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Message from the Principal

December 2, 2015

Dear West Lynn Families,

It is hard to believe that November has passed and we are already into the month of December. Holiday time is just around the corner. The students and staff at West Lynn Public School have been working very hard this fall, and the time has flown by.

Progress Reports will be sent home on December 11. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns. Close teamwork between school and home is essential for student success.

Our Remembrance Day Assembly on November 11 was very moving and meaningful. The feedback from our numerous guests was very positive and appreciative! Thank you to Mrs. Bradacs and Mrs. Malo for doing such an excellent, thoughtful job of organizing it. Thank you to all students and staff for your wonderful involvement.

Our hard working Students' Council continues to plan and organize excellent events and activities for our students. Thank you Ms. Huffman and the Students' Council!

December is shaping up to be a very busy month with lots of learning in a variety of ways. As we begin to gear up for the holiday season I would like to take this opportunity to extend our best wishes to all West Lynn families for a happy and healthy holiday season.

~ Mrs. D. Lefler

Holiday Food and Toy Drive

From now until the last day of school before holidays, December 18th, the Students' Council is collecting non-perishable food items and unwrapped toys in partnership with the Simcoe Kinsmen. The Kinsmen will make baskets from all items donated and distribute to families in need in our community. We know how generous our community is and hope that you can open your hearts once again and support our Christmas drive as you have in the past. Thank you so much for your donations. What a generous school community!

Annual Holiday Turkey Dinner

A reminder about our West Lynn Annual Turkey Dinner: The date is fast approaching; it is Wednesday, December 16. The 2 sittings are 11:15 and 12:15. Once again this year, the Simcoe Kinsmen have very kindly agreed to take care of the turkey and ham. Thank you, Kinsmen! And thank you also to the Kinettes for preparing the mashed potatoes for us! Please remember to send in the gold-coloured information slip from the Turkey Dinner form, along with \$3 per child, as soon as possible, if you haven't already. Thank you for the food donations for this delicious West Lynn dinner – another wonderful West Lynn tradition! Students are welcome to dress up the day of the dinner, if they would like!

Performance by SCS Concert Band

Simcoe Composite School's Concert Band and Junior Band will be coming to West Lynn to perform for us on Thursday, December 3rd at 12:00 p.m. Their Director is Mr. Shawn Beal. The performance will include Christmas music and some other tunes as well.

SCS Grade 8 Tour

Our grade 8 students will participate at SCS on Dec. 9 for a tour and orientation for grade 9.

Christmas Open House

It's that time of year again! Christmas Open House is on Wednesday, December 9th from 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm. This year family and friends are invited to attend many great events happening throughout the night! Crafts and fun activities will be set-up in some of the classrooms throughout the school for you to enjoy as a family.

The Book Fair will be located in the gym this year for you to browse and make purchases if you would like.

Classroom Christmas Baskets will be on display and you will have an opportunity to purchase tickets for a chance to win one of them. The draw for the winners of the baskets will happen at the end of our Open House.

Perhaps you will consider bringing an item for the Food and Toy drive that we are running in partnership with the Simcoe Kinsmen on the night of our Open House. Hope to see you there!

Thank you so much to Mrs. LaPorte and Mrs. Pond for organizing our Open House this year!

Listen for the Kindergarteners!

Adam Lief from the Simcoe radio station, 98.9 MyFM, was at the school to record the singing of our Kindergarten students. Listen for our youngest West Lynn Warriors on the radio throughout the month of December. A sure ear-pleaser!

Poinsettia Fundraiser

Our poinsettia fundraiser was a big success! We raised about \$1 300.00. Thanks to all who helped. Thank you to Mrs. and Mr. Rixmann for planning and organizing. The plants are beautiful and festive!

Fundscrip Fundraiser

Help support West Lynn while purchasing your Christmas present! Purchase your gift cards at www.fundscrip.com and use invitation code 6REXHN to log in. A percentage of every gift card purchased through Fundscrip will be donated to the school. There are many special offers and discounts offered monthly. Don't forget Samko Miko Wearhouse is open December 3rd to the 6th at War Plane Heritage Museum. Purchase new children's toys, books and craft supplies for 30% - 70% off retail price. Tell the cashier you are from West Lynn, make a copy of your receipt, and bring the original to the school by December 10th. West Lynn will receive 10% of your order. Parents Council wishes all of our West Lynn families the very best this holiday season.

Choir Performance

Congratulations to our choir for their excellent performance at the PharmaPlus Christmas open house on Nov. 12. Thank you to Mrs. Malo for directing!

Bullying Awareness Week

The week of Nov. 16 – 20 was Bullying Awareness Week. Students learned about and discussed anti-bullying through a variety of activities, including reading stories and discussing, writing poetry, watching videos, singing songs, creating artwork, posters, developing skits. We had announcements each morning, each one with a message about a different type of bullying. Most classes took the pledge to put a stop to bullying. Websites that families will find useful to continue the conversation:

<http://www.family.ca/contests/stand-up/http://org.kidshelpphone.ca/resources/bullying-awareness-week/>

Grade 8 Parent Night at SCS

Grade 8 students and their parents are invited to the Simcoe Composite School Grade 8 Parent Night and Open House on Wednesday, January 13 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Author Visit: Michael Wade

Michael Wade, author of the *And Then It Happened ...* series, visited West Lynn on Nov. 23. His presentation was very well received by students, grades 3 – 8. Mr. Wade invites students to write stories and tells his audience that anyone can be a writer! We thank families for bringing in some money to support this visit and the Writer's Union of Canada for partial funding as well.

