



From the Withrow Public School Staff, Teachers and Students

Withrow Bulletin

Special Dates

May 28—Fun Fair

June 2—School Council @ 7 pm

Friday June 3—Staff Appreciation Luncheon

June 9—Withrow Concert @ 7 pm

June 10—PA Day

June 13—Primary Choir sings at the Blue Jays Game

June 23—Last Pizza Day

June 28—Grade 6 Graduation

June 29—last day of school—report cards go home

June 30—PA Day

Festival Of Trees at Harbourfront



Please see page 6 to read more information on the Festival of Trees and page 5 for more pictures of the event.

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Work begins on the Field next week!

As work begins on our field, please be aware of the following:

- Work is scheduled to start the week of May 30
- Work is to end in 7-9 weeks (field will be closed for 3-6 months approximately)
- Please ensure children and community members stay off field during summer months
- Call TDSB security if people are compromising our field over the summer at 416-395-4620
- An assessment of our trees has determined trees to be removed and planted in the fall
- A Viability Assessment Review for a new climber will start in the fall

Student Placements for next year—Parent Consultation form

This year 211 parents provided their input into our class placement process via our Google survey. While most other schools do not solicit parent feedback, we have found that this process (using the survey) is the best way to allow for parent input and to manage the requests for a school of our size. We thank all of the parents who took the time to fill in the form, and we thank all of the teachers who spent lunch hours and time after school working on the very complex process of class placement.

This year, as in previous years, we asked parents to determine one priority:

1. **a straight grade,**
2. **a split grade,**
3. **a friend or**
4. **a child to be separated from.**

We then attempted to work this suggestion in alongside considerations of gender balance, academic needs, and social/emotional make-up of the classes. Thank you to those parents who used the form in the way it was intended and provided us with useful information.

Here are some things to take into consideration for next year when providing parental input into placements:

- Please read the news bulletin— some parents have asked for no split class when only split classes available for a specific grade—the classroom organizational model was on page 3 of the last news bulletin
- Please complete the form on time—you have a week
- Please no emails about placement. Parents trying to bypass the form make this process more complicated and we have created this process to streamline things.
- Please fill out the form properly —if you attempt to submit two forms for one student or create two options within the same form we must disregard your input.
- Parents should consult with other parents on friend requests. We had several friend requests this year that came with an opposing request (by the other parents) for the children to be separated.
- Please do not ask for specific teachers; staffing changes take place all spring and into the summer.

The most important thing is to trust our teachers—they know your children and they will do everything in their power to create a balanced classroom in which all students are able to thrive and meet their potential. That is our goal for every child.

If you have questions about the placement process, please feel free to get in touch with us in the office.

Thanks,
Withrow Staff

Withrow Spring Concert - Thursday June 9 at 7:00 pm

The 2016 Withrow P.S. Spring Concert is fast approaching!

The following classes will be performing:

- Ms. Cucinello's Grade 1 Class
- Ms. Mahar's Grade 1/2 and Mme. Denis' Grade 1 Class
- Mme. Nadia's Grade 2 Class
- Mr. Mars Grade 3 and Mr. Mandel's Grade 3 Classes
- Mr. Ferguson's Grade 4/5 Class
- Ms. Wu's Grade 4/5 Class
- Mr. Christophe's Grade 5/6 Class

The following ensembles will be performing:

- Beginning and Advanced Ukuleles
- Withrow Junior Choir

Information will be sent home shortly with all performing students.



Want more music??? Check out our website: <https://sites.google.com/a/tdsb.on.ca/withrowmusic/>

Music Monday at Withrow Raises \$500 in 30 minutes

A huge THANK YOU to all the students who participated in Music Monday! With end-of-season performances from our “Eager-Beavers” Prep Choir, “Very-Dedicated-Monday-Morning- Rehearsal” Primary Choir, “Rock’n-Friday-Afternoon” Orff Team, “Really-Cool” Recorder Orchestra and “Sensational” Strings Ensemble... joined by our “Gem-of-a” Junior Choir, this was one fine showing of Withrow’s passion and belief in Music Education.

