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“Achieving Success Together”

General Vanier School

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Principal's Perspective

Here at school when it comes to June, we are of two different opinions. On the one hand, as we look forward to summer vacation, it can't seem to pass quickly enough. On the other hand, with all that needs to be done in a few short weeks, there never seems to be enough time to get it all finished!



Late May and early June in Ontario always mean one thing: EQAO testing for our grade 3 and grade 6 students. We wish them all well and ask parents to deliver them to us ready to go! This time of year also means report cards and our teaching staff will be busy on the P.A. Day of Fri. June 10th working on completing your child's report for Term 2. Report cards will go home Mon. June 27th - the same day as Grade 8 graduation. Our Kindies will have graduated the week before on Thurs. 23rd - the day before the all our Primary and Junior students head out on their year-end trips.

Our last week will see Play Day on the Tuesday [weather permitting] and our final Celebration Assembly on Wed. June 29th. There we will recognize students and say goodbye to the many staff who will be departing Vanier for other schools in the fall. And, as you have seen from the newspapers, the long anticipated Accommodation Review will be starting up in Fort Erie for September. It seems that change is quickly becoming our common theme here at Vanier. We best strap on our running shoes and get ready to go!

Working Together for Student Success

Our final Pathway for this school year, focusing on effective student & teacher feedback, will wrap up shortly as teachers collect their exit data. In discussion with our staff and the other members of our inter-school network, we plan to continue expanding the kinds and opportunities for feedback as our starting point for School Growth plan next year as well. Our Network of Schools is also going to undertake a mathematics focus as part of our plan for next year, which will fit nicely with some of the work several of our staff have already done working as SUM math teachers these past two years. Our planning for next September will begin later this month on the June 30th P.A. Day.

Report Cards

Teachers are busy wrapping up projects and assembling marks so they can write their comments for your child's Learning Skills and subject marks for the new Term 2 Provincial Report Cards. A P.A. Day on Fri. June 10th is dedicated to working with the newest electronic version of the report card, which will go home to families on Mon. June 27th. Parents are asked to complete the return slip and send it back with their child by the last day, Wed. June 29th.



Provincial Testing - EQAO

On Mon. May 30th the first two weeks will see both our Grade Six [May 30 to June 3] and Grade Three [June 6 to 9] students Province-wide will begin writing tests in Language and mathematics administered by the Education Quality & Accountability Office or EQAO. These assessments are designed to determine a child's ability to read, write and problem-solve compared to the learning expectations at their grade level of the Ontario curriculum. The Language tests consist of four parts and the mathematics has two parts, each of which takes about an hour or so to complete. We will begin on the Monday of each week and ask that parents ensure their children are here and well-rested, ready to go at the start of each of those days. We also ask you to please avoid booking appointments etc for your child during those times that week. The tests are marked over the summer and the results shared with parents in the fall. The data obtained from all of our students is used by our teaching staff and our School Council to determine what our students' learning priorities should be for the following year. Write well everyone!



Grade 7 & 8 Summer School in Fort Erie

To further assist our intermediate students in making the transition to high school the DSBN traditionally offers summer school courses to students interested in improving their mathematics and language skills. In the past, the nearest locations where these were available was Niagara Falls, but this summer they are being offered locally at Fort Erie Secondary School. Each student in grade 7 and 8 has received an information package, but should parents wish to obtain more information, please call the school at 905-871-5962.



