



# Paw Prints

## Unionville Public School



April 2008

**Principal:** Dr. Debbie Donsky

**Vice Principal:** Ms. Carol Takagi

**Trustee:** E. Richardson 905 940 9818

**Superintendent:** Ruth Lambert 905 940 7800

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Wednesday April 2—Dental Screening
- Wednesday April 2—Junior Citizenship Assembly
- Thursday April 3—Legacy Assembly
- Wednesday April 9 and 16—Hep B for Grade 7s
- Monday April 14—Due date for Legacy Run Donations
- Monday April 21-Friday April 25—Earth Week
- Thursday April 24—Legacy Run at UPS
- Friday April 25—Cookie Dough Distribution for Grade 8 Graduation Fund-raising
- Friday May 2—PA Day, No School



## From Your Administrative Team

In the York Region District School Board, we believe that **all children can learn given the right amount of support and time** (Hill and Crevola, 1999). This statement falls under our *Shared Beliefs and Understandings*. When you deconstruct that statement, it is reflective of a paradigm shift in education.

Patterns of learning may vary greatly within a classroom. Teachers need to plan for diversity, give students tasks that respect their abilities, use dynamic and flexible grouping for instruction, and provide ongoing assessment.

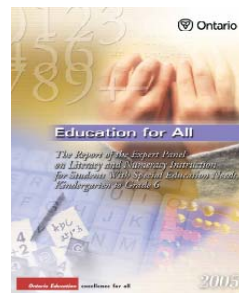
~(Education for All, p.4)

Many of us grew up in a system that believed in the bell curve. This meant that there would be a small percentage of students at the bottom of the achievement and an equally small portion of students at the top. The vast majority of students would fall in the middle—but what is that middle?

If we believe that all students can achieve, then we believe that all students can reach the Ministry of Education target of a level 3 or 4 (equivalent to a B or A). So then we ask ourselves as educators, what of the student who is not achieving at

this level? What is our responsibility towards his or her and how do we change our practice to accommodate these students?

In 2005, the Expert Panel at the



Ministry of Education published a document, **Education for All** (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/speced/panel/speced.pdf>)

One of the key concepts in this document is **Differentiated Instruction**. The idea of differentiated instruction is that all students receive instruction at their level of instruction.

The concept came from Vygotsky's (1980) theories which suggest that we learn best when we are in our "zone of proximal development". This means that given what we already know, we can build on this knowledge, within a social context, to further our knowledge.

When we think about levelled texts in literacy instruction, students are part of a guided reading group at their *instruc-*

*tional level*—their zone of proximal development. While the teacher works with one group, another group may be

Treating all children exactly the same means that children who need accommodations or modifications to the program in order to succeed will be disadvantaged. Some students require more or different support than others in order to work at a level appropriate to their abilities and needs.

~(Education for All, p.5)

working on independent reading with a clear intention and focus. The book the student uses in this context would be at his or her *independent level*, which will be lower than the instructional level because they are able to read, comprehend and synthesize information on their own—at their just right level.

As a staff, we have been working through the *Education for All* document and will continue to do so throughout the remainder of the year.

This document addresses this history and development of programming for our students with special needs but the title says it all—*Education for All*.

At UPS, we are committed to this goal.

## Earth Hour at UPS



On Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, students at Unionville Public School took part in a symbolic Earth

Hour ([http://www.earthhour.org/?competition=earth\\_hour](http://www.earthhour.org/?competition=earth_hour)) in which many schools around the globe participated.

We turned out all the non-emergency lights in the school and experienced first hand the importance of conserving energy. We used limited technology around the school and ensured that all computers and monitors that were not in use were turned off. All students also had an opportunity to view a PowerPoint

presentation by the UPS ECO-Team in the library. We learned all about why Earth Hour is important and what we can do as individuals to conserve energy for the betterment of our planet.

Students were asked at the assembly to take a picture of themselves participating in Earth Hour to bring to

school and add to our ECO-bulletin board. If you have taken a picture, please send it to school with your child and have them hand it in to Ms. Rocha (Room 16).

