

Blake News

The Newsletter of
Blake Street Public School
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Blake Street Public School
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Jennifer Zurba, Principal **Jackilyn Wallace**, Vice Principal
Marc Sprack, Superintendent of Education **Jennifer Story**, School Trustee



Despite our hope that we would beat the odds, and remain COVID free for the school year, the virus' presence in our school community became a reality this week. I want to THANK our incredible staff who continue to work diligently in implementing our safety measures: hand washing, hand sanitizing, mask wearing, social distancing..... It makes a difference. It becomes clearer to me as I hear about cases within our schools, that our masks do work to keep us all safe.

School Wide Homework Assignment: Artifacts of My Ancestors

As you know, our school has been focusing on equity and identity through school-wide guiding questions. This term's focus has been: Who am I? What is my story?

We value the stories and voices of ALL families. In order to support this learning, we would like to have students bring into class an "artifact" from their ancestors or history. This artifact can be something tangible such as a photo, a document, a souvenir, or it can be something less tangible such as a story or a memory. Students should be thinking about how their artifact connects to their story or identity. Think of it as an "identity show and tell." Please support your child to choose an artifact and to prepare to share with their classmates. We are excited to learn more about our students and their rich history and unique identities, and we are also happy to encourage these rich family conversations.

Teachers will be sharing specific presentation dates with families in the days/weeks to come.

Ms. Zurba's artifact:



On my mom’s side, I recently found this letter while cleaning out my cupboards during the initial quarantine. This letter was sent to my grandfather from his aunt, sharing his family history. As you may be able to see from the stamp date, the letter was written in the summer of 1957. My mother’s side of the family is Jewish, and my grandfather’s parents were originally from Riga, which was the capital of independent Latvia. My grandfather’s parents left Riga in and around 1908 and moved to Birmingham, England (where he was born), and then on to Toronto. The rest of his mother’s siblings stayed in Riga, Latvia. In the letter, his aunt shares with him how all the family, except her, were killed when Latvia was annexed by Germany in WW2. I am not sure where this letter had been hidden, and how I came to find it in my drawer, but it connected me and my family directly to the Second World War, and the Holocaust in a way never shared before. It reminds me of how lucky my grandfather’s side of the family was, through early immigration, to survive, and allow me to THRIVE, while many of my ancestors did not.

Book Bank

While the Book Bank’s storefront is closed to the public during the lockdown in Toronto, they are still giving away books! Step up to the walk-up window and ask one of their staff or volunteers for the titles you want, and they will find the books you are looking for, or offer you something else you might like. The book bank window is open Wednesday, December 2 and 9, from 12:00 – 5:00 at 350 Berkeley St.

Skate Bank

Winter is coming! Blake Street PS has a skate bank - students can borrow skates for the winter season. If you have skates you borrowed last year please return them to your child’s teacher before December 4th. If you would like to borrow skates please let your child’s teacher know which size, we will try to find skates that fit for your child to borrow for the season. Helmets are not available from the skate bank due to health and safety concerns.

Outdoor public skating will begin on November 28th. The closest skating rink is at Withrow Park. Leisure skate times include 9-12 a.m. everyday and 3-6 p.m. on Wednesday. This year the changeroom and washrooms will be closed, and rinks will be operating at reduced capacity. Helmet use is encouraged at all times (CSA approved hockey helmet). You can learn more about city skating rinks here: <https://www.toronto.ca/data/parks/prd/facilities/outdoor-rinks/index.html>

Have a wonderful weekend!
Jenn and Jacki

Notes and Updates from Parent Council

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W1h xv2LYVvdbg6oklM_7CXKuFbFFt61ag3JhbCiJO6k/edit?usp=sharing

Please click on the link above to access the Parent Council Update.

