

# WALTER GRETZKY

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



365 Blackburn Drive,  
Brantford, ON  
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519-770-1288

**Principal**  
Clara Anderson

**Vice-Principal**  
Barkev Poladian

**Office Coordinator**  
Marilyn Genery

**Secretary**  
Julie Knight

## October 2015



### **Message from the Principal**

We are off to a great start, here at WGES! The students are a very friendly and respectful group of young people. As their principal, I feel privileged each day to come to school.

A huge thank you to the parents who have been coming out to volunteer at the school in various areas, including the Strong Start program, reading groups, and School Council. We greatly appreciate your contributions. Students have been participating in some extra-curricular activities including Junior and Intermediate soccer, cross-country, and Diwali practices. Thanks to the staff and parents who make these opportunities possible. We are looking forward to a spooky and fun-filled time on October 30<sup>th</sup>. I hope you will be able to come out to see the costumes. Thanks again for your ongoing support in making WGES the best school it can be.

As our community keeps growing, we continue to welcome new students and families to the area and to our Walter Gretzky Elementary School family. This year we are also very excited to have Barkev Poladian, our new Vice-Principal join us. We will be sharing on a part-time basis with Ryerson Heights Elementary School.

Remember to check the WGES website at [www.granderie.ca/schools/waltergretzky](http://www.granderie.ca/schools/waltergretzky) or go to [www.granderie.ca](http://www.granderie.ca) for labour updates. Click on the staff tab, then "labour updates".

*Growing Excellence... Inspiring Success*

## School Council

Introducing the 2015/2016 School Council Members

Chair - Mamjeet (MJ) Shahi  
Vice Chair - Stacey Ashby  
Treasurer - Komal Soni ...  
Secretary - Emily Martin  
Parent Rep. - Jeet Virk  
Parent Rep. - Kate McGinnis-Wilson  
Parent Rep. - Seema Gill

We are still looking to fill the positions for Fundraising Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator. To see the minutes of the monthly School Council meetings, please go to the Walter Gretzky *home page* and click on "School Council."

***Our next meeting will be on November 3 beginning at 7:00pm. All parents are welcome!***



### A Reminder:

Parents, please be aware that we have several children in our school with severe food allergies to peanuts and other nuts. These students have severe life-threatening reactions to nuts and nut products. Although this may or may not affect your child's class directly, we want to inform you so that you know to send foods that are free from peanuts or other nut products. Please read labels and choose foods that do not say "may contain traces of nuts or peanuts". Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

### **BUS SAFETY TRAINING**

All students at WGES will have a chance to practise bus safety on **Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>**. We will have 3 buses here for students to use for evacuation practice. A video on safe evacuation will also be presented. Even though we don't have buses to and from school, all students need to know these safety procedures when the travel by bus on field trips.

## Inclement Weather Days

Walter Gretzky Elementary School follows the Grand Erie District School Board's policies for Inclement Weather.

On some occasions, it may become necessary cancel school for a day due to weather conditions, or to close the school in the middle of a school day when there is the risk of dangerous weather.

### **Our school is in Zone 4.**

For information about school cancellations and closures, check the following sources:

- [www.granderie.ca](http://www.granderie.ca)
- FM 92 The Jewel
- Grand Erie District School Board Transportation Website



Please make sure your child comes to school with proper clothing and outerwear as the weather gets colder. It's time to set up routines for coats, hats, gloves, scarves, boots, dry socks, etc.

### **No Wheels on the Playground**

Many students are remembering to walk their bikes and scooters and carry their skateboards on the playground. Thanks for making our playground safe. Remember to lock your bike when leaving it in the rack





## It's a Costume Parade!

All students from grades JK-8 are invited to participate in the WGES annual costume parade on Friday, October 30th. Parents are invited to the back tarvia to watch the parade, which should make its way outside by 9:30am. Please make sure the length of your child's costume is short enough so that they don't trip and that the costume does not include any type of "weapon" props (i.e. toy guns, swords, knives, etc.) Parents, **do not need to send treats to school** for Halloween activities. If you do choose to send something, please make sure it is a peanut and nut-free product. Remember that homemade treats and those bought from "may contain nut" facilities such as Tim Horton's are not to be brought to school. Thanks for helping out. Happy Halloween!