Summer H.E.A.T. Program

For those students who are in grades JK to Grade 3 who are interested in further developing their reading, writing and math skills the DSBN is hoping to offer them an opportunity to participate in their Summer H.E.A.T. program this year. This program has run successfully in Welland, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines for the past two years and this year hopes to come to Fort Erie as well. Running five days a week from 8:30 am to 12:15 pm each day starting July 11th July 29th. The program is delivered by teachers and teaching assistants and is a combination of summer school and day camp, but typically also includes special presentations and some field trips as well. There is a cost and application forms will be available through our

Accommodation Review

If you were reading the local newspapers recently, you will have seen the announcement from the DSBN that an Accommodation Review process is coming to Fort Erie starting in September. This process, which will unfold over the next school year, will involve all four elementary school communities in town: Rose Seaton, Fort Erie Elementary, Garrison Road and General Vanier. And while there have been many ideas and opinions shared over the years about what to do and where to go with the schools in Fort Erie, the final outcome of the Accommodation Review won't be known until process has run its course and reports are presented to the DSBN Trustees for their consideration. Specifically what all that will look like will be shared with principals later this month, but one thing will be for sure – the first meeting of the A.R.C. will be here at General Vanier on September 28th at 6:30 PM. For additional information please see the insert in this newsletter.

General Vanier Staff for 2011-2012

The unfortunate reality of a small school is that as our student numbers continue to decline, there will be reductions or changes in staff as well. As of this printing next year our classrooms will be: an AM JK/SK, a grade 1&2, grade 2&3, a grade 4&5, a grade 5&6 and a grade 7&8. The process for assigning staff to schools and classrooms runs throughout month May and at its conclusion this year there have been quite a few changes to the look of the staff at Vanier for next year.

Leaving us will be: Mrs. McAlpine, to Garrison Road; Miss Sims to Quaker Road; Miss Schultz to Crystal Beach and Mrs. Cassidy to Fort Erie P.S.

Changes at General Vanier next year will be: Mr. Piett, LRT and Mr. Badger – 7/8 & teacher-librarian.

Being welcomed are: Mrs. Gibson, JK/JK AM & 7/8; Mr. Haynes, grade 2/3 and Miss Wilson, French PM. Ms. Eves and Mr. Cross, both EA's will return and Ms. Wright will be leaving us.

DSBN Academy Update

We are proud to report that each of those students from General Vanier who had applied to the new DSBN Academy in March has been accepted! Families received

their acceptance letters in May and are now busily participating in the welcome activities the Academy has set up to help both students and parents make the transition to their new home school. The first of these events, a parents & students luncheon, is planned at Brock University on June 18th with several more introductory events to follow.

French Immersion

Late in May we received confirmation that two of our students, Cody & Devon T., had been accepted to the French Immersion Program at McKay School starting next September. Though we will miss them, we know they will do us proud. Bonne chance!

Kindie & Grade 8 Graduation

Our Kindergarten Graduation will take place on Thursday June 23rd starting at 9:30 AM in our school gym. The program will run about 1 hour and will include diplomas and a short musical presentation. Parents & guests will be seated starting at 9:15 am.



If your child is in Grade 8, then you will also want to be in our school gym for 6:00 PM on Monday June 27th as we celebrate your child's years here at General Vanier. Grads are asked to be here at the school by 5:45 pm, and parents can begin taking their seats at that time. The school will acknowledge outstanding academic and participation, followed by valedictory address by class representatives. The program traditionally takes about an hour and will be followed by a short reception afterwards; refreshments & cake provided.

Year-End Celebration Assembly

Our last Celebration Assembly will be held on Wed. June 29th – the last day of school. We will recognize our monthly winners, acknowledge Term 2 sports and clubs and take a moment to say goodbye to departing staff and students. We will begin at 9AM and parents & siblings are welcome!

Kids Quest Program

Our Kids' Quest program wrapped up a very successful year of providing many of our students with after-school support with a pizza party celebration just after the long weekend in May. Running Tuesdays and Wednesdays since last fall, the program offered homework help and extra learning supports for about fifteen 'regulars' throughout the year. Assuming funding through the Multi-Cultural Society continues into next year, it should be up and running again at Vanier next fall.

G.R.E.A.T. Program

Constable Abbott of the Niagara Regional Police wrapped up her sessions with the grade four group in early May and will do the same for the longer grade seven course by mid June. This program is designed to instruct children how to effectively deal with peer and social pressure and instead make choices that will benefit them now and in the future. A pizza party for the sevens is planned for the afternoon of June 23rd.

