



St. Mark School Newsletter

October 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

Walk to School Month
October

Walk to School Day
Wednesday, October 2nd

**Grade 1&3/4 Classes at
RARE Research Reserve**
Friday, October 4th
9:30-11:30 am

**Umbrella Project Opening
Assembly**
Friday, October 4th
(time TBD)

Thanksgiving Food Drive
October 7th – 18th

School Picture Day
at St. Mark School
Wednesday, October 9th

**Dress Like a Turkey Day
or Wear Fall Colours**
Friday, October 11th

Thanksgiving Day
Monday, October 14th

**FDK Classes visiting
Shantz Pumpkin Patch**
Thursday, October 17th
(morning)

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

The Autumnal Equinox 2019 occurred on Monday, September 23rd at 3:50 am; the first day of fall arrived as it always does. Once again, we are richly blessed with all the beauty the autumn season offers.

It is hard to believe that we have completed a whole month of school. As in the past, we are inviting parents, who have some time, to volunteer at the school. If you can volunteer your time at St. Mark School, please contact the school at (519) 743-4682.

Once again, our teachers and staff have signed up for numerous extra-curricular activities throughout this school year. Their dedication and commitment to the students of St. Mark School is much appreciated. Thanks again staff!!

Our school community is very blessed to have a School Council that is committed to working together to make the school the best it can be. I would like to extend a sincere thanks to the members of our School Council who so generously give of their time, and for their commitment to the students, staff and parents of our school community. Please continue your support of this group and their endeavors this year. There is more information about our School Council in this School Newsletter for your perusal and information.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our Opening Mass which was originally scheduled for Thursday, October 3rd at 9:30 am at St. Mark Church. If we reschedule our Opening Mass, I will be in touch with our school community. We are all very thankful for our school community and the students we serve. I would like to wish everyone a very joyful Thanksgiving. Please take some time to give thanks for the many blessings we have. Happy Thanksgiving!! Enjoy this beautiful time of the year.

Mr. Lankowski
Principal

Federal Election

Monday, October 21st

Raptors Day

Wear Raptors Gear or Red & Black

Tuesday, October 22nd

PD Day

Friday, October 25th
Full Day

Halloween

Wear Orange & Black (am) & Costumes (pm)

Thursday, October 31st
(Nutritional Free Day No. 2)

NOVEMBER AT A GLANCE

The Feast of All Saints

Thursday, November 1st

Grade 4 Bible Celebration

at St. Mark School
Wednesday, November 5th
at 2:15 pm
(Nutritional Free Day No. 3)

Progress Report Distribution Day

Tuesday, November 5th

Commissioning Mass for Council Chairs

Tuesday, November 5th
Location & Time TBD

Parent-Teacher Interviews

at St. Mark School
Thursday, November 7th
3:30-9:00 pm

Remembrance Day Ceremony

at St. Mark School
Monday, November 11th
10:40 am

Bullying Awareness & Prevention Week

November 17th – 23rd

Professional Development Day

Friday, November 15th

Grade 4&6 Classes at Laurel Creek Nature Centre

Tuesday, November 19th
9:00-3:00 pm

NUTRITIONAL FREE DAYS

Our next **Nutritional Free Day** in October is on the following date:

- Thursday, October 31st – Halloween Theme Day

HEALTH & WELFARE

There are students and staff in the school who have extreme allergies to peanuts and related products such as peanut butter and oil, as well as other nuts and nut products (cashews, pistachios etc.) For some, the allergies are so severe that consumption or even exposure to a nut product (e.g. smell) could be **life threatening**. Prevention is the best approach and, therefore, we ask families to refrain from sending nuts and nut products to school with the students. **Please instruct your child never to share their lunch and recess snacks.**

PEANUT BUTTER SUBSTITUTES

There is a new product marketed as *School Safe Soy Butter Spread*; a food product that looks, smells and tastes like real peanut butter (but isn't real peanut butter), This product **will not** be permitted in a school, as it places administrators, staff and volunteers in a position of having to decide definitively if the product is – or is not – real peanut butter. Board staff members are not qualified food experts and are in no position to make such decisions – particularly where exposure to real peanut butter can be life threatening to someone with a severe allergy.

