



Unionville Public School PawPrints

February 2009

Principal: Dr. Debbie Donsky
Trustee: E. Richardson(905) 940-9818

Vice Principal: Ms. Carol Takagi
Superintendent: R. Lambert (905) 940-7800

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Monday February 9th—Primary Prologue Performance
- Tuesday February 10th—Girls' B Ball Tournament at UPS after school
- Tuesday February 10th—Intermediate Prologue Performance
- Wednesday February 11th—OBA Festival at Le Parc
- Wednesday February 11th—Markville SS Open House for Grade 8 Parents
- Wednesday February 11th—Winter Walk to School Day**
- Friday February 13th—House Colour Spirit Day—Team Jersey Day
- Monday February 16th—Family Day—NO SCHOOL**
- Tuesday February 17th—Boys' Tournament at UPS after school
- Thursday February 19th—Ski Day for Grades 6, 7 and 8 students
- Thursday February 19th—Parent information night on bullying (SEE PAGE 4 FOR DETAILS)
- Friday February 20th—Grade 8 grad photos
- Wednesday February 25th—Ski Day for Grades 6, 7 and 8 students
- Friday February 27th—Snowflake Soiree**



From Your Administrative Team

At our School Council meeting in January we began to look at how our School Plan for Continuous Improvement meets all the needs of our school. [The Board plan](#), has three focus areas—Curriculum Implementation; Parent, Family and Community Engagement; School and Workplace Climate.

Our school plan has four focus areas with an overall goal of **increased student achievement in reading comprehension through assessment for learning**. Our four goals include: Balanced Literacy Instruction, Differentiated Instruction, Safe School through Restorative Practices and further developing Learning Communities to support professional and student learning.

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

~Martin Luther King Jr.

When comparing the two plans, we were concerned that the representation of parent and community engagement was weak and yet the involvement of our community is so strong.

How do we bring the two together? We looked at two areas in particular around parent engagement: **Volunteering** and **Communication**. These areas are from Joyce Epstein's (<http://www.csos.jhu.edu/P2000/staff/joyce.htm>) , **Six Types of Involvement: Keys to Successful Partnerships**. We plan to ultimately work towards all six areas.

We are going to begin our work with Volunteering. We hope to strike a committee that includes both parents and teachers to best determine how to effectively engage parents and com-

It's not how much you do, but how much love you put in the doing"

~Mother Teresa

munity while still working towards school improvement. Please take the time to complete the survey below so that we can begin to understand your perspective on Volunteering at UPS. [Volunteering Survey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=rJdLFNo5syK4xvS0OI_2fAOQ_3d_3d) (http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=rJdLFNo5syK4xvS0OI_2fAOQ_3d_3d)

We would appreciate your feedback.

Snowflake Soiree & Silent Auction—Bid for our Kids!

7pm - Friday February 27th at the York Downs Golf and Country Club

Over 50% of Tickets Sold!

Over 60 Auction Items donated so far by UPS families, local business, teachers, and local artists. Sporting, concert, and theatre tickets, restaurant gift certificates, sports paraphernalia, fitness packages, and handy home items just to name a few

- 15 One of a kind baskets being created by your children, their teachers, and parent volunteers. These baskets are going to be phenomenal!
- A commemorative poster of the 2008/2009 school year with one-of a kind black and white ink self-portraits of every student at UPS. These will be on sale for \$20 in poster rolls.
- 2 Handmade quilts by our very own AM and PM Kindergarten classes with the help of two very talented moms.

What will you get for your ticket you may ask?

- Hot and cold appetizers, cake, coffee and tea. A drink ticket per person (cash bar after that), DJ and dancing, a ticket for a raffle prize, and a take home goodie!
- Tickets are \$40. Please contact Karen Mitas 905-940-4748 or at smitas@sympatico.ca today to have yours hand delivered to you. If you cannot make it on the evening of the 27th please consider purchasing a ticket, making a donation to UPSAC or contributing to the class basket to show your support to UPSAC fundraising. **This is our single largest fundraiser of the school year.**

For all inquires, questions, or to make a donation please call Pamela Nitert 416-721-2038 or pnitert@rogers.com/.