Family Math

We had great hopes for our after-school Family Math program, but it didn't quite work out as planned. The program is designed for students in grades 2 to 5 and a parent to spend about two hours together over six sessions. Each session began with a cooking lesson where the participants assist in the preparation of a simple meal, and is then followed by evening of teaching how parents & students can positively interact around school work, in this case learning math together. Difficulties began with some low enrollment numbers, and then the instructor had appendicitis! The net results were that we had to cancel the program before it could run the full six sessions. We thank those who did participate and will we will try and set it up again in the fall.



Breakfast Club

Thanks to our dedicated volunteer, Mrs. Lorraine Spencer, and the support of our E.A.s Ms. Wright and Ms. Eves, our Breakfast Club is about to complete another year of providing for our students. The school is also indebted to those parents and grandparents who have made generous food and cash donations to our program to help keep it going. Our school community will need to increase its support of the program for next year if we wish it to continue. Additionally with the Ministry mandating new standards for September regarding what is served and provided to children through schools, we will be needing additional adult volunteers to plan, fund and run our program. To help us celebrate our successes, the Niagara Nutrition Partners – the breakfast club organizing body – invited Mrs. Spencer to attend a Breakfast Club Gala in late May. Accompanied by Mr. King, Mrs. Spencer was fittingly served her own breakfast prepared by various high school culinary programs! The last day for the breakfast club for this school year, will be Thursday, June 23rd.



Grade 3 Swim to Survive Program

Thanks to the support of the Education Foundation of Niagara each of our grade three students participated in Swim to Survive Program at the Fort Erie YMCA. Organized by the Lifesaving Society the classes taught each child the basic skills they would need to survive in water, and ensured they had the basic swimming ability to avoid drowning. Our thanks go out to the E.F.N. and the Lifesaving Society for their donation and support.



Class Trips

With the warm weather here, many of our classes are heading out on their year-end trips. After a weather re-scheduling, our Primary students spent the day at Safari Niagara [formerly Zooz] on May 27th and plan to be off to Marineland on Friday June 24th. Our grade 7/8 class will be off to see the musical "Joseph" at the new Convention Centre in Niagara Falls on Tues. June 14th followed by three days & two nights at Youth Adventure Camp at Brock University. Our Juniors [grades 4 to 6] will be doing the sites and experiences of Niagara Falls on Fri. June 24th, following on the heels of a



trip to the St. John's Outdoor Education Centre on Fri. June 3rd. Our grade 2 and 3&4 classes head to the same location on June 20th.

Jump Rope / Hoops for Heart

Rainy weather forced us to postpone our Jump Rope for Heart & Hoops for Heart originally scheduled for Friday, May 20. The new date for our Heart & Stroke Foundation fundraiser was Thursday June 9th, periods 5 & 6 starting at 1:35 pm. Thanks to Miss Sims for putting this altogether again this year. Let's keep our strong tradition going and do our bit again this year for Heart & Stroke. Over the past 12 years our small school has raised over \$20,000 all on its own!



School Council Corner

School Council met last on the evening of the evening of May 24th. First up was a dissection our attempted fundraiser using Little Caesars pizza kits, which despite their efforts fell well short of reaching the minimum 100 orders required. With year-end trips happening, the Council decided to take a pass on further efforts for this, but will have to look closely at fundraising for next year. Instead they will concentrate on promoting the Bike Rodeo scheduled at the school for Saturday June 11th. Each student has been asked to sell some raffle tickets for the host of prizes that will be drawn for after the rodeo.



The Council also received a communication from the DSNB, via Ministry Of Education, that sets out a year's worth of agenda items that a typical Council can undertake. As they looked forward, members also spoke about the need to recruit new folks for next year's Council – especially as several members' children will be graduating in June. The next Council meeting will be called after the Open House in September.