NEWS FROM THE ST MARK SCHOOL LIBRARY

There are plenty of books about Thanksgiving and loads of SPOOOOOKY BOOKS for Halloween, so check out the display in the Library Learning Commons. Can't find what you're looking for? Ask Ms. Najjar, or check out the online catalogue at <http://library.wcdsb.ca:8080/?config=148#section=home>. We will also be starting a Maker Space/Craft Club in October, so if you have any craft items at home that you are no longer using, please feel free to donate them to the library. Please consult attached list for some ideas. Thanks - and have a wonderful Thanksgiving and a Happy Halloween!!



MakerSpace craft
items.doc

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>Advent Penitential Service at St. Mark School Friday, November 22nd 1:15 pm</p> <p>Hep B & HPV Vaccinations for Grade 7 Students at St. Mark School Wednesday, November 27th</p> <p>Enrolment Masses for First Eucharist & Confirmation at St. Mark Church Saturday, November 30th 5:00 pm & Sunday, December 1st 9:30 am <u>or</u> 11:30 am</p>	<p>EQAO 2019 RESULTS</p> <table> <thead> <tr> <th>Grade 3</th> <th>St. Mark</th> <th>WCDSB</th> <th>Province</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Reading</td> <td>89%</td> <td>75%</td> <td>74%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Writing</td> <td>89%</td> <td>71%</td> <td>69%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mathematics</td> <td>81%</td> <td>62%</td> <td>58%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table> <thead> <tr> <th>Grade 6</th> <th>St. Mark</th> <th>WCDSB</th> <th>Province</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Reading</td> <td>86%</td> <td>81%</td> <td>81%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Writing</td> <td>86%</td> <td>82%</td> <td>82%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mathematics</td> <td>57%</td> <td>49%</td> <td>48%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>(*The table indicates the percentage of students achieving Level 3-4.)</p>	Grade 3	St. Mark	WCDSB	Province	Reading	89%	75%	74%	Writing	89%	71%	69%	Mathematics	81%	62%	58%	Grade 6	St. Mark	WCDSB	Province	Reading	86%	81%	81%	Writing	86%	82%	82%	Mathematics	57%	49%	48%
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SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWS

Our School Council met for the first time this year on Thursday, September 26th at 7:00 pm at the school. Our School Council Executive, Parent & Staff members are as follows:

Chair: Emily Hartlen
Vice-Chair: Diana Darcey
Treasurer: Danielle Nezezon
Secretary: Sarah Demaiter

Parents:
Catherine McCaffery, Chantalle Hepburn Claudine Newman, Courtney Hughes, Craig Polach, Elizabeth Searam, Kevin Gentile, Krysti O’Kelly, Michelle Proctor, Nancy Lameira, Natasha Jackson, Paula Jacobs, Sarah Rudavsky, Stephanie Eneogwe, Stephanie Sobek-Swant, Tanya Wigboldus & Tatiana Batista

Teacher: Michele van der Veen
Principal: Gary Lankowski

School Council Meetings, 2019-2020 are scheduled as follows:

Thursday, September 26, 2019 at 7:00 pm
Thursday, November 28, 2019 at 7:00 pm
Thursday, January 30, 2020 at 7:00 pm
Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 7:00 pm
Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 7:00 pm

All School Council Meetings will be held in the school library; parents/guardians and citizens are all welcome to attend as these are public meetings. We will be launching our school fundraiser in the first week of October to raise funds for St. Mark Catholic School – more information about the fundraiser is forthcoming.

