



Deroche Elementary School

# News letter



March 30, 2017

Michael Abercrombie, Principal | Tel 604-826-2360 | michael.abercrombie@mpsd.ca | [www.deroche.mpsd.ca](http://www.deroche.mpsd.ca)

Dear Parents:



## ***Including All Bears***

One of the major debates in public education over the past 25 years has been over the question of fairness of including students with “special needs” in the regular classroom. One argument is that the majority of students in a particular class who have “normal” learning capacity should not be deprived of the resources and learning opportunities because of one or two students with “special needs” require a much greater amount of attention to learn. On the other hand, there is the opposing view that justice and equity, two important democratic values, requires that every student, no matter what their situation, deserves the support required to help him or her learn. Furthermore, these more challenged children should not be deprived of social connections with their peers by being segregated into separate classes or schools.

If there are unlimited resources to support all students in the classroom then this would not be a very intense debate. However, in reality, governments cannot, or do not, provide sufficient funds to avoid having to choose which students will receive enough support and which students will have to learn without extra help. In the past several years, governments have both insisted that all students, regardless of particular needs, be included in the classroom as much as possible, but, at the same time have had difficulties sufficiently funding this policy.

In a recent professional seminar at Clarke Theatre, attended by many of our teachers, I heard a point of view that was very helpful in

viewing the question of including all kids in the classroom. The speaker, a BC author and educator named Shelley Moore, ended her excellent presentation by showing a clip of grade two kids in Richmond being interviewed about their experience of having an autistic boy in their classroom for a year. The audience was wonderstruck by listening to the kids describe how much they had appreciated the opportunity of helping their autistic classmate and how much they had learned from him about kindness, determination and self-acceptance. I was in awe of how valuable a person requiring extra support could be to relieving the anxiety of his classmates and helping them build a better self-image and view of their own uniqueness.

At Deroche Elementary we have students with a variety of backgrounds and different challenges. I am proud that they we attempt to include all our students in the regular classroom and grateful that we receive a lot of support from our School District in our efforts. I am also extremely appreciative of our teachers and educational assistants who skillfully deliver lessons which are tailored as much as possible to the individual needs of each student. Finally, I cannot thank enough, (they tell me to stop!) our team of volunteers who come to the school every day to ensure that several students receive extra support to be able to read at grade level. I feel fortunate and blessed to be a Deroche Bear and I hope we can continue to ferociously (but calmly) attack the challenge of providing our children, no matter what their situation, with a great social, emotional and academic learning environment!

*Mike Abercrombie* – Principal



## 2017-18 Kindergarten Registration

A reminder that 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 in order for us to prepare for next year's class planning. Parents may register during our regular office hours.

## Moving In or Moving Out?



If you are planning on moving out of the area before September 2017 or if you know of a family that is moving into our catchment for the next school year, please inform the office. We have begun

our projected enrolment process for classroom planning and any changes in enrolment can affect our school plans.

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

Thank you to all parents and guardians that participated in the parent/teacher conferences on March 7<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions about your child's report card or concerns about their progress, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher for further discussion.

## Please Return Report Card Envelopes

A reminder to sign and return the colored report card cover and report card envelope to your child's teacher as soon as possible. These cards and envelopes will be used for the final reporting term.

## PAC Meeting

The next PAC meeting will be held on Wednesday April 12 at 9:00 am. We hope you can make the meeting as we will be talking about some of our upcoming plans and would like to hear your ideas and get your input.

## Strong Start Program

Many of our young families are enjoying connecting with each other and sharing in their child's early learning at our Strong Start centre. Feel free to stop by or encourage other parents to participate. Our Strong Start Program is led by Miss Julie and runs every Mon/Wed/Fri from 8:30 to 11:30. It is a free drop-in program for preschoolers and their parents/caregivers and is a great way to introduce your child to school.

## Grade 7 Middle School Transition

During the second week of April, we will have representatives from Hatzic Middle School coming to meet with our Grade 6 students to give an overview of middle school and to answer any questions that students may have. Students will also have the opportunity to tour Hatzic as part of their middle school transition at a later date in May.

## Spring Break Reading Challenge

We hope you enjoyed some reading-time with your child over Spring Break. As part of our reading challenge we had asked that students return their reading calendars to the office by Monday. Congratulations to our outstanding readers and we hope you enjoy your special treat! Thank you to parents for helping strengthen your child's reading skills and for making reading a part of their everyday routine.

## April Reading Challenge



Our reading challenge will continue for the month of April. Watch for our "Apple Blossom" reading calendar coming home

on Friday. Students will be asked to read (or be read to) from April 3<sup>rd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> and parents are to check off the calendar to indicate if completed. We are excited to see our student's progress so please continue to help with your child's academic success.

## Volleyball Tournament

We are very proud of our volleyball players who demonstrated how hard work and determination can equate to positive growth and achievement. The team went into the final tournament with an undefeated 12/0 record and played some great matches placing them 4<sup>th</sup> overall at the March 2<sup>nd</sup> tournament. Our Bears won a record 15 games in a row this season. Well done team! Thank you Ms. Olson, Mrs. McDonald and Mr. Laslo for coaching the team.

