



St. Mark School Newsletter

February 2019

St. Mark Catholic Elementary School
240 Autumn Hill Cres.
Kitchener, ON, N2N 1K8
Phone: (519) 743-4682

"Growing in skill, wisdom and strength."

Our Mission Statement

St. Mark Catholic Elementary School, with home, Church and community, is committed to nurturing the growth and future success of faith-centered individuals through the pursuit of academic excellence, Catholic values and respect for all.

IMPORTANT DATES

**Knights of Columbus Basketball
Free Throw Competition**

at St. David CSS, Waterloo
Saturday, February 2nd
10:00 am (Start)
9:30 am (Registration)

**Confirmation Parent & Candidate
Meeting**

At St. Mark Church
Sunday, February 3rd
after 11:30 am Mass

Grade 8 Mount Mary Retreat

February 6 – 8

**Grade 7 Trip to Laurel Creek
Nature Centre**

Thursday, February 7th
Full Day

Grade 3 Dairy Presentation

Thursday, February 7th
2:15-2:55 pm
at St. Mark School

Pastoral Plan Launch

Monday, February 11th
4:00-6:00 pm
at St. Daniel Church

**JUMP Rope for Heart
Kick-Off Assembly**

Tuesday, February 12th
9:15 am

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

The year continues to move by quickly. It is indeed hard to believe it is February already, and that we have completed half the school year. Many great things are happening at St. Mark Catholic School in the early months of this New Year. Be sure to scan the February calendar (left margin) for more information about up and coming events at the school and the Church.

We celebrate *Valentine's Day* on Thursday, February 14th with a special theme day, special activities and nutritional free day at the school. Wishing everyone a happy *Valentine's Day*! Also, we look forward to spending time with our families on *Family Day*, which is on Monday, February 18th – happy *Family Day* to everyone, and hoping you enjoy some quality time with your family on this special day.

Mr. Ricketts and the grade 8s are on retreat at *Mount Mary* in Ancaster from February 6th – 8th. Let's keep them in our thoughts and prayers, and wish for them a joyful experience.

Sincerely,

Mr. Lankowski
Principal

SAFE ARRIVAL TO SCHOOL

The school day begins at 8:55 am. Teachers and other staff members begin supervising the school yard at 8:40 am. Please **do not** send your child/children to school before 8:40 am, since they would be unsupervised on the school yard – unless your child is enrolled in our Extended Day Program. If this is difficult for you, please make daycare arrangements for your child/children. Thank you for your cooperation in this important matter.

Also, this is just a gentle reminder that if your child is sick or will be

Valentine's Day Theme Day & Nutritional Free Day (No. 5)

Thursday, February 14th

Report Card Distribution Day

Thursday, February 14th

Confirmation Meeting for Candidates

Sunday, February 17th
after 11:30 am Mass

Family Day

Monday, February 18th

First Eucharist Preparation Meeting at St. Mark Church

Wednesday, February 20th
6:30 pm

Girls' Volleyball Tournament

Monday, February 25th
at Resurrection CSS
12:30-4:30 pm

Grade 4-6 Skills Canada Challenge

Wednesday, February 27th
at Conestoga College
8:00-3:00 pm

Grade 7-8 Skills Canada Challenge

Thursday, February 28th
at Conestoga College
8:00-3:00 pm

JUMP Rope for Heart Event

Thursday, February 28th
Full Day
Please Bring a Toonie

MARCH AT A GLANCE

Confirmation Meeting for Parents & Candidates

at St. Mark Church
Sunday, March 3rd
after 11:30 am Mass

Boys' Basketball Tournament

Monday, March 4th
at Resurrection CSS
12:30-4:30 pm

Pancake Tuesday & Nutritional Free Day (No. 6)

Tuesday, March 5th

Ash Wednesday Mass

late coming to school, you **MUST CALL THE SCHOOL AT (519) 743-4682** and inform us of the absence. Please also provide for us a reason for absence. Thank you for helping to keep our students' safe.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

Please remember that **ALL VISITORS** to the school, including parents, must sign in and out of the office during in-class hours. Thank you for your attention to this important reminder.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are volunteering at the school, you are required to wear a 'volunteer' badge. If, on the other hand, you are simply visiting the school, you are required to wear a 'visitor' badge. Both badges are available in the main office. Mrs. Pingos will personally issue one to you if you are either volunteering or visiting the school.