Music Monday is a nation-wide celebration organized by the Canadian Coalition of Music Education. Their goal is to raise the awareness and understanding of the role that music education plays in Canadian culture, and to promote the benefits that music education brings to young people.

At Withrow, we chose to perform for our friends and family AND to share the opportunity to make music with others less fortunate. The Withrow Community raised over \$500 in 30 minutes through your generous donations at the door. The money raised will be going to Regent Park School of Music. RPSM provides accessible extra-curricular music programs to children in our city - through private/group lessons, instrument ensembles, and choirs. \$500 gives one child fully subsidized music lessons for an entire year. On behalf of RPSM, executive director Jane O’Hare wishes to thank you kindly for your donations and community generosity.



Withrow Public School Spring Concert

Let's

SING & DANCE

Like it's 2016

Join us for the 2016 Withrow Spring Concert
An Evening of Singing and Dancing

Thursday, June 9, 2016 from 7 – 8 pm
Withrow P.S. Gymnasium

Students need to arrive at 6:30 – 6:45 pm
Gym doors will open at 6:45 pm - Please wait outside the Bain Entrance

Performers will be dismissed from their classrooms at 8:00 pm





School Yard Field Update



We want to take this opportunity to thank all parents involved in the Field Committee as well as those who were part of the consultation process for revitalizing the Withrow School Yard.

The process takes a long time, in order to ensure that protocols are followed, and appropriate consultations take place. Here is a re-cap of all of our work so far:

In 2013/2014, the Withrow Home and School and community members developed a Master Plan with an architect as part of planned work on the “Pit” area of the playground. This Master Plan included options for improving the yard in stages over the course of several years. Community consultations, teacher input, and student ideas were incorporated into this plan. The finalised Master Plan looked at dividing the projects into different areas.

The first area was getting work started on the Pit. Designers were able to take suggestions from students staff and parents into the master plan. Work began that fall and was completed in mid winter 2015. This improvement was completed at no cost to the School Council, but was paid for out of Board funds. Given the number of other capital funds programs needed to be completed in the TDSB, we were very happy that our project was completed.

During this same time we really were looking to also revitalize the field. We looked at the plans and decided that we needed to have a conversation about sod or turf. After much debate, the parent council decided on sod, given that the board would not only pay for it, have the soil tested but also pay for an irrigation system (sprinklers) to ensure the grass is well watered.

The field committee made up of parents decided that they wanted to implement some of the elements of the master plan while the field renovations were underway. Although the Board was paying for sod and irrigation the parents decided they wanted a track around the Field, a new baseball diamond, a new sand pit and dead trees removed and new trees planted. Part of this would be paid for by the Withrow School Council, using fundraising dollars.

The Field work was to begin the summer of 2015, however costs to the parents rose tremendously from the original estimate. The Field Committee decided that instead of asking parents for more money they would scale down the scope of work. They were able to secure a grant of \$8500 to plant new trees. Instead of a full track around the field, it was decided on a 100 meter track on the south side near Withrow with the removal of the old fencing around the diamond and the relocation of the new fencing and the sand pit. The final costs to the modified scope of work was approved late in the fall of 2015 and now work is set to begin the first week of June 2016, the week after the Fun Fair.

So what’s next?

The School Council Field Committee met with the Viability Assessment Review Committee from the Board to move forward with a new climber, which would go into the tree island area just west of the field. Going forward, the Field Committee will help the details of the scope of the work to be outlined and ensure that costs are managed and communicated appropriately.

On May 12, the Board came to start looking at the scope of work that is required and to determine a timeline of completion. Work is now scheduled to start the week of May 30th.

We had a second Viability Assessment meeting on May 24 to discuss the removal of dead trees and the planting of new trees using the grant money we received. The planting will happen this fall. The removal will take place with the field work.

Work on the field is expected to start the week of May 30 depending on weather. The scope of work is expected to last somewhere between 7–9 weeks. Work should be completed sometime during the summer near the end of July. The important part is that the sod be fenced off during this crucial time. It will be fenced off sometime between 3—6 months. It is crucial that the community stay off the grass and ensure the members of the community stay out of the fenced off area, especially during the summer when schools are not monitored by staff and children on a regular basis. If you need assistance with children, teens or even adults using the field area while fenced off please call the TDSB emergency line at 416-395-4620. We hope to open the field for student use sometime either this fall or winter.