Green Scene at Vanier

The natural area planting around the back of our school by the Primary play area has taken full advantage of the generous spring rains and is bursting with interesting plants and critters. You may recall this area donated to us by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and with the help of student volunteers we did a planting there last spring. Equally interesting is the 'wet patch' by the Douglas Park pathway that this spring is full of rushes and other semi-aquatic plant life, all courtesy of our very soggy spring weather.



Inside the building Round Two of our recycling contest continues. The tally boards in the main hallway indicate that once again Miss Sims is doing very well, but it is Mrs. Walpole who is currently in the lead by one point. With two collections remaining, we will see who will prevail! Our grade 5/6 class enjoyed their trip in May to the Niagara Recycling facility in Niagara Falls which was their prize for having the most km walked on the April 8th Walk to School Day.

Bike Rodeo Saturday June 11th

To help promote safe biking to and from school, our School Travel Plan folks have planned a bike rodeo for Saturday June 11th right here at the school. We will have our police liaison officer, the F.E. Fire Department fire safety trailer, a bike inspection and a bicycle skills safety course – where prizes are available. Our students have been busy selling raffle tickets for the many prizes we will give away, including one boys & one girls bike, several bike helmets, a Coke fridge, two Coke watches and other additional prizes that may yet come into us. The money raised will go towards improving our playground equipment and perhaps even some new bike racks. We'll be here rain or shine, so we hope to see you!

Walk to School Day – Friday June 17th

To wrap up our year as a continuing School Travel Plan pilot we are holding another Walk to School Day on Friday June 17th. As we did in April, we are challenging all our students to take a pass on a ride and instead walk to school or bike that day. With the sunny spring weather our students can enjoy their trip to school in company of their friends and family – and perhaps get some fresh air & exercise at the same time. Typically on those days we see about half of our school population taking part, and by totaling the numbers of kilometers we don't drive, we can reduce air pollution in the air we all breathe by some 70 to 80 kilograms – one kg for every 4 km walked.

To compete for the prizes offered we ask students to 'register' beforehand. This time around there will be prizes for the class that walks the most km and the largest friends or family group that walks in together as a 'walking school bus'. If you need to calculate your distance, the big map in the main hallway is there to help you out. It should be another great day to Walk to School.

School Travel Plan

Our year-long efforts to observe, review and improve the 'walkability' of the ways our children get to school will come to an end this spring. Over the past fourteen months our small committee has tried to promote and encourage as many of our students and their parents on the benefits of walking rather than being driven to school. In our efforts to promote safety, exercise and community we have surveyed our students & parents held walk to school days, monitored traffic patterns, updated our Kiss & Ride area and held a Bike Rodeo. Now that we are at the end of our plan it is time to find out how much has changed through another survey. Each child will do another 'hands-up' survey in their classroom, but we are asking our parents to complete a pencil & paper survey that we will be sending home. The information from those will give us a better idea of the success of our programs. To encourage participation we will be offering prizes – one gift card worth \$25.00 and one gift card worth \$50.00 for all surveys returned to us by Thursday, June 23rd. The winners will be drawn from those submitted and awarded at our June Celebration Assembly.

Sports & Intramurals

Track & Field Day at General Vanier was held on Fri. May 13th during one of those rare moments where there was no rain this spring. It was a rather warm day but by the end of it some 50 of our students had earned the right to represent our school at the Area One Regional at Pride Field in Ridgeway on Tues. May 24th. While the weather there was more typical of our soggy spring, three of our students: Ty V., Tyler P,



and Alyssa G. finished high enough to go on to the All-DSBN Track & Field at the Niagara Olympic Club in St. Catharines on Mon. June 13th [rain date next day]. We wish them success. Our thanks go out to Mr. Badger and his legion of high school & former student assistants, without which track & field at our small school would be hardly possible.

The last sporting event planned for the season will be a cross-graded Play Day to be held on Tues. June 28th – weather permitting of course [rain rain go away!].