PARKING

Thank you to all parents, guardians and caregivers who have been following the rules for dropping your children at school and picking them up at the end of classes. The safety of your children remains the priority for everyone at St. Mark School. A reminder to the few who are still not following the rules and are putting our children's safety in jeopardy:

Parents/Guardians are not to be using the school parking lots to pick up their child/children between 8:40 am & 3:40 pm; Parents & Guardians who have a child enrolled in the Extended Day Program can use the parking lot from 7:00 am – 8:40 am and 3:40 pm – 6:00 pm

Parents/Guardians are not to be parking in the handicapped space, unless they have a permit or the principal's permission to do so.

Parents/Guardians are not to be parking in the school zone on Autumn Hill Crescent; we encourage parents to park on the school side of Autumn Hill Crescent when dropping their child/children off to school – again, not in the school zone; a city Bi-Law Officer will issue tickets to those who do not comply.

When students are dropped off they are not to be walking through the parking lot on their own – rather, students need to be escorted by parents/guardians to the playground area.

Together, let's make our school the safest place for our students.

YARD SUPERVISION

Just a reminder that there are no supervisors in the school yard in the morning before 8:40 a.m. and supervision ends at 3:40 p.m. Please do not send or drop off your children before 8:40 a.m., unless your child is enrolled in the Extended Day Program.

ATTENDANCE CHECK PROGRAM

Our Attendance Check Program is in place for the school year. If your child is going to be absent from school or arriving late for school, please report this by calling the school at (519) 743-4682 or sending a note in advance with your child. Parents/guardians, NOT children, must call the school or write the note. Again, this year the school answering machine will be in service during the hours when the school is closed. Please use the answering machine for reporting your child's

at St. Mark School
Wednesday, March 6th
9:00 am

Graduation Pictures & Siblings

Thursday, March 7th
at St. Mark School

MARCH BREAK

March 11th – March 15th

School Council Meeting

at St. Mark School
Thursday, March 21st
7:00 pm

Beacon of Hope Breakfast

Tuesday, March 26th
at St. John Church
7:30-9:00 am

Confirmation Mass

at St. Mark Church
Tuesday, March 26th
7:00 pm

Lenten Reconciliations

Wednesday, March 29th
9:30 am
at St. Mark School

APRIL AT A GLANCE

**Grade 3 Class Visiting Laurel
Creek Nature Centre**

Monday, April 1st
Full Day

**Grade 7 Hep B & HPV
Vaccinations**

at St. Mark School
Tuesday, April 2nd

**First Eucharist Preparation
Meeting for Candidates**

Wednesday, April 3rd
At St. Mark Church
6:30-7:30 pm

Student Senate Meeting

Friday, April 12th
at Resurrection CSS
Full Day

PD Day

Friday, April 12th
Full Day

Good Friday

absence at any time during the day or night.

Please leave:

- Your child's name
- Your relationship to the child
- The teacher's name
- The date he/she will be absent/late
- A brief reason for the absence

Teachers take attendance upon arrival of the students for morning and afternoon classes. Attendance is sent electronically to the main office where Mrs. Pingos checks the log against the list of calls from parents/guardians. If we do not receive a note in advance or a telephone call to report your child's absence or late arrival, parents will be contacted at home or work. Thank you for your continued support with our Attendance Check Program to ensure that all students arrive safe for school.

REPORTING IN & SIGNING OUT

If you are bringing your child/children to school after 8:55 am or 12:40 pm, please make sure to report to the main office. The Administrative Assistant will document that your child has returned to school late, give your child a late slip and send him/her back to their classroom. If you are signing your child/children out for the day or a period of time during the day, you need to do so in the sign-in/sign-out book in the office.