We will have another Viability Assessment meeting in the Fall to outline the work and cost of the new climber which will go in the treed area west of the Field. If all goes well, a new climber will be installed sometime in the spring of 2017.

Smart SAVER

The TDSB has launched a campaign to help families access free money to help with their children's future.

Families are encouraged to open a no –fee no contribution required Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) through SmartSAVER.

Go to the following link at www.tdsb.on.ca/SmartSAVER for the secure online application.

Please see the flyer sent home for more information.



Withrow Avenue PS
25 Bain Avenue
Toronto, Ontario

Phone: 416-393-9440

E-mail: Withrow@tdsb.on.ca

Twitter: @TDSB_Withrow



Our students and teachers getting cozy with authors at the Festival of Trees Trip at Harbourfront

Lunchroom Staff needed

As you may know, Withrow has ten lunchroom supervisors who work in our KG, Primary and Junior lunchrooms each day. These supervisors work from 11:30-12:45, Mon-Fri. Throughout the year we need to fill these positions as vacancies come up, or staff take sick days. If you are interested in working as a lunchroom supervisor at Withrow next year on either a long term or occasional basis, we would love to hear from you. If we begin the hiring process now, we can have you ready to start work at a moment's notice. Please get in touch with dan.fisher@tdsb.on.ca to get started!

REMINDER: Bringing Scooters to School

As the weather outside improves, more and more students are bringing their scooters to school. It's great that children are choosing to be active and walking or riding to school!

Storing large numbers of scooters creates issues for us, however. Some students are riding their scooters in the building and on property and in other cases, scooters have been damaged.

We are therefore asking that if students want to ride their scooters to school that **scooters should be locked at the fence outside and not brought indoors or used on school property** during school times from 8:30—3:45.

Teachers have provided reminders about this to students. We would appreciate you reinforcing this at home with your children.



Forest of Reading

Last week 21 lucky students attended the Silver Birch Fiction and Silver Birch Express Awards at the Festival of Trees at Harbourfront. Not only did the students get to meet most of the nominated authors, including Withrow's own Mr. O'Donnell, but the weather was perfect too. Read more about it below.

Here are this year's winning books:

Blue Spruce (K-3) - *If Kids Ruled the World* by Linda Bailey & David Huyck

Silver Birch Express (Gr 3-6) - *The End of the Line* by Sharon E. McKay

Silver Birch Fiction (Gr 4-6) - *Masterminds* by Gordon Korman

Silver Birch Non-Fiction (Gr 4-6) - *Haunted Canada 5: Terrifying True Stories* by Joel A. Sutherland

le prix Peuplier (Gr 1-3) - *Ça commence ici!* by Caroline Merola

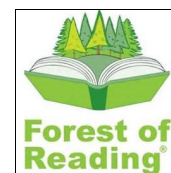
le prix Tamarac Express (Gr 3-6) - *Les trois grands Cauchon* by Sonia Sarfati & Jared Karnas

le prix Tamarac (Gr 4-6) - *Un clic de trop* by Rhéa Dufresne

Festival of Trees, by Olivia, Rm 337

I had a great time at the Festival of Trees. All the music, games and laughter was a little overwhelming. Everyone was very excited. During the ceremonies everyone was clapping and screaming. A couple of kids even stood on their chairs!

There were booths with games and food trucks selling things like cotton candy, popcorn and even Beaver Tails! There were huge lines for author autographs. There were also ice cream stands and a bookstore too. There were author workshops. I think that everyone who went to the Festival of Trees had a wonderful time! Please see page 5 for pictures of the event.



Library and Learning Commons

Toronto Public Library

This month many of our students went to the Riverdale branch of the Toronto Public Library to meet with some authors. Rms 335 & 342 learned all about Houdini during their visit with Marty Chan. The grade 1 & 2 students in Rms 219, 229 & 230 met Kallie George. Her novel, *Clover's Luck*, was a finalist for this year's Silver Birch Express Award. Thank you to the library for inviting us!