Equity & Inclusiveness Speaker: Chris D'souza

Equity speaker Chris D'souza visited West Lynn and Elgin Public Schools on Nov. 24th and taught students and staff lessons in dignity, diversity, equity and inclusiveness. Each and every student has a fundamental right to an education. They must receive education free from all forms of bias and discrimination. Dignity and Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness for all.

These are the key messages of Chris D'souza's presentations for students and adults in education. He addresses race, culture, religion, gender, disability, size, age, sexual orientation and more, within the context of bias, stereotyping and discrimination.

D'souza encourages all audience members to think about their thinking, about why they think the way they think and to ask questions. Rather than fear, hostility or bias toward differences, he encourages embracing and celebrating differences and striving to learn more about diverse cultures, traditions, life styles and interests. "Stretch your mind," he recommends. "You become a better person because of this learning." D'souza says, "Education can eradicate stereotypes."

At both schools D'souza did two performances for students – one for K – 5 and another for 6 – 8. His performances included the reading of three books he has written and the singing of songs he has written, including, "I Want You to Be Nice to Me." To view and listen, visit <http://chrisdsouza.ca/>. Students were prepared ahead of time in class to participate in the singing of his song, which addresses numerous types of discrimination. Through humour, personal stories and experiences, facts and the arts, Chris's powerful, thought-provoking message was enjoyed by students and staff.

To the students he advises, "Be proud of who you are. Know about your identity. Own it. Celebrate it." And don't accept discrimination against others or bullying toward others. To the staff, he told them that everything they do either replicates the hegemony / oppression or it interrupts it. He asks us to shift the lens to think about those who are not included in all that we do and to develop mechanisms in schools to minimize the exclusion.

Character Education Program

Thank you to Miss Hrycun and Ms. Kitchen and their classes for providing us with a great start for our focus on Humility for the month of December, at our Good News Assembly on Mon. Nov. 30.

Thank you to all students who created quotes for morning announcements about Perseverance throughout November.

McDonald's Character Education Prizes

Here are the names of the winning students for November for the McDonald's draws for PERSEVERANCE. Congratulations to:

Kindergarten: Lukas Primary: Raegan
Junior: Gabe Intermediate: Atlantiz

The **Principal's Awards** for one student from each class who demonstrated PERSEVERANCE well, were presented also. Photos of these students are posted on our Character Ed. bulletin board beside the main office.

Character Trait for December:

Our character education teaching focus for the month of December is Humility. Grand Erie defines Humility: *Be humble and recognize your limitations. Strive for mutual benefit.* Teachers will be talking about this very important trait with your children. Please help us by talking about the importance of humility at home, as well. The Social Justice Begins with Me topic is *Building Supportive Communities*.

Volleyball Tournaments

Our volleyball teams have been practising hard in preparation for their tournaments in December. The Intermediate Boys' Tournament is December 2 at SCS. The Intermediate Girls' Tournament is at Lakewood on Dec. 7. The Junior Tournament is December 10 at Lakewood. Congratulations to the students for a great season. A big thank you to coaches, Mr. Preston, Ms. Huffman, Mrs. Pell and Mr. Rustan for their dedication and time commitment to our students! We also greatly appreciate the parents who supported the teams and provided transportation.

Winter Weather Is On Its Way

With winter on its way, parents are reminded to make sure your children are dressed for cold weather. A warm coat, boots, snowpants, hats and mittens are needed. Children are outside for 20 minutes at a time and some days it can feel very cold. An extra pair of gloves/mitts and an extra pair of socks sent in backpacks are a good idea too.

Lego Club

We are hoping to start up a Lego Club after Christmas. We have a teacher to supervise the club (thank you Mrs. Laporte!) and lots of interested students. Now all we need is some Lego!!! If you or anyone you know has Lego they would like to donate for our club, please send it to the school. We are excited to get started!

Important Dates:

Dec. 2 – Int. Boys' Volleyball Tournament
Dec. 3 – SCS Concert and Junior Band concert
Dec. 4 – grade 4 / 5 and 5 to Eva Brook Donly Museum for A Victorian Christmas
Dec. 7–18 – Cannes-a-grammes sales (French classes)
Dec. 7 – Int. Girls' Volleyball Tournament
Dec. 9 – 5:30 – 6:30 Open House, Book Fair and Christmas Themed Basket Draw
Dec. 10 – Junior Volleyball Tournament
Dec. 11 – Sweater Day: *Wear any kind of sweater of your choosing, appropriate for school. On this day, the lights will be dimmed and our heat will be lowered as well, to recognize the impact that something so simple can have on our planet.*
Dec. 11 – Progress Reports go home
Dec. 11 – Jr. Trip to Lighthouse Festival Theatre for A Christmas Carol & Primary trip to Eva Brook Donly Museum
Dec. 14 – Kindergarten Christmas Craft Extravaganza
Dec. 16 – annual Turkey Dinner, Fancy Schmancy dress up day, if desired
Dec. 18 - P.J. Day and Jr./Int Dance last block
There will also be a Teacher/Student volleyball game during one of the recesses during the last week of school. A canned good or toy will be the cost of admission to the dance and the volleyball game
Dec. 18 - Last day of school before our break
Jan. 4 - First day of school after our break

Wishing everyone a wonderful happy holiday! Dec. 21 – Jan. 3, 2016