We challenge you and your families to make small changes in your every lives to promote environmental awareness and do your part to prevent further climate change.

*“Created to take a stand against the greatest threat our planet has ever faced, Earth Hour uses the simple action of turning off the lights for one hour to deliver a powerful message about the need for action on global warming....On March 31 2007, for one hour, Sydney made a powerful statement about the greatest contributor to global warming – coal-fired electricity – by turning off its lights. Over 2.2 million Sydney residents and over 2,100 businesses switched off, leading to a 10.2% energy reduction across the city. What began as one city taking a stand against global warming caught the attention of the world. ([http://www.earthhour.org/?competition=earth\\_hour](http://www.earthhour.org/?competition=earth_hour))*

## Lunch Programs and Supervision

Lunchtime supervision continues to be a concern at Unionville Public School. We have made every effort to encourage parents and community members to give their time as Lunch Assistants but still seem to have difficulty attracting people to take on these positions. We have several women from the community, current and past parents of students at Unionville and we greatly appreciate their ongoing dedication to our students.

Another parent, Karen Ingram-Mak, has taken on the responsibility of calling outside service providers to extend supervision during the lunch hour while also offering educational programming for your children at a reasonable cost. She has recently sent out forms to students and we hope that you take advantage of this great opportunity. Depending on the response, we can work to offer more programs like these, next fall.

If you are interested in taking on the position of lunch assistant, it pays \$10.00/hr. We require support on all days but are happy to accept those interested in doing even one or two days a week to support our students. If you are interested, please come by the office to pick up the necessary forms. If you have any questions regarding the responsibilities or hours of work, please feel free to come and speak either Dr. Donsky or Mrs. Takagi. If you are willing to offer some time as a volunteer during lunch hour please also let us know. Thank you.



## Dance-a-thon

On Friday March 28th, UPS students danced to help raise funds for the school. It was a very successful day with the students learning some new moves and of course raising over \$5000.00 for technology and the library!

The Unionville Public School Advisory Council would like to graciously thank all families for their fundraising support.



## Class Placements



In early June we will be organizing classes for the start of the new school year in September 2008. Our main objective is to create classes which will provide the optimum learning environment for everyone.

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We recognize that children have their own learning styles. We appreciate that parents have valuable information to share with us in this area as we make placement decisions based on children's capabilities, gender, work habits and behaviours. Teachers have the benefit of knowing the children they are currently working with. We rely on their professional decisions.

When teachers meet to create new class lists we will use this information to help make our final decisions.

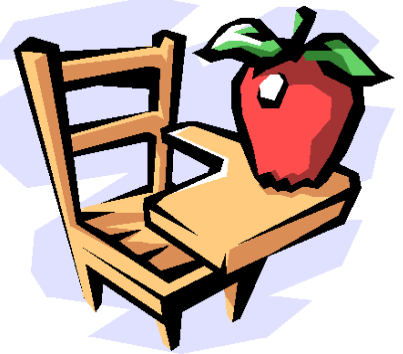
## Primary Class Size Reduction

The Board continues to respond to the Ministry of Education's mandated requirements related to primary class size. In doing so, this has allowed us to make great gains in creating primary classes that maximize teacher time with students in support of their learning.

As Principal, I am working with my Superintendent and Board staff to plan for the upcoming school year. Each school board in the province will have to meet Ministry expectations. In general, on a board-wide basis, 90% of primary classes must have 20 or fewer students, and only 10% may have up to 23. In addition, while classes in grades 4-8 will not have a hard cap, each school board will be required to demonstrate a regional average of approximately 26 students to one teacher.

As we proceed through the planning process, I will be sure to keep you informed as to how our school will be meeting Ministry requirements.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school.



## Unionville Makes Music

Despite the holidays, it sure has been a busy month for the Unionville Public School Music Programme. At the turn of the month, students from UPS joined Grade 7 and 8 students from Central Park Public School and James Robinson Public School for an annual Music Retreat held at Jackson's Point. Our music students performed in mixed ensembles and in just 5 rehearsals over two days, held a concert of new repertoire. Ms. Rocha chaperoned this trip, and her time, energy, and support are very much appreciated.

