an accident)
- Total and permanent disability
- Paralysis/loss of use
- Special disability benefits
- Death benefits
- Eye glasses repair/replacement due to accident

Purchasing Student Accident Insurance is strongly recommended especially if your child participates in athletic or other co-curricular activities on or off school property. All rates are one-time annual premiums. Numerous plans are available to fit any family's budget. Family rates for 3 or more children are offered. Purchase online before September 30, 2014 and save further with the 3-Year and 5-Year plans.

The insurance agreement is between you and Reliable Life Insurance Company. To subscribe, apply 24/7 directly online at: www.insuremykids.com If you have any questions please visit the "Frequently Asked Questions" page at the above website or contact Reliable Life Insurance Company direct toll free at: 1-800-463-KIDS (5437) A Small number of pamphlets are available in the school office.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

As part of our Eco-School plan, we will be instituting daily Boomerang Snacks and Lunches in order to emphasize waste-free snacks and lunches. We ask that **all** waste from snacks and lunches go home with your child. This includes all plastic bags, wax paper, aluminum foil and uneaten foods (fruit and vegetable waste—apple cores, banana peels, etc. will continue to be composted at school). Recyclable cans, plastic water bottles and milk cartons can still be left here at school for recycling. Why are we recommending Boomerang Snacks and Lunches? There are several positive benefits: families take responsibility for the waste they produce, food wastes can be added to the family green bin (this service is not yet available to schools, although we do have a composting program for fruits and vegetable refuse) and parents can see what their children are not eating. Here are some suggestions for making this work:

- Pack snacks & lunches in reusable containers
- Pack drinks in a thermos or reusable container
- Use a reusable lunch box or backpack
- Keep a plastic bag in the lunch bag for the uneaten food items and any packaging material to avoid messes.
- Be sure to monitor food quantities, especially JK to Gr. 1. We often find half eaten fruit, yogurt, juice boxes etc. in the garbage
- Reusable containers are often easier for the children to open than the single-serve items
- Packing lunches the night before will save time in the morning.
- Older students can be taught to prepare their own nutritious waste-free lunches & snacks
- Avoid sending drinks in packaging that can't be re-sealed. Many children just take a few sips and throw out the rest
- Pre-packed lunches, single-serve snacks & lunch items are more expensive. You'll save money!
- Children of all ages can take responsibility for returning reusable containers, assisting with snack & lunch preparation & putting recyclables in the recycle bin at home.

As we continue with our efforts to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, we will continue collecting used printer cartridges. Every used cartridge diverted from a landfill reduces the amount of plastic waste & toxic matter omission. Please note that ribbons are not acceptable.

NO CHILD WITHOUT

Our school is involved in the Canadian MedicAlert Foundation's *No Child Without* program. There is no cost for students who attend our school and are between the ages of 4 up to their 14th birthday to join MedicAlert through this program. If your child has a medical condition, allergy or is required to take medication on a regular basis, then you should consider this program. A child's MedicAlert identification can alert school staff, friends, coaches and others about your child's medical condition should an emergency occur. For further information go to www.nochildwithout.ca.

To register your child you will need a *No Child Without* brochure from the office. If your child is already part of the *No Child Without* program and there have been changes to their medical condition, medications or emergency contact information, call MedicAlert at 1-800-668-1507 to update your child's file.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM

Current educational research indicates that learning or maintaining a second or third language has a positive effect on all aspects of a child's educational development. The focus of the International Language Program is to offer an opportunity to develop and/or maintain the ability to listen, speak, read, write and understand a new language or the language of the home or heritage. The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, through St. Charles Continuing Education Centre, is offering free International Language classes to elementary students in the city. For information on schools in your vicinity offering international languages, please refer to the flyer that is posted on the Board web site under International Language Elementary, or www.st.charles.ca.

HWCD SB - Déjà Vu Youth Theatre is...

Holding open auditions to all **students in grades 4 – 8 of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board** and is designed to develop creativity, enhance self-confidence and encourage an interest in musical theatre and the performing arts. Our goal is to create and perform musicals with a Catholic message that reaches young people. Rehearsals in singing, dancing and acting will be coupled with age-appropriate theatre games which will occur on **Monday and Thursday nights from 6:00pm to 8:30pm** at St. David CES. This hard work will culminate with students sharing their newly developed skills in an original musical with schools across our board.

For more information, please contact us at dejavu@fc.hwcdsb.ca

INFORMATION MEETING:

An information meeting for all parents and students interested in auditioning will be held at the Nicholas Mancini Centre (44 Hunt St.) on **Wednesday, September 10th, 2014 at 6:30 pm**