2009 Cardboard Boat Challenge



On Tuesday January 27, an event called the 2009 Cardboard Boat Challenge with Skills Canada took place. Eight of our fabulous grade eights were chosen by their peers to compete. In the contest the teams had to use their skills in math and science to come up with a boat design. The groups were given 2 eight-by-four feet strips of cardboard, two rolls of pink duct tape, two tubes of concrete cement and a large paperclip. When our Unionville



teams got there, we had about two hours to make our boat with the given materials. There were two challenges that the boat was faced with. The first one was to race the boat across a 30m pool, and the second one was a weight challenge.



When the boat race began, many boats did not make it past the 1-meter line, but both of our team's boats did. It was very nerve-wracking watching our teammates climb into the boat that could have broken at any moment. But in the end our designs held strong, until the weight challenge of course.

U.P.S. Team Number one was up first; our student hopped into the soaking wet cardboard boat and was literally sucked in as it sunk to the



bottom of the meter deep pool. Our Second team was more successful; it held a total of 5 of our students but exploded as the sixth one tried to get in.

In the end the grade eights represented the school very well. Team number

one came in 4th place, and Team number two came in First! Congratulations to all the participants!

Welcome to Marlene Cooper



Please join me in welcoming Marlene Cooper in the JK/SK Tuesday/Thursday classroom. She will be covering Stacey Tam's LTO until June.

Lost and Found

Lost and Found will be gathered up and taken away at the end of the first week in February. Please be sure to check the lost and found for lost items.



Grade 1 French Immersion Program

The York Region District School Board offers two French Second Language programs: Core and French Immersion.

Core French Program: Students will receive 40 minutes of daily instruction at their local public school beginning in Grade 4.

French Immersion Program: Students receive full-day instruction in French in this optional program beginning in Grade 1.

Both are excellent programs but have different language learning outcomes. Core French graduates have basic communication skills in French which form a firm foundation for further study of French and other languages. Students who graduate from French Immersion secondary schools are functionally bilingual (able to work in a French milieu or attend a French-speaking college or university).

Would you like further information regarding the French Immersion Program?

Please visit the websites for Canadian Parents for French and the York Region District School Board.

For parents interested in the French Immersion program for their children, please attend the **Information Evening on Wednesday, February 4, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at Sir Wilfred Laurier Public School.**

Registrations for Grade 1 French Immersion will be accepted starting at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 5. The deadline to apply for the school year commencing September 2008 is **Friday, March 6, 2009.**

Registrations will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. As space is limited, some students may be required to attend a French Immersion school other than the one designated for their community.

Where in the World?

Music is very powerful. Not only can it make you feel good, but it can help you learn about other cultures. People from other countries have rich experiences and musical traditions that are different from our own. Yet, they also have some remarkable similarities. Through music, we can see the incredible diversity of human experience and begin to understand the value of difference.

Rhythms, melodies and instruments have travelled across oceans and combined with local musical traditions to create new and exciting music. Music captures the soul of a people, and when one hears music of other lands, they are connected to the heartbeat of that culture.

With these thoughts in mind, we are excited to introduce a new listening programme at U.P.S. which will be introducing new and different kinds of music from around the world to your child. Students are being challenged



to identify the country of origin of the music which will be played throughout the week over the P.A. system as your child enters school. It is our hope that this programme will help establish a positive and uplifting start to the day as well as a greater appreciation for cultural diversity.

The Driveway and Parking Lot

I would like to start by thanking all of the parents that are respecting the request to use the parking lot only in particular circumstances. So thank you! I would also like to thank the MANY parents and staff who have alerted me to the ongoing problem with both the driveway and the parking lot. Our caretakers are outside managing the enormous amounts of snowfall we have had this season and often see parents who are dropping their children off or picking them up and continue to use both the disabled parking spot and the fire route and bus loop. They continue to be met with disrespect by some parents and/or community members when they ask them to move their vehicles.

It is expected that you will comply with this request and both are in breach of bylaws in the town of Markham. We have contacted the police department regarding our concern with these infractions. We will not hesitate to



contact the York Regional Police to enforce these bylaws.

As previously stated, both Mr Seapy and Mr Loughlin are maintaining the safety of our building. I am quite certain that if you or your child required either access to a close parking spot or an ambulance, you would like these locations free from parents who have parked or stopped their cars in either location.