VOLUNTEERS IN THE SCHOOL

St. Mark Catholic School is still looking for interested **volunteers** who would like to share their time and talents with the staff and students of our school. Volunteers strengthen and enrich educational programs and foster greater cooperation among all the partners in our Catholic school community.

Our school welcomes volunteer involvement in a variety of areas and capacities. Volunteers may provide short-term commitments to such things as: supervising on school excursions, serving as a guest speaker, or helping to run special event such as book fairs and author visits. Or, volunteers can provide a more long-term commitment including such things as: Strong Start Reading Program, Fundraising, library help, etc.

If you are interested in learning more about volunteering in our school, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please request a **Volunteer Recruitment Package** from the school's main office, complete and return it at your earliest convenience. If/when approved, you will be notified by a school contact regarding details of your volunteer work at the school. We are really hoping to add to our current list of volunteers at St. Mark School.

WINTER CLOTHING

Please make sure your children come to school with the appropriate winter wear in the next few months. We do send our students outdoors

<p>Friday, April 19th (No School)</p> <p>Easter Sunday Sunday, April 21st</p> <p>Easter Monday Monday, April 22nd (No School)</p> <p>First Eucharist Preparation Meeting for Candidates & Parents Wednesday, April 24th at St. Mark Church 6:30-7:30 pm</p> <p>Feast of St. Mark Day Thursday, April 25th</p> <p>Spirit Day at St. Mark School Friday, April 26th 12:40-3:25 pm</p>	<p>for no longer than 20 minutes on days when the temperature is between -15 and -19 degrees Celsius. Students are kept indoors when the temperature is -20 degrees Celsius or colder. We would also encourage parents/guardians to send an extra pair of gloves & socks with your child/children in case your child's gloves & socks get wet. Thank you for your assistance.</p> <p>NUTRITIONAL FREE DAYS</p> <p>The following is the Nutritional Free Day in the month of February:</p> <p>Valentine's Day Theme Day Thursday, February 14th</p> <p>VALENTINE'S DAY THEME DAY REMINDER</p> <p>Our Valentine's Day Theme Day is fast approaching! We have students at the school, who have peanut and nut allergies. We ask you to be extra careful in checking labels and avoid sending any holiday treats to school that may contain peanut or nut products. This is a life-threatening situation for these children. Thank you once again by showing your care and concern for all children by helping to provide a safe learning environment.</p>
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LITURGICAL CALENDAR, 2018-2019 UPDATE		
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 • 6-8 • 17 • 20 	<p>Confirmation Preparation Meeting at St. Mark Church (<u>after</u> 11:30 am Mass): <u>Candidates & Parents</u></p> <p>Mount Mary Retreat for Grade 8 Students (Feb 6-8)</p> <p>Confirmation Preparation Meeting at St. Mark Church (<u>after</u> 11:30 am Mass): <u>Candidates only</u></p> <p>First Reconciliation & Eucharist Preparation Meeting at St. Mark Church (6:30 pm): <u>Candidates & Parents</u></p>

<p>FEBRUARY FIT-BIT</p> <p>Cooking with Children Involving children in menu planning, grocery shopping and food preparation with age-appropriate tasks has huge rewards for the entire family, including spending quality time together, building important life skills and boosting self-confidence. Children are more likely to taste and eat foods they help prepare and will become better at choosing and eating healthy foods for themselves. Each child is different in their growth, development, and readiness – gradually build on their skills in the kitchen as they are ready and able to do so safely. To help get you started, age appropriate tasks can be found at Unlock Food; some include:</p> <p>Two to three-year old may wash vegetables and fruit and help find ingredients in the kitchen</p> <p>Four to six-year old may stir, slice soft items with a plastic knife (e.g. a banana) and may assemble foods (e.g. yogurt parfaits)</p> <p>Six to eight-year old may use simple kitchen equipment, such as a grater or can opener, after shown how to do so safely and may assemble more complicated recipes (e.g. fresh spring rolls)</p> <p>Eight to eleven-year old may make their own lunches and may use a stove with supervision to make basic recipes (e.g. omelets, quesadillas)</p>

Try making **quesadillas** as a family; giving your child(ren) age appropriate tasks and letting them provide input on specific ingredients to include.