SCHOOL PICTURE DAY

Individual and class **School Pictures** will be taken on **Wednesday, October 9th** for all students JK to Grade 8. If you do not wish to have your child’s picture taken with his/her class, please contact your child’s teacher no later than Friday, October 4th. Please try to avoid appointments on that day, since class pictures cannot be retaken.

FAMILY COMPASS WATERLOO REGION

Guiding you to services for children and youth

Using the Family Compass of Waterloo Region 'I Have a Concern' tool, finding the right service provider for a child or youth's concerns can be completed in four easy steps.

Step 1 Visit www.FamilyCompassWR.ca and click on **I Have a Concern**.

Step 2 Launch the tool.

Step 3 Answer a short series of questions about your concern.

Step 4 Print, save or email your responses to your best starting point organization for follow-up.

Guiding you to services for children and youth in Waterloo Region

Unsure where to start? Find out who can help you and your family in minutes.

Family Compass Waterloo Region is a quick, easy and interactive website for parents, professionals and youth who are looking for local health, social or recreational services.

Visit FamilyCompassWR.ca to get started.

- Quick and easy to navigate.
- One-stop resource for all local services supporting children and youth.
- Search from anywhere.
- No guessing who to contact when you have concerns.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR, 2019-2020

November	• 5	Grade 4 Bible Celebration at St. Mark School (2:15 pm)
	• 22	Advent Penitential Service (Grade 3-8) at St. Mark School (1:15 pm)
	• 30	Enrollment Mass for First Eucharist & Confirmation (5:00 pm)
December	• 2	Enrollment Masses for First Eucharist & Confirmation (9:30 am & 11:30 am)
	• 12	Advent Mass at St. Mark Church (9:30 am)
	• 25	CHRISTMAS DAY
February	• 5	Mount Mary Retreat for Grade 8 Students (Feb 5-7)
	• 6	Mass at Mount Mary with Grade 8 Students & Staff (4:30 pm)
	• 26	Ash Wednesday Mass at St. Mark School (9:00 am)
March	• 13	Lenten Reconciliations at St. Mark School (9:30 am)
April	• 10	Good Friday
	• 12	EASTER SUNDAY
	• 16	First Reconciliation Celebration at St. Mark Church (6:30 pm)
	• 18	First Reconciliation Celebration at St. Mark Church (9:45 am)
• 25	Feast Day of Saint Mark	
May	• 1	First Communion Retreat at St. Mark Church (all day)
	• 3	Celebration of the First Eucharist at St. Mark Church (2:00 pm)
	• 6	Marian Mass at St. Mark Church (9:30 am)
	• 21	Confirmation Rehearsal at St. Mark Church (6:00 pm)
	• 25	Confirmation Mass at St. Mark Church: Bishop Colli Presiding (7:00 pm)
June	• 18	Year End School Mass at St. Mark Church (9:30 am)
	• 25	Grade 8 Graduation Celebration at St. Mark School (6:30 pm)

TERRY FOX WALK FOR CANCER RESEARCH

This year, St. Mark School is excited to be participating in our 16th Terry Fox Walk for Cancer Research. We are very proud of our contribution to cancer research:

\$118,404.09 has been raised by the St. Mark school community since 2005!! Last year's total was an astounding **\$12,498.65!** We were one of the top 25 schools in Ontario again!!

Terry Fox Kick-Off Assembly - Tuesday, September 10th at 2:30 pm in the school gym – Pledge Sheets Go Home

Terry Fox School "Run" - Thursday, September 26th at 2:00 pm

Family members are welcome to join in.

We hope you will join us in continuing the legacy of one of our country's greatest heroes and support this wonderful cause by donating to our Terry Fox School Run fundraising page at:

<http://www.terryfox.ca/StMarkCESKitchener>

Thank you!

THE PROMISE PROJECT; OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) has developed a program entitled *The Promise Project*, with Joe and Marie Roberts from *The Push for Change* (<https://www.thepushforchange.com/>) organization.

