



Deroche Elementary School

# News letter



March 2, 2017

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Dear Deroche Families:

When times are tough, when challenges face a community, it's the character of its people and the values that they share in common, that carry the day. What I am referring to are how the Deroche Bears' parents, staff and students responded to several problems which happened in a short period of time.

In January and February, the Deroche School Community, during school time, faced two power outages, a railway crossing gate malfunction, a school bus breakdown and several days of record snowfall. These unusual conditions meant that parents, teachers and students had to work together to make sure each child could remain safe even though transportation routines were completely altered. In each event, teachers and other staff responding quickly to notify families, parents in turn communicated with each other to figure out who was able to take students home, and students willingly changed their routines and waited quietly until they could return home. Staff also did great work keeping students occupied positively while the situation was sorted out. I was very impressed watching people work so well together to overcome the challenges but one event in particular, showed me the values of cooperation and team work that I am finding lie close to the heart of our community.

In late January, our school was closed due to two accidents on the highway on either side of our school. After some hard and quick work all parents were able to be notified, and were on their way to pick up their stranded children. Unfortunately, due to the accidents, no cars could get through. The wait could be up to 6 hours. However, our community would not be

defeated, groups of parents communicated with each other, and two parents, a student teacher volunteer and a couple of staff members were able to hike from the accident sites to walk our children around the accidents to be picked up by parents on the other side. It was a safe solution which relieved the anxiety of a lot of parents. I was amazed at the level of trust, cooperation and team work demonstrated by the Deroche Bear community.

There are other stories of determination and caring that I know of, and I am sure during the snow, you could add a lot more. I hope that in the months ahead that we do not face similar challenges. Our kids need to stay in school. Nevertheless, as we face the normal challenges of a school community, field trips, special celebrations, reading and academic obstacles; as well as, dealing with normal school community conflicts, I hope we will remember how well we did together in January and February, 2017, and how much it benefitted our kids.

As a final note, when you get this Newsletter our senior volleyball team will have completed their season. Whether they win the city championship or not, we are very proud of them. Here again, the character quality of determination, combined with the value of cooperation, produced an amazing result. Our team, representing the smallest school in the District, led the league with an undefeated (12-0) record!

Bears, let's keep striving and working together in all that we do, no matter what obstacles we have to overcome!

*Mike Abercrombie*  
Principal



## Div 1 & 2 Field Trip to Grouse Mountain

Our Grade 3-6 students are going on a special field trip to Grouse Mountain tomorrow. The adventure will start with an early morning train ride on the West Coast express; a transfer onto the Sea bus and a gondola lift up the mountain. Once there, students will learn how to snowshoe and listen to an Aboriginal cultural presentation before making their way back home again. Thank you to the Aboriginal department and PAC for contributing to the cost of the field trip. We wish students and accompanying parents a fun filled day!

## Report Cards and Teacher Conferences



Term 2 report cards will be going home on Monday March 6<sup>th</sup> and parent/teacher conferences will be held on Tuesday March 7<sup>th</sup>. Appointment times are not required. Please drop in anytime between 2:30 and 7:00 pm.

We encourage parents to ask questions, seek support and discuss your child's academic and social strengths or concerns.

### Questions parents may want to ask teachers:

- What activities does my child enjoy most?
- What skills does my child need to develop further? What are the main challenges?
- What can I do at home to help my child develop skills?
- How can I best support my child in each subject?
- How can I follow up on these suggestions?
- How does my child get along with other students?
- Is there anything about my child's behavior or performance you would like to share?
- How can we best work together?

Communicating with your child's teacher on a regular basis is encouraged. Staff email is [firstname.lastname@mpsd.ca](mailto:firstname.lastname@mpsd.ca)

## Div 3 & 4 Field Trip to Science World

Our Grade K-2 students will be going on a field trip to Science World on Wednesday March 8<sup>th</sup>. Students will be traveling by District school bus and are to meet at the school by 7:00 am. There will be lots for students to see and explore. They will learn about fire, electricity, bubbles and more!! Permission forms were sent home last week. Please sign and return by Monday March 6<sup>th</sup>.

## Foundation Skills Assessment

Last month we advised parents about the Grade 4 Foundation Skills Assessments. FSA's are administered annually to Grade 4 and 7 students province-wide and provide a snapshot of how well BC students are learning foundation skills in reading comprehension, writing and numeracy. Our students completed the assessments last week and we should receive testing results shortly which we will share with parents.

## Pink Shirt Day

On February 22<sup>nd</sup> students and staff wore pink in recognition of anti-bullying day. We took time out to remind ourselves and others of the negative effects that bullying can have on people and the importance of making good and respectful choices. Students also made a pink flag with their handprints to symbolize our commitment to be a bully-free school.

## Jump Rope for Heart



We had our Jump Rope for Heart event on February 24<sup>th</sup>. Students participated in a "heart healthy" presentation as part of their pledge to the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Students were reminded of the importance of staying active and eating healthy. Thanks to Ms. Olson for coordinating the event. Please remember to return pledge forms and any funds collected by Wednesday March 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Martial Arts Lessons

Mr. Janzen from Excel Martial Arts was here on February 20<sup>th</sup> and will be returning again on March 6<sup>th</sup> for an interactive training lesson with our students. The session will teach students about martial arts but will also focus on the importance of building positive relationships as well as promoting mental health and positive growth. Students enjoyed the first session and we look forward to Mr. Janzen returning.

