

**PRINCIPALS' REPORT – January 10, 2012**  
**George Webster School Council**

**Model School Update:**

**Innovative teaching and learning practices:**

As a school, we are committed to **culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy**. In our planning sessions for Term 2, we have looked at ways for students to examine their world mathematically, and take action “to build a better world.” Working with our coach, George Kargiorgakis and with Professor Beverley Caswell from OISE/UT, we have tried to plan data management activities that will help our students interpret the strengths and needs of their community, and feel empowered to make change. Dr. Caswell, Ms. Balyk, Ms. Steinhauer, and our instructional leader, Susan Pitre, will present at the FUTURES Conference in May on **Co-Teaching in Mathematics for Equitable Practice**.

**Support services to meet the social, emotional, and physical well-being of our students:**

In the new year, **Scouts About** continues to provide programming on Mondays after school. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays after school, we will continue to offer **Parks and Recreation** programs. On Sundays, we continue Martial Arts classes from 10-1. In January, our **Hockey Team** begins to compete! Thanks to JumpStart Foundation for supporting this program. **This session's Play Leaders will be trained on Friday, January 13 at lunch – parents are welcome to join us.** Again, if you have an hour to give over lunch once a week, we need you! **Social skills groups** continue with Rolando from the Child Development Institute. Starting in January, we will be sending home a backpack full of nutritious food once a month for any family that enrolls for our **OnexOne Backpack Pilot Program**. Finally, thanks to the efforts of many volunteers, our snack and lunch programs will continue in the new year.

**The outreach necessary for the school to become the heart of the community:**

A number of programs for parents continue in the new year. Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, **Adult ESL** continues. Monday afternoons, our Settlement Worker, **Ramla**, is leading an **English Conversation Circle** from 1-3 p.m. in the Parent Resource Drop-In Centre (library). Special workshops in January/February include:

- **Nobody's Perfect:** This 8 week **Parenting Program** is run by Toronto Public Health. Childcare and interpretation can be provided. Information about how to register for this program is in the School Office. The program begins Tuesday, January 17 and runs from 6-8 p.m.
- **Settlement Worker Workshops:** Ramla Alsinawi has arranged a series of workshops for our parents including:
  - **Introduction to Mothercraft ECE Program** (Wednesday, January 11)
  - **Importance of Routines Parent Workshops** (Wednesday, January 18)
  - **Healthy Eating** (Wednesday, February 1)
- **School Council Workshops:**
  - Jacqueline Smith, Rukshana Sayyada, and others have organized **Let's Talk About It! An Anti-Bullying Panel Discussion** on Thursday, February 2 at 6:00 p.m. The panel will include Dr. Ruth Stirtzinger (Child Psychiatrist), Sarah Liddell (Social Worker), Malca Gaffe (Sexual Health Educator), and members of the Child Development Institute. Each speaker will present on bullying and how to prevent it, and then answer questions from the audience.
  - **Parent Workshop on Sleep: Take Back the Night!** At February's School Council Meeting (February 7 at 6:00 p.m.) Dr. Shelley Weiss from the Hospital for Sick Children will talk about children and sleep.

## Parents at one of our workshops

### **Research, review, and evaluation of students and programs:**

We continue to use multiple sources of data to review and evaluate our students and our programs. Our goal for the 2011-2012 school year is to make sure that at least 66% of our students meet the provincial standard in reading – with our boys and girls achieving equally well **You can help us in this goal by continuing to read to or with your child for at least 20 minutes each day – in any language!** We know that when parents read with their children daily, that makes a positive difference in their learning. Coming up soon... the Parent Census – we need you to complete this important survey – spread the word!

### **A commitment to the sharing of successful practices:**

On January 18, 2012, we welcome other schools from our cluster who will engage in an **equity walk**, to help us examine how equitable our practices are. On January 31, we will host a **delegation of principals from Chile** who are interested in the work we are doing to raise the bar and close the achievement gap for our students.

### **GEORGE WEBSTER IS GROWING!**

On November 29, 2011, a decision was made about the grade configuration of two area schools including Crescent Town Elementary School and George Webster Elementary School. It was recommended that Crescent Town Elementary School be reconfigured from a JK to Grade 5 school to a JK to Grade 4 school as of September 2012. The conversion of George Webster Elementary School from a JK to Grade 5 school to a JK to Grade 8 school was approved as well. George Webster will be offering JK to Grade 6 effective September 2013; JK to Grade 7 effective September 2014; and JK to Grade 8 effective September 2015.

At a Board meeting on December 7, 2011, the Board of Trustees of the Toronto School Board also decided to change the junior attendance boundary to assign all students in the Crescent Town Elementary School attendance area with the exclusion of those students living at 100, 102, 104, 106 and 108 Goodwood Park Court to George Webster Elementary School for Grades 5 to 8.

The decisions that have been made are the result of work that has been completed as part of a Program Area Review. A Program Area Review Team (PART) met with community members to discuss options to ensure that the needs of all students are being met for future success.

### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW**

**January 10** – Grade 2/3 to ROM

**January 11** – Grade ½ to ROM; Grade 4/5 Ski Day; Parent Info Session on Mothercraft ECE program

**January 12** – The Wolverines play their first Hockey Game 12:00 p.m. at Ted Reeve Arena. Parents/Caregivers are welcome to cheer the team on!

**January 13** – New Play Leaders will be trained at lunch -- Parents are welcome to join!

**January 16** – Play Leaders begins for 8 weeks

**January 17** – “Nobody’s Perfect” 8 week Parenting Program begins every Tuesday 6-8 PM

**January 18** – Parent Workshop: Routines

**January 25** – FAMILY LITERACY DAY – join us for muffins at 8:30 a.m. and Family Reading at 9:00 a.m.

**January 27** - PA Day – no school for students

**February 2** – Join us as a panel of experts share their perspectives on bullying and answer your questions about how to prevent and deal with bullying