In 2016-2017, *The Push for Change Campaign* saw Joe Roberts travel across Canada pushing a shopping cart to educate youth on homelessness. Building on the momentum of that trek, Joe and Marie expanded their goal to educate Canada's youth about the factors that contribute to homelessness by promoting an initiative called *#iPromiseto*.

You may recall that WCDSB hosted Joe & Marie during their epic walk across Canada.

Joe and Marie are seeking to take this a step further through *The Promise Project*. *The Promise Project* focuses on youth and aims to engage and empower them in developing a project to address an issue affecting youth within their communities. Students will have an opportunity to submit their ideas as part of a contest that will occur in the latter part of the 2019/2020 school year. Successful projects will be granted a monetary sum to further their project.

Any youth (up to age 24) can participate in *The Promise Project*. For example, entries could be submitted by individuals, groups of youth, student clubs, classes, teams, etc. from both inside and outside of the school environment.

All resources and information can be found at www.thepushforchange.com under the "Promise Project" tab. Resources include The Promise Project toolkit and supporting documents. The toolkit outlines project information, requirements and resources. A curriculum integration component for educators and leaders is also available for viewing and download.



ThePromiseProjectT
oolkit-Web-EN.PDF

FASD & EDUCATION WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

FASD/Waterloo Region is hosting an educational workshop event for caregivers, educational staff and service providers regarding FASD. The workshop in Kitchener is on Tuesday, October 22nd at the WRDSB Main Office at 51 Ardelt Avenue, Kitchener (*see PDF for details*).



FASD & Education
Oct 2019.pdf

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PROGRAMS

Carizon is offering numerous community programs for children regarding anxiety, tapping into wellness, dealing with anger, paying better attention, and building self-esteem. The dates, times, program duration and age of children depends on the program considered. Please see flyers (PDF) below and visit the Carizon website at www.carizon.ca for more information.



Anxiety Group
Flyer.pdf



EFT Group Flyer.pdf



Extinguish Your Fire
Flyer.pdf



Hocus Pocus Focus
Flyer.pdf



Super Me Flyer.pdf

ADDENDUM TO KINDERGARTEN 2019

There have been some recent changes to specific expectations in the Kindergarten Program (2016). Please refer to the enclosed PDF which outlines these changes.



addendum-to-kindergarten-program.p

OKTOBERFEST PARADE 2019

The Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest Day Parade is fast approaching. The Parade Production Committee is looking for some willing volunteers of all ages to participate in the parade (*see PDF below for details*).



School Contact
Letter_19(1).pdf

TVO MATHIFY

TVO Mathify is an innovative platform which provides a seamless learning experience through a combination of enriched online classroom tools and live after-school math tutoring by Ontario Certified

Teachers. Starting September 16, 2019, students can connect to TVO Mathify's live tutors during the newly extended hours of 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm EST, Sunday through Thursday. See the link and PDFs below for more information.

www.tvomathify.com



TVO Mathify.pdf

THE UMBRELLA PROJECT

Welcome to The Umbrella Project!

This school year, your child will be participating in The Umbrella Project. The Umbrella Project is a curriculum designed to help your child learn the skills of emotional wellbeing. This year we will be focusing on empathy, growth mindset, cognitive flexibility, authenticity, purpose, kindness, self-efficacy, optimism and lifestyle. Developing these skills will help your child lead a happier, more successful life.

If you are interested in learning more about the Umbrella Project visit, www.umbrellaproject.co

You are invited to follow along with your child's learning journey. Each month we will be teaching your child a new umbrella skill. You can expect to receive a regular newsletter where we will provide information, stories, challenges and tips about fostering the skills your child is focusing on in class at home.

Caregivers have a powerful impact on childhood wellbeing and your participation will help to deepen your child's understanding of these important skills. If you are interested in learning more about applying the Umbrella Project principles as a parent, visit www.umbrellaproject.co/parents

If you are interested in observing the Umbrella Project in action, you can follow us on your favourite social media channel:

www.facebook.com/umbrellapict

www.twitter.com/umbrellapict

www.instagram.com/umbrellapict

Please email us at admin@umbrellaproject.co to share your stories, ask questions, and give feedback about what has worked well in your home.

