

## Principal's Message

Welcome all to the 2019–2020 School Year here at Niagara Street PS! We are off to a great start with many things already happening to get our students and community engaged! We have already had our first school wide event last Friday where the students participated in a sewing workshop with the Sewing Studio. The students were very proud to show off what they had made and the school got 2 sewing machines donated from the program to help foster further interest in sewing. We would like to thank the school council for subsidizing this event – this is how the money that is raised at our various fundraisers goes to support some great learning opportunities for our students. Our next school wide event is the Terry Fox run this Friday. We are always happy to participate in this fundraiser for cancer research; something I'm sure most Niagara families have been touched by, and to follow Terry's great example of courage, strength and hope. Information has been sent home of the many different ways you can donate and if we hit our goal of \$2,500 we will have the Teachers Olympics where the students will cheer on their teachers in some fun challenges.

Speaking of running, our students who are interested are already practicing running Cross Country. As most of you know, Ms. Sutcliff our physical education teacher for over 25 years retired last year, and Mr. Wittenberg has taken up her mantle and is continuing with our proud tradition of sending close to half the school to the annual Cross Country meet. I hope you had the chance to meet Mr. Wittenberg and our other new teachers, Mr. Kirkpatrick HSP/Music, Ms. Dell'Erede FDK, and Ms. Amaral in FDK (replacing Ms. Neal who is extending her parental leave) at our Meet The Teacher/Curriculum Night last Wednesday. It's always nice to have a chance to meet everyone and share a little of what your child will be learning this year. The school council also sponsored a welcome to Kindergarten event in the gym for our newest families to connect and meet each other. Thank-you to Annemarie Shrouder and Michael Skeete for organizing the event and thanks also to all the people who helped out getting ready and cleaning up! If you're interested in helping out in different ways at Niagara the school council is a great way to get involved! Our first meeting is this Wednesday at 6:00 pm in the library. Childcare is provided and we also offer pizza to make things easier for you to come to a meeting. The first meeting is where we elect the positions of Chair, or Co-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. If you are interested in any of these positions there are nomination forms that you can get from the office.

We have a new procedure with our beginning of the year forms – they are now online. You have to have completed your registration with us and given us a valid email with consent for commercial emails to receive the link so that they can be filled out. The first year of any change is always a bit of a challenge, if you haven't already submitted the forms online, please be on the lookout for paper copies being sent home with your child(ren). We are always concerned about allergies so if your child has an allergy that we should be aware of please make sure the classroom teacher is aware of it along with filling out the forms.

## Principal's Message Continued

There is one part of the form that causes some people some confusion – Use of Personal Email and Anti-Spam Legislation. We ask for your email and then because of anti-spam legislation we have to ask your permission to use it because many of our messages that we send include some kind of sale of something (like school pictures, pizza) or fundraising (think of this message we are raising money for Terry Fox). If you say no then the only email list you end up being on is for attendance. If you would like to receive emails from the school then you have to say yes so that you can go on that list. We only send emails related to what is going on at school that will often include fundraising events.

Please ensure that Kimberly in the office has your most up to date contact information. Also please call the school at any hour if your child is going to be away especially as we head into cold and flu season – our answering machine is always on. We do not encourage you to email Kimberly that your child will be away because if she is away no one can read her email.

Our nutrition program has started whereby students are offered a healthy snack in the morning. We do get some funding for the program and we ask parents to contribute– we suggest \$10.00 a month or \$50.00 for the first half of the year. All children participate in the snack program. There are also some after school programs that are offered by outside organizations but use rooms at Niagara. These programs will have a fee. The Board does offer the International Languages program of Mandarin and Spanish here on Thursdays. Registration was last Thursday but if you're still interested you can contact TDSB Continuing Education at: 416-338-4100 and inquire about International Languages registration for your child. The classes are on Thursdays after school and there is a fee of \$20.00.

As you can see there is a lot happening at Niagara and we are looking forward to a great year of learning for our students!

### P.A. Days & Holidays (no school for students)

#### **Professional Activity Days:**

Friday, October 11, 2019  
Friday, November 15, 2019  
Friday, December 6, 2019  
Friday, January 17, 2020  
Friday, February 14, 2020  
Friday, June 5, 2020  
Friday, June 26, 2020

#### **Dates to Remember:**

**Labour Day:** September 2, 2019  
**Thanksgiving:** October 14, 2019  
**Winter Break:** December 23, 2019 to January 3, 2020 (last day of school December 20, 2019; school resumes January 6, 2020)  
**Provincial Family Day:** February 17, 2020  
**Mid-Winter Break:** March 16 to 20, 2020  
**Good Friday:** April 10, 2020  
**Easter Monday:** April 13, 2020  
**Victoria Day:** May 18, 2020

## Road Safety

It's back to school time and we would like to remind drivers to slow down in school zones.



In recent years, TDSB staff has been working closely with the City of Toronto's Transportation Services, Toronto Public Health and other community partners to improve road safety for school aged children and youth in the City of Toronto. In 2017, the TDSB launched its Traffic Safety Program (TSP) which helps schools identify travel issues and develop workable solutions. The TSP program aligns with the City of Toronto's Vision Zero Road Safety Plan – a plan aimed to reduce the number of traffic-related deaths and serious injuries on Toronto's roads.

Together, we can keep school zones safe!

To learn more about road safety, please visit: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Road-Safety>.

## Lockdown and Fire Drills

At the beginning of each school year, staff and students prepare for the year ahead by establishing the foundations for a successful year. One of the ways we know we can help students be successful is to create a safe environment in which to learn. Though no one ever wants to see an emergency happen at a school, it's important for school staff to be equipped to deal with those situations, should these occur.

The safety of students and staff is a top priority at our school and to that end, as with all emergency drills, it is essential that we are prepared and understand the importance of procedures that will help ensure the safety of everyone in our school.

The TDSB has taken steps to ensure your child's safety while in school. Each school has developed emergency preparedness plans that include steps staff will take in the event of an emergency, how staff will get students away from possible dangers, and how students' families will be contacted.

One aspect of emergency preparedness is the lockdown and fire drill. All schools are required to conduct a minimum of two lockdown drills and six fire drills each school year. Lockdown drills, like fire drills, are an essential component to ensuring student and staff safety. It is important that all staff and students are prepared and know how to respond in cases of emergencies. The drills last approximately 5 minutes and ensure plans are effective and can also systematically identify any safety concerns.

Communication is also very important in any emergency situation. The emergency contact information kept on file is important in helping this happen. Please make sure our office staff have the most up to date contact information, in the event of any changes/updates.