Basic ingredients:

Small amount of vegetable oil

Vegetables (e.g. bell peppers, onions, zucchini, corn)

Whole grain tortillas

Meat or alternative, cooked (e.g. chicken, tofu, black beans, scrambled eggs)

Cheese (grated)

Directions:

Lightly coat a skillet with vegetable oil over medium heat, add vegetables and cook until soft, then remove from heat.

Lay tortilla on work surface and sprinkle half the tortilla with chosen meat or alternative, vegetables and cheese, then fold the tortilla to cover.

Heat non-stick skillet over medium-low heat and toast quesadilla, turning once for about two minutes or until golden on both sides.

Cut in triangle slices. Serve with salsa, if desired.

Adapted from Unlockfood.ca

Brought to you by Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services

JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

FOR SEPTEMBER 2019

FOR STUDENTS CURRENTLY IN THE ST. MARK SCHOOL BOUNDARY

WILL BE HELD AT ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL:

240 Autumn Hill Cres.

Kitchener, ON

N2N 1K8

(519) 743-4682

February 5, 2019 any time from 4:00 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.

and

February 12, 2019 any time from 9:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

(Please make an appointment in advance.)

Children born in 2015 are eligible for Junior Kindergarten.

Children born in 2014 are eligible for Kindergarten and only need to register if they were **not** in Junior Kindergarten this year.

EDU GAINS WEBSITE – NUMERACY

The Ontario Mathematics curriculum on... Math Skills for the 21st Century

The set of skills our children need today extends beyond the traditional paper and pencil calculation skills that dominated mathematics instruction that most parents remember. In addition to having a good understanding of number facts and the ability to work with numbers, there are other important skills such as reasoning, problem solving and the communication of mathematical ideas that are also essential in the twenty-first century. For example, students need experience with making estimates, deciding on and adjusting their strategies, persevering through to a solution, and justifying their thinking. *The Ontario Curriculum; Mathematics, Grades 1-8 (2005)* supports the development of this mathematical thinking in a way that is meaningful and relevant to students. *The Ontario Curriculum: Mathematics, Grades 1-8 (2005)* is available on the Ministry of Education's website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum>.

Partnering with Your Teen in Mathematics

Partnering with Your Teen in Mathematics Grades 7 to 12 is a resource for parents, guardians, caregivers and other family members to support the development of their teen's mathematical abilities. The document addresses key aspects of understanding of the adolescent learner, different ways of learning, engaging in conversations with your teen, and supporting mathematical thinking, learning and work habits. For the document, [click here](#).

What is available to parents at **home** to **support** their children in **Numeracy**? Check out the link below.
http://www.edugains.ca/resourcesMath/CE/HomeSupport/MathResourcesforHome-April2018_AODA.pdf

WINTER CUP & MUG DRIVE

St. John's Kitchen is a gathering place for people in downtown Kitchener. Its diverse community includes many people who are experiencing homelessness, at risk of homelessness, or street involved. It's a place where people come together in the spirit of respect and mutual support.

Did you know that **St. John's Kitchen** serve meals to up to 300 people each day? They rely on community donations for the bulk of their operating budget, and they may spend up to \$900 per year on coffee cups. This is the reason why we are holding a **"Share the Warmth, Share the Love" Cup and Mug Drive** in support of **St John's Kitchen**. If your cupboards are bursting with unused mugs and coffee cups, then we can help you declutter while also supporting this worthy organization. During the week of February 4-8, please send any mug and coffee cup donations to school with your child(ren) and we'll see that they get to **St. John's Kitchen** in time for **Valentine's Day!** Thank you for your help, St Mark families!



