

Macdonald C.I.
 “We’ve Got You Covered.”

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1-4 Holiday Break				
5	6 Return to School	7	8	9 Sac Rhyne Without Reason Day	10	11
12	13 Field Trip Moratorium	14 Sac Bingo Bash	15 OUAC Equal Consideration	16 Moratorium Begins	17	18
19	20	21 Moratorium Ends	22 Exam Day	23 Exam Day	24 Exam Day	25
26	27 Exam Day	28 Exam Day	29 Exam Review	30	31 Semester 2 Begins	

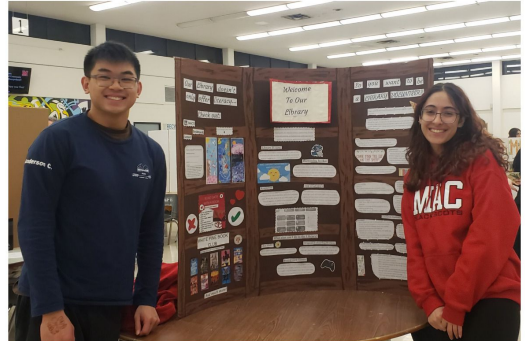


Photo Credits : Aleezah Abidi

Ask Angus

Angus Blackscot

Dear Angus,

What does it feel like to be a school's mascot?

Dear Blackscot,

Hey, I might look a bit silly, but being a school mascot isn't all that bad, eh? There's something about the buzz from the crowd that's just unreal! But it's not just about the hype—it's about repping our school, Mac, with pride. I won't lie, though—being a mascot's no walk in the park. All that dancing and running around feels like a full-on workout sometimes! But honestly? The cheers, the smiles, and the energy you guys bring make it all so worth it. So yeah, it's hard work, but y'all make it the best gig ever!

Dear Angus,

What are your opinions on Costco? I love free samples.

Dear Blackscot,

Aye, gotta admit, who doesn't love a good ol' Costco run?! You walk in for a loaf of bread and somehow leave with a cart full of who-knows-what! And those free samples? Pure genius—free food, what's not to love? The bulk deals are a lifesaver too, especially for big families or anyone stocking up. Plus, their return policy? Absolutely amazing—shopping without the stress! Only downside's the crowds—feels like you're packed in like sardines sometimes. But even then, it's still a good time, eh?



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Grade 8 Info Night

Aleezah Abidi

This December 3rd, 2024 Mac staff, students, and administration set up yet another Info Night for 8th graders on their way to high school. On this day, students in Grade 8 from around the area — and even outside the area — had the chance to discover what high school at Macdonald CI is like.

To start, various clubs and councils set up their respective boards in the cafeteria, each one of them representing one of the numerous extracurricular groups within the school. As parents and children started rolling in, they closely observed the wonderfully creative setups, catching a glimpse of the different clubs they could join. There was the dance club, the diversity club, stage crew, MSA, HSA, SAC, and so, so many more.

Later, there was a beautiful performance in the auditorium by none other than the band students. A mixture of excitement and creativity, this piece was a wonderful welcoming gesture toward the parents and children sitting in the audience.

Up next was a quick introduction of our Grade 9 Reps, Amna and Raymond, and two of our Mac Reps, Sarah and Emmitt. After recapping their experiences at Mac as students, a couple of staff members explained the school's credit system, volunteering requirements, extracurricular opportunities (including sports, clubs, and councils) class schedules, and other important details.

Last, but definitely not least, were the well-awaited tours. Mac Reps sorted parents and children into groups and led them across the school, introducing the beautiful art room, the spacious library, the complex tech rooms, the large Mezz, and a quick glance at other general classrooms. Of course, as families began to leave, they had to get a couple snacks by the main entrance, organized by the Parents Council.

The day was an opportunity for future Mac students to catch a glimpse of high school. It was so exciting to see so many earnest young faces explore all that Mac has to offer!

School / Club Activities

Holiday Cheer Assembly / Ugly Sweater Day

Aleezah Abidi and Amna Khan

On Friday December 20th, 2024, Mac held its annual Holiday Cheer Assembly and Ugly Sweater/Pajama Day, going into the Winter Break with a bang! Students crowded into the auditorium and they watched an amazing production of the Polar Express, mixed in with excerpts of incredible talent put on by our very own students. Cozy in their sweaters and PJs, Mac witnessed extraordinary performances in the form of bands, singing, and dancing. There were quite a few songs that got others singing along, like “Last Christmas,” “Way 4 Love,” “A Whole New World,” and many, many more.