The ArtsLink Music Alive Festival began on Monday, March 17 with our UPS Concert Band. The band was adjudicated by Mr. David Lum of Agincourt CI and received a Platinum Standard for their superb playing and musicianship. The UPS Stage Band also performed in Music Alive on Monday, March 31 for their first performance and festival as an ensemble. They received a Gold Standard from Mr. Colin Clarke in an entertaining and enthusiastic clinic. Well done to both groups for representing Unionville Public School so well at this prestigious event.

Mark your calendars, as our Unionville Public School music ensembles have a few more formal performances to look forward to. The Concert Band will be playing in Markville Pops 2008 at the Markham Theatre for the Performing Arts on Monday, May 5 at 7:30pm. The Stage Band will also be playing in Junk Food and Jazz at Markville Secondary School on Wednesday, May 28. With the Wonderland Music Festival, sharing assemblies, and main-stage concerts on the horizon, it proves to be a great season of music.





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## School Council



Our next school council meeting is Tuesday April 15th

at 7:30 pm.

Minutes fro previous meetings are available on the school website at:

<http://>

[www.unionville.ps.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/advisory.htm](http://www.unionville.ps.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/advisory.htm)

Thank you also the school council and the community for the generous donations to support our music program, library and sports teams.

## Provincial Assessments—EQAO

Our grade 3 and 6 students will be participating in the Education Quality and Accountability Office's Primary and Junior Assessments will be held May 27th, 28th and 29th.

Please avoid making out of school appointments for your child during this time.



## Intermediate Girls Basketball Team—UNDEAFETED (37-0)

The Unionville Intermediate Girls basketball team RULES York Region! We always dreamed of taking our team all the way to win the title. We came so close for many years but were never able to finish on top. This year, everything changed. Under the coaching direction of Mr. Chin, we started the season strong, winning 6 tournament titles; Legacy, Unionville Public School, St. Augustine, Redstone, Cornell, and Discovery Public School. Our team was focused and determined, practicing four days a week. We always managed to have a great time at practice, sometimes to the dismay of our coach (he secretly had a great time too)! Our team easily took the Area tournament title, held at William Berczy. UPS won the final four crossovers and qualified for a berth at the regional tournament. Having been to Regionals many times before, we all knew what was in store for us. With 12 teams competing this year, the road to the finals would not be easy. Unionville defeated W.J. Watson and Holland landing to advance to the semi finals against Aurora Senior Public School. It was a hard fought battle but the Lady Bulldogs pulled out the win. There was no way we were going home without the trophy this year, as the Unionville crew dominated Michael Cranny in the championship game.



We are proud to bring home the Intermediate Girls Y.R.D.S.B.A. basketball pennant to hang in our gymnasium. I would like to thank all of my team mates for such an amazing season. We worked so hard and had so much fun along the way. I would also like to thank Mr. Chin for his dedication to the team and always believing in us. I hope that future basketball teams at UPS keep up the tradition.

By: Lindsay Shotbolt

## Boomerang & Litterless Lunches



Did you know that we have our garbage picked up 3 times a week and our recycling is picked up only once every two weeks? There are schools twice our size with the same size bins that have the reverse!

In an attempt to move towards a GREENER school, we are asking that you please consider sending food in reusable containers and that all compostables are returned home to be placed in green bins.

Using reusable contains reduces the cost for lunches and more often than not, means your children are eating healthier foods. It is better for their bodies, our school and the world...so why no try it?

If you pick up your child(ren) after school and you arrive after 3:45, students will be brought into the office to ensure their safety. Staff are not on duty outside after 3:45 pm!



## Legacy Run @ UPS



This year all UPS students will once again have the opportunity to participate in the Legacy Run/Walk around Toogood Pond in support of the Markham Stouffville Hospital on **Thursday April 24 at 2:00** in the afternoon (rain or shine). All money will be going towards the hospital's **Dr. Bear Program** and the **Maternal Child Unit**. Registration forms for parents are also included in this years' pledge package.