Julie Najjar
Librarian

LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS UPDATE

February is a busy month at the Library Learning Commons! **Valentines Day, Black History Month, Freedom to Read Week, and Bullying Awareness Day**... the LLC has a book for that! Online and print materials covering each of these topics and themes is available for use, so please check out our library catalogue online at <http://library.wcdsb.ca:8080/?config=148#section=home> or visit Ms. Najjar in the library for assistance.

Julie Najjar
Librarian

ST. MARK SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN, 2018-2019 HIGHLIGHT Student Learning Needs in Literacy:

Reading:

- Making connections
- Improve overall comprehension skills
- Build general and specific vocabulary
- Identify main idea and supporting details in written text

Writing:

- Increase use of personal voice in writing and identifying point of view
- Strengthen students' ability to complete short written pieces about a potential topic that meet specified criteria
- Revising and editing a piece of writing
- Organizing content and language conventions
- Topic development and generating ideas (e.g. planning a piece of writing)
- Writing tasks of a higher cognitive demand (e.g. critical thinking)

We have developed various **Actions & Strategies** for addressing our Student Learning Needs in Literacy. Our **School Improvement Plan, 2018-2019** can be found on our School Website.

2019 YOUTH VIDEO COMPETITION

The submission process is now open for youth to submit their creative videos or short films to win prizes, have their videos showcased in the community and make connections with the film industry!

- Three **age categories**: 12-14, 15-17 & 18-25
- Six winners receive **\$300 cash prizes!** Honourable Mentions also win prizes
- Winning short original videos will be showcased at the Kitchener Central Library Theatre on Saturday, April 27 at 2 p.m.
- We are bringing back the very successful **Q&A with film industry professionals** during the showcase
- **NEW**: we are thrilled to partner with the [Grand River Film Festival](#) for an opportunity to screen the winning videos during their festival in May 2019!
- check the webpage in the New Year for more exciting updates!
Submission deadline: March 29, 2019, 5 p.m.

Learn more about the contest: www.kitchener.ca/youthvideocomp

Brought to you by the City of Kitchener's Public Art Program and Kitchener Public Library.

Karoline Varin

Program Administrator, Arts & Creative Industries | Economic Development | City of Kitchener
519.741.2200 ext.7912

ASSESSMENT DATES, 2018-2019 (FINAL)

April 8 – April 15	Grade 4 CCAT
April 23 – April 30	Grade 7 CAT-4
May 21 – June 3	Grade 3&6 EQAO

If your child/children are in grade 3, 4, 6 and/or 7, please mark these dates in your calendar. Please avoid booking appointments and/or trips on the above dates if your child/children is/are in the above grades. Punctuality is also important in all school days especially during the above assessments.

KNOWLEDGE-HOOK

Knowledge-hook is now a Board approved "**Green Tool**" which ensures student information is stored in a secure manner. This online, interactive math resource will support student learning in grades 3-8. Knowledge-hook will provide additional math support and instruction for learning in the classroom and for differentiated home-practice. If you have any questions or concerns about this program, please speak to your child's classroom teacher.

GRADE 8 TO 9 TRANSITION NUMERACY RESOURCES

The following resources are for parents/guardians of our grade 8 students who will be considering high school course selections very soon. The information below is regarding high school mathematics.