Of course, we can’t forget the wonderful efforts of the SAC as they acted in the famous Polar Express. At the show’s end, the long-awaited LipDub was projected. Filled with school spirit, the video turned out wonderful, despite being the first one filmed in years!

Overall, Mac was truly brought together through this display of holiday cheer. The unity and joy were palpable and this production was an excellent start to the break!

We thank Ms. Georgiou, Mr. Steel, the stage crew, the Student Activity Council, and the performers for their many morning rehearsals, practices, and preparations for this spectacular show!



Photo Credits : Kun Hong



Photo Credits : Tithi Padhiar



Photo Credits : Kun Hong

SAC Door Decorating Contest

Alphen Tan

As the holidays rolled around, SAC held its annual door-decorating contest. The contest fosters the school's holiday spirit by displaying student creativity through unique designs on classroom doors. Classes could strive for one of two objectives: (1) the most eco-friendly door, or (2) the best traditional door. With a free pizza lunch at stake, many classes put in their best effort, resulting in lots of festive doors at Mac. These doors filled Mac with festive cheer and creativity, as students walked around the school to view each. The four judges had the difficult task of selecting a winner and, luckily, I was able to get a quick interview with Jatin Taploo, one of the judges.

Alphen: What doors stood out to you?

Jatin: Most of the doors were very unique and clearly had a lot of thought behind them. It was a pleasing experience to see so much holiday spirit from not only the students, but also the teachers! The doors that really stood out to me were Ms. Jang's homeroom class and Mr. Fraser's homeroom class.

Alphen: What did you take into consideration when judging these amazing doors?

Jatin: What was taken into consideration when judging these doors was how creative they were, if they were eco-friendly or traditional, and if they were pleasing to the eye – like the use of colour.

Alphen: Which door was your favourite? Jatin: My personal favourite has to be Mr. Fraser's class. His class went all out, putting on a light show, snowflakes on the top, a speaker, and they had 3D decorations. It was by far the most unique and creative, contrary to popular belief.

As Jatin suggested, Mr. Fraser's class ended up winning the pizza lunch for the best traditional door. Meanwhile, Ms. Mouratidis' class won the pizza lunch for the most eco-friendly door.

Although every door was great, these two classes went above and beyond to distinguish themselves. Seeing Mac's artistic talent on display makes me excited for what next year's door-decorating contest will entail!

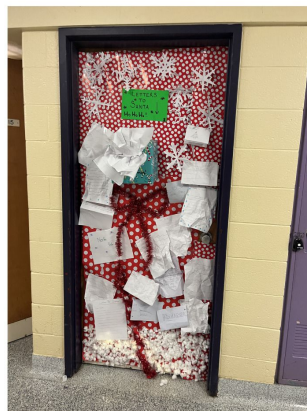


Photo Credits : Tithi Padhiar



Photo Credits : Alphen Tan

Club Activities

Winter MIA Food Drive

Vidhi Jaju

This December, Mac in Action organized the Winter Food Drive to help Mac give back to our community. It was a wonderful way to spread kindness and support those in need during the holiday season.

Each homeroom class had about a week to bring in donations, which were collected on December 18, 2024. All the food items collected from each homeroom were donated to the Daily Food Bank, an organization that helps provide food to people in need.

Students and staff were encouraged to donate non-perishable items, such as canned goods, pasta, rice, cereal, and more. Everyone worked extremely hard to contribute, making the drive a great success for Mac.

To make things even more exciting, there was a friendly competition between homeroom classes. The class that collected the most items would win a special prize: a pizza lunch!

This year, Mr. Fraser's class brought in the largest number of donations and were announced as the winners. However, since they had already won another school competition recently, the pizza party prize was passed to the runner-up, Ms. Domville's class! Congratulations to both classes for their amazing effort! The Winter Food Drive truly was a great reminder of how much we can achieve when we come together as a school community.

Health Council Gingerbread Making

Aleezah Abidi

On Tuesday December 17, 2024, Health Council hosted a wonderful gingerbread decorating event.

Students who managed to make it on the attendance list excitedly participated in this lovely event as they gathered together to decorate their gingerbread houses.

Health Council's wonderful heads carefully assembled adorable little gingerbread houses, sorted the candy into little plastic bags, and paired it together with a bit of icing, setting it all on tables for students to decorate with. With plenty of choices in candies and houses, the participants of this event joyfully decorated gingerbread houses with friends. As cheerful Christmas music played, yearbook council members walked around snapping pictures the whole time.