We are excited to start this journey together to help children build positive coping skills to prepare for all of life's weather.

Health and happiness,

Dr. Jen Forristal Founder of the Umbrella Project

drjen@umbrellaproject.co

THE UMBRELLA PROJECT – EMPATHY!

This month our focus is on building Empathy. All the Umbrella Skills can be built with practice and this month we are working to build the empathy piece of your child's umbrella of wellbeing skills.

What will empathy do for my child? CREATE STRONG SOCIAL NETWORKS.

Empathy is the ability to put ourselves' in someone else's shoes and understand what they may be feeling. It is a key ingredient to successful relationships with our friends and family. High levels of empathy result in lower levels of conflict, better problem solving. It also helps us make new friends, keep the ones we have and build a stronger social network.

Having a strong social network helps us live longer and is one of the best predictors of our health and happiness.

Each month we will include some simple steps you can use at home to build your child's umbrella skills.

EMPATHY TIP #1

Help your child recognize and label their own feelings

Understanding what you are feeling in a given situation helps children learn to empathize. When we ignore or suppress feelings it's difficult to understand them in others. At home, make sure your child understands that all their feelings are okay, including sadness, anger, frustration and how to recognize those feelings. Help them give these feelings a label. Then set clear boundaries about what is and isn't okay to do with the feelings. For example, its normal to feel angry at a sibling but not okay to hit them as a result. This simple step helps children learn to calm themselves, cope better with life's ups and downs and empathize with others.

EMPATHY TIP #2

End your day with "High low high"

This is a quick exercise you can do around the dinner table or as a family before bedtime. Have each member of your family recall a high point, a low point and then another high point of their day or week. Take time to listen to each person and ask questions if you want. In order to practice empathy for someone else, we need to understand their journey. For your kids, it's very beneficial to hear what went well in your day, what you are proud of and also the challenges you are working through. For parents, this is a great way to get your kids talking about the specifics of their day and improve your parental empathy for the daily rain they face.

EMPATHY TIP #3

Start a phone bin

Technology provides us with a great many benefits, but one downfall is its impact on our empathy levels. When we are immersed in our devices, we get less practice with face-to-face interactions, communication and interpreting people's feelings, all key components of empathy. To build empathy this week, start to carve out device-free time in your home with a phone bin. Use it over dinner, while playing a family game or walking to get ice cream. Maybe it's over dinner, while playing a family game or walking to get ice cream. Have everyone with a device throw it in the bin and just enjoy each other's company without distraction. Try to find a few chances every week to connect this way. Time without technology is critical in helping our children develop empathy. Even before they themselves have these devices, our empathy levels as parents are impacted by this divided attention and we are modelling behaviours that are very important for our child's future development. In my home, I find my children ages 7 and 9 will ask for this device-free time now. A great start for when they get their own technology to manage.

EMPATHY TIP #4

Help kids see what they have in common with others.

Having high empathy is linked with increased happiness and scholastic achievement. To build this important skill help kids see what they have in common with others. One of the biggest predictors of prejudice and a failure to empathize with members of other groups, is having little or no contact with people who aren't like you. Research shows that schools can boost empathy by fostering an inclusive, warm attitude towards cultural diversity and you can do this at home too. Take stock of how often your kids play

with others who are different than them. Do your girls play with boys and vice versa? What about other cultures? What about the adults around them? How wide is your child's perspective? Encourage diversity to learn about and empathize with others.

See this blog for a more detailed look at coaching children through the challenges of building empathy:
<https://umbrellaproject.co/category/empathy/>

Health and happiness,

Dr. Jen Forristal
Founder of the Umbrella Project Founder of the Umbrella Project
drjen@umbrellaproject.co