 **Important Dates**
2011/12

September 6: 1st Day of School
September 23: Early Release Day
October 5: World Teachers' Day
October 7: PA Day
October 10: Thanksgiving Day
November 11: Remembrance Day
December 26 - January 6:
Winter Holiday Break
January 20: PA Day
February 2: Kindergarten Open House 4-6
February 20: Family Day
March 9-16: March Break
April 6: Good Friday
April 9: Easter Monday
May 18: PA Day
May 21: Victoria Day
June 8: PA Day
June 28: Last Day of School

 www.dsbn.org

S.O.S. SAVE OUR SUBSCRIPTIONS

This coming fall our school will be providing the opportunity to renew and/or purchase new magazine subscriptions through the QSP Family Reading Fundraising Program. Please ignore any notices from the publishers asking you to renew now and instead, support our school's fundraising efforts in the fall. Please share this message with other family and friends who order through our program. As always, you will receive the best price while our school retains a substantial portion as profit (approx. 40%). Thank you for your continued support!

A quote from Nathan P-W who said, "Reading chapter books is like having TV in your head, this is cool!"

Those 'ah ha' moments come to many students in many ways indeed.

PLANNING TODAY TO ENERGIZE EDUCATION TOMORROW

During the 2009/10 school year, the DSBN engaged in a system-wide review of our school buildings which enabled trustees to gain an overview of how our facilities are being used, and to identify potential areas for growth and revitalization in the future.

The majority of school boards throughout Ontario are facing the challenge of declining enrolment because of changing demographics. Parents are having fewer children later in life, which reduces the number of students starting Kindergarten each year.

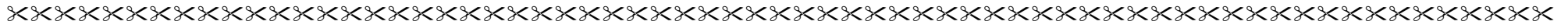
One way school boards can address the issues of declining enrolment and aging facilities is through accommodation reviews. Through this process, education can be rejuvenated by building some new schools, consolidating some schools, renovating some schools and closing some schools.

At their most recent meeting, Trustees passed a Facilities Planning report which examines how to provide optimal learning spaces for students by initiating three phases of accommodation reviews beginning in September, 2011. Phase one accommodation reviews will undertake an in-depth study of central and south St. Catharines and Thorold secondary schools as well as elementary schools in Fort Erie.

Over the coming months, Board staff will begin to assemble an Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) for the two reviews. Each committee will undertake an in-depth study of the school planning areas and provide recommendations that will help guide Trustees in their decision making. Each ARC will include a business community member and/or a municipal representative, parents, a trustee, and DSBN staff. All ARC meetings will be open to the public, and the public will also have an opportunity to provide feedback during specially scheduled public meetings.

Moving forward, our goal is to continue serving students with excellent programs. The accommodation review process will ensure that funding is spent on enriching the educational opportunities for students

The full report, along with information about accommodation reviews is available at: www.dsbn.org/arc



June Newsletter Draw

My child(ren) _____ brought home this newsletter
and I have read it.

Signature of Parent/Guardian



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>June 2011</h1>						
			1 Gr. 6 EQAO	2 Safari Niagara trip for primary students	3 St. John's trip for 4/5 & 5/6 classes	4
5	6 Gr. 3 EQAO	7 Gr. 3 EQAO	8 Gr. 3 EQAO	9 Gr. 3 EQAO Jump Rope – 1:35 pm	10 P.A. Day	11 BIKE RODEO 11:00 – 2:00 pm 
12	13 DSBN Track & Field meet	14 Joseph trip – 7/8 class	15 7/8 Brock trip	16 7/8 Brock trip	17 7/8 Brock trip	18
19	20 St. John's trip – Gr. 2 & 3/4 classes	21	22	23 SK Graduation – 9:30 am	24 4/5 & 5/6 trip to Niagara Falls Primary trip to Marineland	25
26	27 Gr. 8 Graduation - 6:00 pm Term 2 Report Cards go home	28 Play Day	29 Celebration Assembly – 9:00 am Last Day of School	30 P.A. Day		