When the decorating was finished, everyone placed their houses together to form a village. This created a beautiful backdrop for one big group photo.

This was a truly joyful event, a perfect end to school before the winter holidays! We can't wait to see what the Health Council has in store for next year!

Boy's Basketball

Amna Khan

Arriving back from Winter Break, Mac's Boys Basketball is kicking off strong in 2025, with many games scheduled! Students can't wait to watch our Junior and Senior Boys teams play as they represent Mac and display their school spirit on the court.

These two teams consist of an incredible roster of athletic stars. The Juniors include Darien Mak, Habib Mohamed, Malachi Valley, Gavin Jenkins, Graham Nair, Jamarie Bennett, Andy Bryce, Zakariya Omar, Cameron Soulliere, Kaiden McEwen, and Emmit Bowers. The Senior Boys team includes Kurdyar Aram, Alliston Ricketts, Dimitri Mattheou, Natan Kidane, Phillip Byers, Shahzad Nazari, Gian Saldivar, Isaiah Carvery, Caedan Bowers, and Chyden Daniels.

So far, the boys' basketball teams have played four games against Victoria Park, Lawrence Park, Earl Haig, and George S. Henry. Our Juniors are still looking to win their first game, coming back refreshed and ready from the holidays. Mac's Seniors have started off strong with a win in their first game, and are gearing up for a second win this month.

Mac's Jr. and Sr. Boys Teams have been playing their best, and we hope to see them come out on top as they begin their January games!

Follow the athletics instagram @macdonaldathletics_tdsb for more sports updates!

Study Tips

Hannah Emberley

With exams quickly approaching, use these study tips to help you prepare!

1. Make sure to aim for 8 hours of sleep each night.
2. Get rid of your distractions (whether that be your cellphone or your favourite book).
3. Don't study in an environment where you rest or eat, like your bed or dining room table.
4. Take breaks – go for a walk or do some yoga.
5. Celebrate small successes and monitor progress, even minor improvements.
6. Don't start studying the night before your exam. Instead, start a week or two before in order to allow for multiple study sessions.
7. Use a timer to break your study session into active "study periods" and "rest periods". For instance, spend 25 minutes studying and take a 5 minute break – this is known as the Pomodoro method.
8. Set the goals you want to achieve by the end of your study session and stick to a study plan.
9. Create mock tests or exams for yourself (or do this with classmates and quiz each other).
10. Redo previous quizzes, tests, or exams to refamiliarize yourself with the content and correct previous mistakes.
11. Make sure to ask questions in class if you don't understand something.
12. Form a study group with people in the same courses as you and keep each other accountable.
13. Have everything you need for your study session in arms reach as this will prevent you from getting up and wasting time (or encountering a distraction).

Miscellaneous

New Year, New You?

Ms. Starvou

As the clock strikes midnight on December 31st, a sense of renewal fills the air. The start of a new year feels like a clean slate – a perfect opportunity to reflect, set goals, and embrace change. For high school students, New Year’s Resolutions can be more than just wishful thinking; they can be a roadmap for personal growth and success.

But, let’s face it: most resolutions are abandoned before February rolls around. Why is that? Often, it’s because our goals are too vague, unrealistic, or lack a clear plan. This year, let’s rethink the resolution game.

Resolutions are more than traditions: they’re tools for self-improvement. Whether it’s improving grades, building healthier habits, or spending more time with family, setting goals gives us direction and purpose. For high school students juggling academics, extracurriculars, and social lives, resolutions can help prioritize what really matters.

Let’s take a look at some of the New Year’s Resolutions set by our Mac Community:

New Year’s Resolutions made by our Grade 9 students:

- Get good grades
- Become a firefighter
- Get my license
- Lock in on a relationship
- Eat more
- Participate in extracurricular activities
- Make money
- Pass math
- Get a dog

New Year’s Resolutions made by our Grade 12 students:

- Get accepted to the University of Toronto
- Pass Advanced Functions
- Get into the Royal Military College of Canada
- Make money
- Work out consistently
- Be less stressed
- Get accepted to Queen’s University with a scholarship
- Get into OCAD
- Stop procrastinating
- Stay healthy
- Get my license
- Be happy
- Do good work in HOSA
- Ace my exams
- Finish the 30+ books on my list
- Get into Toronto Metropolitan University
- Earn a high mark on my Philosophy Seminar

New Year’s Resolutions made by our Staff:

- Mark less
- Commit to fitting in time for myself amidst a hectic schedule – workout, eat healthier, and get a good night’s sleep
- Reduce screen time (maybe incorporate a screen-free day once a week)
- Hit 10,000 steps a day and/or follow through with an after-meal walk (increase my NEAT, non-exercise activity)
- Spend more time in nature (try to make a daily commitment to do this)
- Join a new activity that I have always wanted to try (pickleball, tennis, a hiking club, or a choir)
- Read more books
- Learn to say “no”

If these New Year’s Resolutions have you thinking about making your own, here are a few tips for success!