## Volunteers

Volunteers are needed at the school. Please contact the office if you can spend an hour or two helping out at the school. Currently, we need the following: Reading club helpers, Kindergarten lunch helpers, morning and afternoon yard helpers and parking helpers. Together, we can make a huge difference in our community and for the students at WGES



Here at WGES, we like to learn about, and celebrate many cultural traditions from around the world. This year, we hope to participate in several celebrations and would like to call on parents to contribute their knowledge and time to help make our celebrations meaningful. If you would like to participate in an event that you are familiar with, or learn about a new one, please contact Clara Anderson to express your interest. Participation could include helping with any of the following: songs, decorations, information sharing, costumes, food, etc.

For the 2015-16 year we hope to celebrate the following: Diwali, Christmas, Chinese New Year, and Cinco de Mayo.

## PICK-UP/DROP OFF ROUTINES

**Mornings:** We thank you for walking your children to school. This is making an improvement in the parking lot. Starting over the next week, we are asking parents to **say goodbye and drop their children off at the gate** in the morning. Yard supervisors are on duty at 8:30am. It is easier for staff to identify who should or should not be on the playground if all adults remain outside the gate. Also, the tarvia area gets very crowded with our increasing number of students. If you have other family members dropping off, please let them know of this new routine. During the morning only, students are asked not to play with balls or Frisbees on the tarvia. The reason is that the whole school population, from grades 1-8 are on the tarvia at the same time, making it much more crowded than at recess. At recess we have half the school out at a time and the field is also used. Primary students are out separately from Junior and Intermediates. During recess, students are free to play with equipment. The morning supervision is for drop-off only.

## PICK-UP/DROP OFF ROUTINES CONTINUED

**Afternoons:** Ideally, we would like parents to meet their children at the gate, however with so many children exiting at the same time, we realize this would be impossible. There is not enough room for all of the families to wait outside the gate. Therefore, we are asking that you wait inside the fence along the edge of the playground. (near the basketball nets and the bike rack area or near the big rocks behind the school) This way, you will see your children exiting the building and they can see you. There are 2 yard supervisors on after school as well. Please remember that if you bring your dog with you, the dog should be leashed and stay on the edge of the playground. Some students are allergic to dogs or frightened of dogs. If you have parked along the back of the parking lot, please use the sidewalk behind the dumpster instead of walking through the parking lot. Though these dismissal routines are not ideal because of the number of families waiting, we believe that these issues, along with some parking issues, will improve once the construction zone moves farther from the school. Thank you for your cooperation.

## PARKING

We know that parking continues to be an issue. We understand that it is very frustrating for parents to go through the challenges of finding a safe parking spot every day. I have had several good suggestions from parents regarding how to improve the situation. Some of these suggestions can be started right away and some will have to wait until the construction zone moves further down the street. New signs are being ordered and installed for "one way" and "no parking" zones. A study is being conducted by the Brantford City Police traffic department to look at the need for a crossing guard at Gillespie and English. Empire is watering the street several times per week to cut down on the dust. Many families are walking. Mrs. Anderson or Mr. Poladian are out every day. These small changes are making a difference.

The following suggestions may improve the situation in the near future and require some work to be done:



- creating an exit onto Gillespie Drive where there is a break in the fence,
- -parking along Gillespie Drive and the side streets once the construction is complete,
- increasing the number of parking attendants so several key spots can be managed.

Parents, please consider the following. Picture a volunteer on the sidewalk at the entrance, waving cars on from parking in the entranceway. A second volunteer halfway down the sidewalk reminding drivers to drop off and drive, a third volunteer at the end dumpster area, waving cars around the corner so they don't block traffic. Finally, a volunteer on the outside sidewalk, reminding pedestrians to cross at the corner. Each of these areas is a trouble spot. Only with a group effort will we make a big difference. This is how it is done at other schools that have been effective in solving the problem. It would only take 10 minutes per person. Please volunteer to improve parking at WGES. Call Clara or pick up a vest at the K-pen gate any day. We want to alleviate the challenging situation while making the parking lot safe for all. Your help is so greatly appreciated. Why not be the first parent to volunteer?