Please respect our request and keep our children safe.



Visit from Ben's Grandma

Today, Ben's grandma came to our class. She came from Alberta, way up at the north end of it. She brought pictures and interesting stuff.

I thought it was great to have Ben's grandma here. She told us many adventure stories. I can't believe that when Ben's grandmother was my age, she did stuff almost like pioneers. Her house did not have electricity, they had to work very hard, share bedrooms and they cooked on something like a fireplace.

I didn't know that Ben's grandpa was so good at building stuff like a house out of logs. The log house is now what they live in. His grandpa also built an igloo and he slept in it for one night.

I hope that Ben's grandmother would come another time and tell more stories.

Written by V.L.
(Grade 3 student)



Think Recycle

A special thank you to all students, parents, par-



ents and staff who have supported our Think Recycle Fundraising Program. Cartridges and cell phones deposited in the Think Recycle boxes do not end up in



landfill sites and for every 12 qualifying cartridges and cell phones we collect, one tree is planted through the

Tree Canada Foundation or American Forests in our school's name.

Parents, please note that your workplace can also donate its used print cartridges and cell phones to our school.

Simply call 1.888.265.2895.

All funds generated will go to your child's school.



Contact Us:

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Phone: (905) 477-1824
Fax: (905) 477- 5745
unionville.ps@yrdsb.edu.on.ca



Kindergarten Registration

We are taking registrations for new students entering Junior Kindergarten (born in 2005) or Senior Kindergarten (born in 2004). Registration takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. We will be pleased to make photocopies of your child's original documents:

- Birth Certificate
- Citizenship Status if not born in Canada
- Proof of Residence (i.e. tax bill, driver's license)

Please inform any friends or neighbours who have an eligible child and do not presently have children attending Unionville P.S. that registration has begun for next school year. For more information please call the school.

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 with Ministry requirements.

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

Safe Schools—Bully Prevention

Bullying

As part of the Safe Schools Action plan at Unionville PS, students from JK to Grade 5 will participate in assemblies on BULLYING on Thursday February 19. Through picture books and video clips students will be introduced to:

- What is bullying?
- What does bullying look like, sound like and feel like?
- What should I do if I'm being bullied?
- What can I do as a bystander?

How do I stop being a bully?

Parents are invited to attend an information session at Unionville PS on Bullying on **Thursday February 19 at 6:30 pm.** Mercedes Carli, a Guidance and Resource Teacher with the Toronto District School Board will discuss what parents can do to help their child deal with bullying behaviour and what they can do to discourage bullying behaviour. She will also address parenting styles that can lead to bullying behaviour in children. Please RSVP to carol.takagi@yrdsb.edu.on.ca if you plan to attend.

Playground Partners

About 20 enthusiastic grade 6, 7 and 8 students have received training in Communication Skills, Positive Role Modelling and Cooperative Games so that they can lead games with the primary students in the playground during recess times. The intent of the program is to assist our primary students with learning appropriate games and social skills when outside while fostering leadership skills with our older students. The primary classes will rotate through a schedule so that all primary students have an opportunity to be part of the fun.

Playground Partners!

Playground partners is an organization which students from grade 6-8 participate in to help younger students. The way that it helps is that it helps them make friends in a safe and appropriate manner. Some kids are not able to make friends on their own so we are going to help them out. This also teaches them how to cooperate with one another in a sociable manner. For the past few weeks we have been in training to become a great playground partner, learning about listening, talking respectfully and sharing. We will be learning non-exclusive and cooperative games to allow all the kids to play and have fun together. We are all looking forward to helping these kids; we believe that we can make a difference.

By: Cameron Stajer and Alexandra Crawford

Summer Institute Program



The York Region District School Board's Summer Institute is a program that offers academic, recreational and athletic programs and activities with intentional links to the Ontario Curriculum for children and youth from Kindergarten to Grade 8. Weekly programs run from July 6, 2009 to August 14, 2009. Registration fees begin at \$115 per week for students enrolled in our schools and \$130 per week for non-Board students. Registration and site program information will be available on the Board's website www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca in early March.

For further information, please call at 905-895-5155 x135 or e-mail: performance-plus.si@yrdsb.edu.on.ca.