1. **Be Specific:** Instead of saying, “I want to do better in school,” try, “I will dedicate 30 minutes a day to reviewing my notes.” The more specific the goal, the easier it is to track progress.
2. **Start Small:** Big goals can feel overwhelming. Break them into smaller, manageable steps. For example, if you want to get fit, start with a weekly workout routine before committing to daily sessions.
3. **Make it Measurable:** Choose goals you can measure. If you aim to read more, set a target like one book per month. Measurable goals help you stay motivated and track achievements.
4. **Stay Flexible:** Life happens, and sometimes resolutions need adjustments. If you miss a day or two, don’t give up entirely. Re-evaluate and keep moving forward.
5. **Celebrate Small Wins:** Acknowledge progress, no matter how small. Celebrating victories along the way keeps the journey enjoyable and rewarding.

Still not sure where to start? Here are some resolutions tailored to high schoolers:

- **Academics:** Create a study schedule, ask more questions in class, or improve time management.
- **Health:** Drink more water, limit screen time before bed, or join a sports team.
- **Social Life:** Spend less time on social media and more time connecting with friends in person.
- **Hobbies:** Learn a new skill, like playing an instrument, painting, or coding.

Ultimately, New Year’s Resolutions aren’t just about “fixing flaws” – they’re about becoming the best version of yourself! As we welcome the new year ahead, take a moment to envision who you want to be and what you want to achieve. With determination and a little planning, 2025 can be the year you reach your full potential.

So, grab a notebook, write down your goals, and start the year with purpose. Remember: the only way to achieve your dreams is to take the first step. Happy New Year, Mac!

White Ribbon Campaign

Amna Khan

On December 6th, 2024 Mac’s SAC held the White Ribbon Campaign in the main hall for an extremely important cause. The Montreal Massacre, also known as the École Polytechnique Massacre, occurred on December 6th, 1989. In a display of targeted gender-based violence, a man massacred 14 women on campus, while also injuring many others.

To protest these gender discriminatory beliefs and the violence occurring from them, Canada remembers December 6th as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. The White Ribbon Campaign, a global movement fighting gender-based violence, took place at Mac on this day. As students bought ribbons and wrote their signatures, the importance of this cause was reflected upon by all who walked through the main hall.

As the next generation, we must recognize this violence and its horrific impact on women in our society in order to fuel change. It is truly up to our world as a whole to fight gender-based violence as a social justice issue to foster societal change. Thank you to those who signed and bought white ribbons for the White Ribbon Campaign!

Considering Co-Op

Hannah Emberley

Last year, I had the opportunity to be placed at Saint John’s Rehabilitation Center during my co-op placement. Through this unique experience, I learned so much about myself and the careers I was interested in. Due to co-op, my fear of public speaking completely diminished as I learned how to talk in a professional manner and how critical each person’s contributions are to keep a workplace running smoothly. I was able to make important decisions about my post-secondary education because I was able to see what my profession of interest does on a daily basis.

In my opinion, I strongly recommend taking co-op because, at the very least, you will discover if that is the career for you. In saying that though, I am very biased because of how phenomenal my experience was; so, I asked someone else who also took co-op.

When chatting with Grade 12 student Leona, she shared her thoughts on her current co-op placement and if she would recommend co-op to younger grades. She responded with pride, saying: “I think co-op is an amazing and highly valuable experience. My current placement is at Sunnybrook Hospital, which aligns perfectly with my goal of pursuing a career in the healthcare industry. Being immersed in a healthcare environment has given me the opportunity to gain firsthand insight into how healthcare professionals perform their tasks and manage patient care. Through co-op, I’ve been exposed to various diagnostic procedures, such as CT scans, MRIs, angiograms, endoscopies, and bone scans. This experience has not only deepened my understanding of how patients are diagnosed, but also strengthened my determination to pursue a career in healthcare. Additionally, I’ve gained practical skills that will undoubtedly be assets in the future. I highly recommend younger grades to take co-op in their senior years. It provides valuable hands-on experience in the industry you’re interested in, helps you develop practical skills, and gives you an advantage when applying for university or college by setting you apart from students who haven’t had this opportunity.”