## Intermediate Volleyball



Our volleyball team had their final round of league play last Thursday and we are very proud of our players for winning all of their 12 games giving them an undefeated record! A special thanks to Ms. Olson, Mrs. McDonald and Mr. Laslo for coaching the team and to the many parents for driving and supporting the team on game days. We are proud of how hard the team has worked and how well they have represented the school. Way to go! We will be participating in a District tournament at 3:00 today at Hatzic Middle School. We hope you can come out and cheer on the team! Go Bears Go!!

## School Assembly and Hot Lunch

Our next school assembly will be on Thursday March 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:15. We will be honouring our February “Students of the Month” and celebrating their accomplishments. All students will be served a spaghetti hot lunch after the assembly. Order forms will be sent home with your child on Monday. We are asking for a “loonie” donation. All proceeds will go towards our new playground.

## PAC News

Please watch for a PAC bulletin coming home soon. The last meeting was cancelled due to snow but PAC hopes to schedule another meeting before Spring Break. Details to follow.

## Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club continues to run every day from 7:45 to 8:10 am. It is open to any students who were not able to get breakfast at home. A special thank you to “Breakfast for Learning” and Superstore for this year’s nutrition grant. Breakfast for Learning is a national charity that helps ensure children across Canada are well nourished and ready to learn. Thank you also to the parent volunteers for helping with the program each morning. We couldn’t do it without you!

## StrongStart Program

Our StrongStart program for preschoolers (birth to age 5) is a great place to introduce your child to school. It is a free drop-in program and is a wonderful way for you and your child to meet new friends. The focus is on play but there are also more structured activities such as story time, crafts and gym time. If you know of anyone who might like to join us, please encourage them to do so! Strongstart runs every Mon/Wed/Fri morning from 8:30 to 11:30 in Room #140 at the school.

## Reading Challenge – Monthly Calendars



We are starting to see an increase in student participation with our monthly reading calendars which is great! We want to encourage and emphasize to parents the importance of reading with your child every day to help build strong communication and language skills. Pick a comfortable spot to read with your child and plan to make reading an enjoyable activity every day – and don’t forget to continue reading over spring break. Be sure to initial your child’s reading calendar and return to the office on March 27<sup>th</sup>. Our outstanding readers will earn prizes, house team points and enjoy a pizza lunch. The ‘Eagles’ are still leading in their reading points so we’d like to see the ‘Coyotes’ and ‘Salmon’ try to catch up!!

## Books For Sharing

We will have a variety of books to give to families on the night of parent/teacher conferences. A book table will be set up in the foyer by the classrooms. We encourage you and your child to pick out a few books for reading over spring break. Remember, a love for reading begins at home so show your child that reading can be fun. Try to read a book, sing a song or tell a story with your child ☺

## 2017-18 Kindergarten Registration



Kindergarten Registration has begun! If your child was born in 2012 they are eligible for Kindergarten. Proof of age and residency is required at the time of registration. We encourage parents to register as soon as possible so we can prepare for next year's class planning. Parents may register their children during our regular office hours.

## Emergency Service Presentations

On March 8<sup>th</sup> we will have special guests from Ambulance Services here to meet with our Div 1 & 2 classes as part of our safe awareness and career inspiring presentations. Constable Young from the Mission RCMP will be coming on March 29<sup>th</sup> to also speak with students about working in law enforcement. We are looking forward to their visits.

## Salmon in the Classroom Program

Our salmon eggs have hatched into tiny baby "alevins". If you peek in our fish tank you will see the alevins in the gravel bed with some starting to develop into "fry". Soon they will be swimming and can be released into the river. We will release the fry into Silverdale Creek as this is where the eggs had come from. Next year, we will be getting eggs from Inch Creek Hatchery and can release them into our own school's stream! This will be an exciting step for our 'forest & stream' stewardship program.

## Outdoor Classroom and Learning Grounds

A lot of planning has taken place as we move forward with our outdoor classroom plans. Thank you to those who have expressed an interest in helping with the site preparation plans. We are going to post-pone our March 4<sup>th</sup> work to a later date when the weather is more favourable. We'd like to say good-bye to winter so we can get on with our spring plans!

For those who may be unaware, we are in the initial stages of creating a "forest and stream" learning site on school grounds for educational purposes. We plan to run a stewardship program for students to care for the stream and forest area while learning about the environment, fish culture, watershed and ecology. We will be able to use the rich ecosystems around our school grounds to help educate our students while restoring a historic spawning streambed. There is an abundance of literature outlining the benefits of outdoor classroom environments and we believe our students will flourish in this type of setting. More information will be shared at the next PAC meeting or feel free to contact the office for further details.

## After School Gardening Program

In an effort to create more extra-curricular opportunities for our students, we will be starting an after school "Garden Club" program after Spring Break. Garden Club will be open to students in Grades 4-6 and will offer lots of garden related projects and activities. Students will maintain our existing garden boxes and help add additional boxes in other locations around the school. We also plan to work on our outdoor classroom site and help Ms. Kristy with her Aboriginal Garden. Watch for more details coming home soon.

**No School Reminders for March**  
March 10: Non- Instructional Day  
March 13 to 24: March Break