The Riverdale branch is also hosting some exciting events over the next few months. They include a babysitting course, Maker Clubs after school on Mondays, a free showing of the latest Star Wars movie on the June 10th PD Day, a talk about raising Monarch butterflies, and a Summer Magic Camp in July. Check out the Withrow library hall windows or visit the Riverdale branch for more information. Some events require you to sign up in advance!

Last Day for Books

All books are due back in the library on June 10th. Thank you for encouraging your children to take responsibility for their books.

Jane Mundell, Teacher-Librarian

Outdoor Play

At Withrow we are lucky to have access to a number of diverse and interesting outdoor spaces. We are able to explore and play in the following areas throughout the entire school year: the large daycare playground, the new creative playground, the pit, two gardens, the field, Riverdale Park and Withrow Park if we are up for the walk. Below is a list of some of the things that we consider important when we are planning for the outdoors:

1. Teach safety first and make sure students know how to use materials safely and ask for help when they need it.
2. Invite and support students when they choose to take risks.
3. Observe students in their play in order to connect to their interests and challenges so that we can support their growth and build on their strengths.
4. Supply open ended materials (sticks, caps, blocks, rope, wooden boards, buckets, fabric) for creative and ever changing play.
5. Supply real tools and materials for purposeful activities that foster muscle engagement, co-ordination, co-operation, challenges and room for self correction and self assessment - (shovels, brooms, buckets, toboggans, bikes, skipping ropes, balls, hammocks, swings)
6. Bring books and writing materials to connect our literacy and numeracy learning to the OUTDOORS.

Stay tuned, this entry is part of larger documentation panel (with lots of photos) coming soon to the front foyer outside of the library. Please check it out for a snapshot into our outdoor Withrow KG program.

Read on for more on outdoor play.....

[How outdoor play inspires independent learning for early years](http://bit.ly/1FaO6ex)

<http://bit.ly/1FaO6ex>

[Importance of Outdoor Play](http://bit.ly/1qLoSfZ)

<http://bit.ly/1qLoSfZ>



Welcome to Kindergarten

This past Friday we welcomed sixty three future JK students and their families to Withrow. Welcome to Kindergarten serves to help families become a little familiar with the school and to give the future students a snapshot into how much fun they are going to have at school next year. We added a few new things this year with this purpose in mind. A handful of current Kindergarten students were used as helpers in the library to assist with the activity areas and also the tour. We wanted families to be comforted by current students in action, and also thought it was a wonderful opportunity for some of our students. We also added Withrow Outdoor Learning into the activity rotation since the outdoors is an important part of all of our programs. Families were given the opportunity to watch and join in the play of Room 102 in the big playground and Room 112 in the pit. The morning felt relaxed and happy, which was the perfect way to welcome our future Withrow families.

Liz Kingstone
JK Teacher



School Council 2016/17 Budget Allocations



This year, as promised, in a move to try to increase engagement from a broader parent group, we asked individuals, or groups interested in Withrow Home & School funding to fill in a budget proposal. There is approximately \$50,000 to allocate amongst various funding requests, including putting some aside for longer-term projects. 9 budget Funding Proposals were submitted. They are, in no particular order:

1. **ARTs Funding**
2. **Outdoor Education/Food Garden Program**
3. **Reconciliation at Withrow (Temporary Mural)**
4. **Teaching and Learning with Technology**
5. **Withrow Funding Incidentals**
6. **Withrow - School Yard (Friendship)**
7. **STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Math**
8. **Library Revitalisation**
9. **Enhancing Music @ Withrow**

Voting (Input) for each of the proposals is now open. Voting will close on June 1st. Each family has one opportunity to cast a ballot.

The last Home & School meeting, which will be held on June 2nd, is only to debate the range of money requested, provided that a majority of parents indicate that they are supportive of the funding proposal under discussion.

The link to the voting survey can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1kgLI0wqTV9gUTw2adVg5LBQB37XNUqNMYKKFxorvz2E/edit>

School Council and the Home and School Association