After that statement, I would say that co-op is a must-have on your timetable in Grades 11 or 12!

Holiday Recipes

Hannah Emberley

Snowball cookies are one of my favourite recipes to make during the holiday season. They are the perfect balance of savoury, brought out by the chopped nuts, and sweet, brought out by the powdered sugar. These Mexican wedding cookies are rounded cookies rolled in powdered sugar, where they get their name. These cookies are super easy to make and are perfect for any holiday party. Make sure to store them in an airtight container at room temperature.

Prep Time: 30 mins

Cook time: 15 mins

Total time: 45 mins

Servings: 60/ 5 dozen cookies

Ingredients:

- 1 cup unsalted butter
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup finely chopped pecans
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup powdered sugar

For the full recipe, please visit:

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/11171/snowballs-ii/>



Snowball Cookies

If you are looking for a simple and fast recipe everyone will love, you need to make peppermint bark. All you need is white chocolate, semi-sweet chocolate, oil, peppermint extract, and candy canes. The best part of this recipe is you can add any of your favourite toppings, and my personal favourites are M&M's, pretzels, Oreos, and Skor pieces. Make sure to keep your bark in cold temperatures.

Ingredients:

- White chocolate
- Semi-sweet or dark chocolate
- Oil (coconut or vegetable)
- Peppermint extract
- Crushed candy canes

For the full recipe, please visit:

<https://sallysbakingaddiction.com/peppermint-bark/>



Peppermint Bark

As easy as it is to make hot chocolate from powder, nothing will ever top a homemade hot chocolate. It only takes a couple more minutes than powdered hot chocolate and is ten times more creamy. If you are going to have homemade hot chocolate, the perfect way to top it is with homemade whipped cream. Personally, I love crushed-up candy cane on top of my whipped cream, but you can throw whatever you like on top.

Ingredients:

- Milk
- Cocoa powder
- Sugar
- Chocolate chips
- Vanilla extract
- Whipped cream
- Chopped chocolate

For the full recipe, please visit:

<https://celebratingsweets.com/homemade-hot-chocolate/>



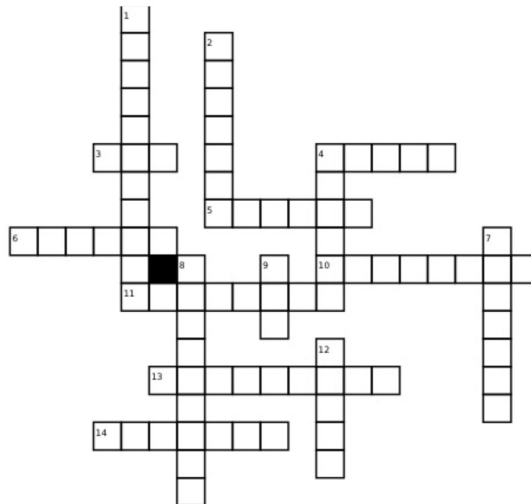
Homemade Hot Chocolate

Activities

Word Search

C Z E V E R G R E E N D V S Y
 H Q N E M I O J U D V E Y M L
 A A P Z N I M J D A S H E R C
 Q E N K A E S R K E G S I T A
 W H P U W D W T S Q G X P I N
 T O B S K A V Y L C F G I J D
 W L E A M K N E E E L B N X L
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|-------------|------------|-----------|-------|
| Santa Claus | Christmas | Evergreen | Bells |
| Mistletoe | Candy cane | Mrs.Claus | |
| Hanukkah | Rudolph | Kwanzaa | |
| New year | Eggnog | Wreath | |
| Advent | Dasher | Elves | |
| Candle | Holly | | |



Down:

1. Famous Christmas ballet
2. Sweet treat left for Santa
4. Traditional holiday drink
7. Frosty the _____
8. Famous Christmas movie
9. A type of Christmas tree
12. Jolly old man

Across:

3. The Grinch's dog
4. Santa's helpers
5. A place Santa stores gifts
6. Country where Saint Nicholas is from
10. Christmas tree decorations
11. A thing you can put presents in
13. Red and white striped candy
14. Famous reindeer