



St. Mark School Newsletter

January 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

New Year's Day

Tuesday, January 1st
Happy New Year!

School Resumes

Monday, January 7th
8:55 am

Confirmation & First Eucharist Parent Meeting

at St. Mark Church
Wednesday, January 9th
6:30 pm

Public Health Vaccinations

Grade 7 Boys & Girls
Thursday, January 10th

Confirmation Meeting for Candidates

Sunday, January 20th
12:30 pm

Grade 8 Pathways Presentation

at Resurrection CSS
Thursday, January 24th
6:30 pm

PD Day

Friday, January 25th
Full Day

Bell Let's Talk Day

at St. Mark School
Wednesday, January 30th

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year & welcome back!! I would like to take this opportunity to welcome everyone back to St. Mark School, from what was hopefully a very restful and joyous Christmas holiday.

We welcome Lori Costigan (CYCW) to St. Mark School. Lori will be with us full days on Mondays, Thursdays & every other Wednesday moving forward. Welcome Lori!!

Looking back to our final weeks before the Christmas Break, I would like to sincerely thank all staff & students for their hard work, dedication and commitment to making our **Advent Liturgies, Advent Mass, Christmas Concert** and **musical performances** so special and memorable.

As we embark on a New Year, we can certainly consider and reflect on the many possibilities and goals we can set for 2019. I encourage everyone to set reasonable and achievable goals [both short-term and long-term] for themselves for this year. Sometimes it helps to write down these goals and consider various strategies and timelines for achieving them. Remember, when you set your mind to something and mix in some real effort and courage, you will be successful.

Please take a moment to note on your calendar the important dates that appear on the January 2019 Calendar (left margin) as well as those important dates and information that appear on the various inserts in the School Newsletter.

Once again, welcome back and best wishes for a year filled with many joys and successes.

Sincerely,

Mr. Lankowski
Principal

**School Council Meeting
at St. Mark School**

Thursday, January 31st
7:00-8:30 pm

FEBRUARY AT A GLANCE

**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

Valentine's Day Theme Day

Thursday, February 14th

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

JUMP Rope for Heart Event

(Date & Time TBD)
Bring a Toonie

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 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.

<p style="text-align: center;">MARCH AT A GLANCE</p> <p>Confirmation Meeting for Parents & Candidates At St. Mark Church Sunday, March 3rd <u>after</u> 11:30 am Mass</p> <p>Pancake Tuesday Tuesday, March 5th</p> <p>Ash Wednesday Mass at St. Mark School Wednesday, March 6th 9:00 am</p> <p>Graduation Pictures & Siblings Thursday, March 7th at St. Mark School</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MARCH BREAK</p> <p>March 11th – March 15th</p> <p>School Council Meeting at St. Mark School Thursday, March 21st 7:00 pm</p> <p>Confirmation Mass at St. Mark Church Tuesday, March 26th 7:00 pm</p> <p>Lenten Reconciliations Wednesday, March 29th 9:30 am at St. Mark School</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ATTENDANCE CHECK PROGRAM</p> <p>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 absence at any time during the day or night.</p> <p>Please leave:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 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 <p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">REPORTING IN & SIGNING OUT</p> <p>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.</p>
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LITURGICAL CALENDAR, 2018-2019 UPDATE		
<p>January</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 • 20 • 31 	<p>First Reconciliation & Eucharist and Confirmation Preparation Meeting at St. Mark Church (6:30 pm): <u>Parents only</u> (candidates may attend)</p> <p>Confirmation Prep 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 only</u></p>

<p>JANUARY FIT BIT</p> <p><u>Smart Goals in the New Year</u> The New Year is often a time of reflection and many people think about their health. Setting SMART goals is a great way to help you make changes individually or together as a family.</p> <p>SMART goals are: Specific: A general goal such as 'eating healthier' can mean something very different from one person to the</p>

next. Focusing your goal can be helpful; for example, your focus may be 'eating more vegetables & fruit'.
Measurable: Set goals that allow you to track your progress. It would be difficult to measure 'eating healthier', but something like 'include a vegetable or fruit with each meal and snack' is easier to monitor.
Action Oriented: Focus your goals on the actions you will take to be successful. If lunchtime has been a challenge, the action may be, 'include a side salad or raw vegetable sticks at lunch and pack a fruit or snack'.
Realistic: Building healthy habits takes time and practice. Choose goals that are manageable. When you have achieved your goal, you can set a new one! Consider possible challenges that may get in the way and be prepared with strategies to overcome them.
Time-based: Including a timeline in your goal will help you stay on track and motivated to keep moving forward! For example, try 'including a vegetable or fruit at each meal and snack for a week,' then take the time to check-in and assess how it is going.

Other family-friendly healthy eating SMART goal examples:

1. Replace your household white bread with whole grain bread for one week.
2. Include legumes in meals on 'Meatless Mondays' for one month.
3. Plan and prepare one new recipe as a family each week for one month.

Adapted from Unlockfood.ca

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

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

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**

any time from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (Please make an appointment in advance.)
and
a date & time in February 2019 TBD (via *Newswire & February Newsletter*)

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.

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.

EDU GAINS WEBSITE – NUMERACY

Doing Mathematics with your Child (Kindergarten – Grade 6)

Today, critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning ability and the ability to communicate mathematically are essential skills. These processes are the foundation of mathematics instruction in Ontario schools. "Doing Mathematics with your Child" is a guide available for parents of students in Kindergarten to Grade 6. This guide offers ways to engage their child in thinking and talking about mathematics around the four strands: number sense & numeration, measurement, patterning and algebra, and data management & probability.