## Martial Arts Lessons

On March 6<sup>th</sup> students enjoyed another session of Martial Arts training with Mr. Janzen. Everyone enjoyed the lessons and we hope to have Mr. Janzen back to the school again. Thank you to Excel Martial Arts for providing these complementary lessons to our students.

## Sports and Wellness

Promoting the development of healthy and active lifestyles for students is one of our goals at Deroche. We want our students to develop an appreciation for athletics, health, physical activity and lifelong wellness. There is a known connection between good nutrition, physical activities and being better learners. We want our students to be part of a culture that balances academic success with leadership, team building and fitness development. Please encourage your child to stay active and to participate in any sports or intramural activities offered at the school.

## Golf or Tennis Anyone?

We are looking at some new sport options to offer our students and would like to give golf and tennis a try. Look for more information coming home within the next few weeks. If there are other sports that you'd like to see offered, please let the office know.

## Outdoor Classroom Progress



We have made a lot of progress with our forest and stream learning site but the weather has certainly restricted our efforts. If the rain holds off on Friday, we are hoping to do some more site work including the clearing of more blackberries and adding gravel to the access path. Thank you to Mr. Cassel for donating a load of road mulch to get us started on the pathway.

We also plan to do some finishing work on our garden boxes. The boxes have been put together but the ground needs to be leveled and the boxes put in place before we can fill with soil. Thanks to Mr. MacLean for helping with the boxes and to the Toyota/Evergreen Grant for contributing towards the project.

## Gardening Program

We are excited to announce that we have received a \$1,500.00 grant from the R.R. Smith Foundation for our Aboriginal and school garden. Thank you to Mr. Elliot and Ms. Tavener who came out to see our project site and wrote a letter of support for our grant application. Ms. Kristy will be working with students to select herbs for a medicine wheel planter box and Mrs. MacLean will work with the Gardening Club group to do some other plantings in the garden area. Garden Club starts next Wednesday after school and will continue until the end of the school year. Watch for a permission form and more information coming home today.

In addition to our gardening program, the school will be taking part in Communities in Bloom "Vegalicious Planter Challenge". Students will grow vegetables from seeds in a pot to see who can grow the best crop. All divisions will be involved with the challenge and students are excited to get growing!



## **National Volunteer Week: April 23-29<sup>th</sup>**

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many parents, guardians, PAC and community members who have volunteered their time for our school. This includes our parent coaches, our breakfast club and hot lunch volunteers, our parent drivers, and our reading program volunteers. Your efforts make a big difference to our school community and our students success.

## **Technology Upgrades**

We would like to pay special recognition to the Cummings family and the Mt. Seymour Lions Club who made a generous donation to put towards new technology for the school. Their generosity is greatly appreciated and we are excited to purchase some much needed technical tools for student learning.

## **District Track and Field and Running Club**

We will begin preparing for the District Track and Field Meet starting next week. Events are scheduled at Albert McMahan on May 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. Students will have the opportunity to practice during the month of April. More details will be sent home closer to the track and field dates. We are looking forward to a fun and exciting track and field season.

Running club will also resume again with Ms. Olson on Tuesday and Thursday after school.

## **April Hot Lunch**

The PAC will be serving a special lunch on Thursday April 13<sup>th</sup> to celebrate Easter. Students will be served ham, scallops, rice and vegies. Parents are also welcome to join us. We are asking for a \$2.00 donation per person for the lunch. All proceeds will go towards new playground equipment. A hot lunch order form will be sent home next week. Thanks for your support and we hope that you can join us!

## **The Literacy Green Bus**

The literacy “green bus” was at the school again today and will continue to visit us the last Thursday of every month. All students have the opportunity to board the bus and pick out a book or two. This is a great opportunity for our students to have some fun and engage in reading. Thank you PAC for organizing this literacy supportive activity for our students.

## **Emergency Service Presentations**

Students enjoyed a visit from Youth RCMP Officers Mason and Young yesterday. There were several excellent questions asked and students learned more about the work of law enforcement and the importance of staying in school. Our next visitors will be the Ambulance Service on Wednesday April 12 at 1:30.

## **Intensive Daily Reading Program**



A special thank you to our ‘Daily Reading Program’ volunteers who continue to commit their time in making our intensive daily reading program a success. Students have been benefitting from this one-on-one reading time and are becoming more confident in their learning. Your dedication to helping our students learn is invaluable.

## **Sasquatch Lions Club Pancake Breakfast**

The annual Sasquatch Lions Club Garage Sale, Auction and Pancake Breakfast is on April 1<sup>st</sup> at the Deroche Hall. There will be new and used items and services that have been donated for the garage sale and auction. All proceeds will be used in our local area. We want to encourage our families to come out and support the community. Breakfast will be served from 7:00 to 10:00 am; the garage sale begins at 8:00 am and the auction begins at 9:00 am. Don’t miss out!