1. **Our new math pathway chart (with proposed AP)** <https://resurrection.wcdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/66/2017/11/Pathways-Chart.pdf>
(This document can be used with parents and students to show the complete secondary math pathway. In addition, the back of the pathway chart includes a look at the Advanced Placement pathway which reaches into grade 12 next year!)
2. **Gr8-Gr9 "What Do the Courses Look Like"** <https://resurrection.wcdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/66/2017/06/RCSS-Grade-8-to-Grade-9-Streaming-Brochure.pdf>
(This document helps illustrate what math courses look like near the end of grade 9. Teachers may find that this helps parents understand course complexity.)
3. **What-You-Should-Be-Able-to-Do-By-the-End-of-Grade-8.pdf**
<https://resurrection.wcdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/66/2017/06/What-You-Should-Be-Able-to-Do-By-the-End-of-Grade-8.pdf>
(This document helps illustrate what students should be able to do by the end of grade 8 math. It is a large document (13 pages) meant, again, to help teachers coach parents and students to an appropriate stream based on currently acquired skills.)
4. **Do I Need to Take Academic Math...**<https://resurrection.wcdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/66/2017/06/Do-I-Need-to-Take-Academic-Math.pdf>
(This document was recently created from our webpage based on requests from the elementary panel. It is ideal for the student who is struggling to decide whether Academic Math in grade 9 should be their next destination. It highlights the numerous entry points into the Academic stream in subsequent semesters/years. Its intent is to send the message that the APPLIED stream does NOT close doors. Rather, students who are missing some foundational skills, might find that the applied-to-academic pathway bridges many gaps that they may currently have.)

STUDENT COUNCIL UPDATE

Power of ONE Assembly is on Thursday, January 31st at 9:00 am in the school gym

Student Council Dates:

Tuesday, Feb. 12th - **Wear Red for Jump Rope for Heart Kick-off Assembly**

Thursday, Feb. 14th - **Wear Red and Pink for Valentine's Day**

Friday, Feb. 22nd - **Twin Day!**

Wednesday, Feb. 27th - **Wear Pink for Pink Shirt Day**

Thursday, Feb. 28th - **Wear Red for Jump Rope for Heart Day!**

Candy Gram Sales – Wednesday, Feb. 6th to Wednesday, Feb. 13th

Candy Gram funds will be donated to local charities (TBD)

SMART WATERLOO REGION: SMART CITIES CHALLENGE

Dear Parents / Guardians, Children & Youth...

We need your help!

Last year the Federal Government launched the “**Smart Cities Challenge**”, a national competition that encourages communities to come up with innovative technology solutions to their most pressing challenge. **The top prize is \$50 million!!!**

Waterloo Region entered the contest with a focus on healthy children and youth. We want to make our community THE BEST in Canada for kids.

And we were chosen one of just five Canadian communities to compete for the award!

To help us win the \$50 million, we are asking you (should you choose to participate) to assist your child(ren) in signing a special petition urging the competition judges to recognize the participation and support we have from local young people to win the smart cities challenge.

The petition is open to ALL children and youth up to age 18 and is available for your child(ren) to sign at: <https://bit.ly/2Hnd0yD>

Let’s hear all those #WCDSBAwesome Waterloo Catholic District School Board voices!!!

For more information, please visit www.smartwr.ca

You can follow along @SmartWatRegion on Instagram and Twitter. Use #SmartWR #SmartCitiesCanada and #bestcommunityforkids when chatting on social media.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FREE THROW SHOOTING CONTEST

Over the last few weeks we have been running the **School Level Free Throw Contest** at St. Mark School for students in grades 4-8. This year we had a total of 56 students participate. We are permitted to send only 2 children from each age group and gender ages 9-14 years. Congratulations to the following students who finished first and second place at the school level competition:

	First Place	Second Place
Grade 4	Jada L. Ethan M.	Berlyn E. Greg O.
Grade 5	Sophia M. Marcus N.	Gabrielle L. Landon H.
Grade 6	Charlee H. Jesse M.	Jelena S. Alex L.
Grade 7	Gigi M. Cole A.	Mya O. Thomas M.
Grade 8	Sophia M. Tim M.	Kiana C.-C. Jalen N.

These students will be moving on to the **Knights of Columbus Free Throw Shooting Contest** council level of competition, which is scheduled for **Saturday, February 2nd** at **10:00 am** at **St. David Catholic Secondary School, Waterloo**. Winners from the council level will move on to the district level of competition held on the same day at 3:00 pm.

Congratulations and thanks to all students who participated in the school level competition, and all the best to those moving on. **Go Lions!!**