Feel free to use the link below to access the guide in English and 13 other languages:

<https://homeworkhelp.ilc.org/>

Homework Help for Students Grades 7-10

Homework help is a free online math help resource for students in grades 7 to 10. Homework Help provides free, live one-to-one tutoring from Ontario teachers Sunday to Thursday from 5:30 pm – 9:30 pm EST. The program is funded by the Ontario government and administered by TVO's Independent Learning Centre. To log in, students will need to register with their Ontario Education Number (OEN), found at the top of their Report Card near their name. (Your child's OEN never changes so any of their Ontario Report Cards will have it.) You can access Homework Help by clicking on the following link:

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/elearning/homework.html?gclid=EA1a1QobChMI_K3L5oy_2AIVlddkCh0LNQHR_EAAYASAAEgJsJfD_BwE

NOTE: Homework Help is offered in English and is only available to students at publicly funded schools.

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 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.

LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS UPDATE

January is an exciting time in the Library Learning Commons. The Forest of Reading Programs are running for Grades 1-8, and all students are welcome to participate in their grade's program (Blue Spruce, Silver Birch and Red Maple). Please see Ms. Najjar for more information. Also, the Maker Club will be starting in January, with many fun crafts and technology projects. Students, stay tuned for more information about this club.

Thank you & Happy New Year!
Ms. Najjar

ST. MARK SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN, 2018-2019 HIGHLIGHT

School-Wide Focus: Numeracy (Proportional Reasoning, Application & Thinking Questions)

School IF & THEN Statement:

IF we focus on developing students' computational fluency, strengthening problem solving skills by providing rich application and thinking problems, promoting a variety of effective problem-solving strategies and punctuating instruction in areas involving fractions, THEN student achievement and confidence in math will improve?

For more information about **Proportional Reasoning** click on the following link:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/studentsuccess/ProportionReason.pdf>

For more information about how you can support at home click on the following link:

<http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/HOME/index.html> and click on 'Ministry Developed Resources' → 'Mathematics' → 'Home Supports'

Student Learning Needs in Numeracy:

- Reading & Analyzing a Math Problem
- Continued Development in Computational Fluency & Mental Math
- Understanding Key Terminology in Math Problems
- Strengthening students' ability to solve problems involving fractions
- Math Problems specific to NSN & DMP (Proportional Thinking)
- Build on students' spatial reasoning skills
- Strengthen students' ability to determine measurement relationships among units & attributes
- Improve student confidence in Mathematics

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

COUNCIL'S CORNER

Happy New Year St. Marks parents, parent council here and we wanted to thank you and update on all your great work with the Fall fundraiser. Our fundraisers would never be as successful without the remarkable participation from our community. This year's fundraiser raised sales of \$2,900.

Remember you can continue to fundraise and support St. Mark through the Mabel's Labels and QVC campaigns.

Money raised helps go towards all the needs and wants of our students and teachers. We wanted to also extend and make a special shout out to the top fundraising classes, a round of applause to the following classes; Garrett, Chambers, Butson and Kramer. Parent council will continue to contribute to such needs as board games for indoor recess, chess club, home reading program, sports equipment, First Holy Communion, Confirmation, Eco Club, Student Council, Skills Canada, technology within the school and requests made by staff ... such as a digital camera purchased for the school for \$1000.00.

We are excited for the anticipation of the New Year and all that's planned for our community. Stay tuned for such events as 'An Evening with Sarah Westbrook' hosted by Parent Council in the spring (date to be announced).

Thanks once again for your continued support and stay tuned for the updates of what's to come.

Parent Council

GRADE 6 SCIENCE OLYMPICS

Eight of our Grade 6 students represented St. Mark School at the Annual Resurrection Science Olympics on December 14th, 2018. Our students participated in 3 different Science inquiries – bridge building, analyzing evidence at a crime scene, and designing a predator with the best chance of survival. There was also a Math challenge set up like "The Amazing Race". Congratulations to Owen A., Norah S., Charlee H., Jennifer A., Derek B., Justin P., Tyler M. and Marcos M. for placing second and showing great sportsmanship and collaboration.

Thank you to Mrs. Monteiro and Mr. Morgan for providing our transportation!

BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE TO SCHOOL (BYOD)

WCDSB has made significant investments to ensure our students and staff have access to a variety of current technologies. The use of technology to support learning remains a key priority to ensure that students are equipped with the skills to flourish in an increasingly digital world. Chromebooks and Windows 10 Cloud-Books have proven to be versatile, reliable, and affordable digital tool in the classroom.

As students have engaged more with the technology that is available in their classrooms, many families have expressed interest in purchasing a device for their child to use at school and at home. Many parents have reached out, seeking advice about which technology would best support their child's learning, is reasonably priced, yet durable enough to withstand the wear and tear of daily use as it's transported back and forth to school each day (see links below).

<https://www.wcdsb.ca/programs-and-services/byod/>

<https://wcdsbca.sharepoint.com/ithelpdesk/mobile/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?FolderC&id=%2Fithelpdesk%2Fmobile%2FShared%20Documents%2FStaples%20BYOD%20Purchase%20Program%2FBYOD%20Purchase%20Staples%20Parent%20Letter%2Epdf&parent=%2Fithelpdesk%2Fmobile%2FShared%20Documents%2FStaples%20BYOD%20Purchase%20Program>

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.)