

NOVEMBER 2011
GR. 2 --- MRS. VANDE KRAATS

Dear Parents,

November is here and it is time for another newsletter to let you know what is going on in our classroom this month.

Halloween Candy: Just a quick reminder that we are trying to be a nut free school and that we do have students in our building with severe allergies. Therefore it is important that you check your child's lunch, along with the Halloween candy they have gotten recently for nut contents. I know that Aero, Smarties, KitKat and Coffee Crisp bars are nut free, so these are appropriate to send. However, I am aware that any kind of M & M's are not nut free. Also, it is really important to your child's academic progress that they do not have an extreme amount of candy in their lunches or snacks. If too much candy is eaten, we as teachers, find that they are busier and harder to keep on task. This makes learning more difficult for them and their peers. I have suggested one piece in their lunch is enough. Please try to monitor their candy intake before and during school hours. This would be greatly appreciated.

Classroom Volunteers: I have contacted parents who wished to volunteer in our classroom and look forward to seeing you all soon. If you still want to volunteer, and haven't let me know, please feel free to drop me a line or write in the agenda when you would like to help out. I will be sending home monthly calendars for our volunteers so they know when they are welcome to come and help out. Our routines are established and the students are ready to be worked with during other class activities.

Agendas: Please ensure that you are checking your child's agenda nightly and signing that you have done so. Thank you to the parents who are already doing this. Emptying mail contents from his/her home folder should also be done nightly. Agendas are a major tool of communication between school and home and one that will be used throughout your child's elementary school years. I often use these agendas as a means to communicate difficulties I am seeing in your child's performance or important things that have happened that day that I feel you need to know about. Returning their home folder daily is also a classroom expectation. If you don't see my stamp or initials in your child's agenda, that means they have not handed it in at the beginning of the day to me and I may not have seen it at all that day. (This is a part of their report card mark.) This is **their** responsibility to bring it to and from school (that is what I say to them when they try to say mom or dad forgot it) and it is part of their everyday routine to bring it in to me in the mornings.

Operation Christmas Child: A note should have come home to your child about Operation Christmas Child and that our class is going to participate in giving a less fortunate child a happier Christmas. If you have not received this note please let me know as it explains in more detail the program. **I myself am asking that instead of your child bringing me a gift in for Christmas, before the holidays, that you donate to this cause instead. As a teacher we get lots of gifts and I feel that I would rather you spend your money on someone who isn't as fortunate as I am.** This is totally up to you, however this would be my preference. We have already received 4 filled boxes, packed by individual families, from our class. Remember we are packing one or more as a class so if you would like to send in a little item to contribute to that box that would also be greatly appreciated. **November 11th** is the cut off date for donations. Thank you to those who have already contributed.

Book Orders: November's Scholastic Book orders have just gone home and December's will follow quickly after that so that they can be here in time for Christmas. These orders would be great gifts of reading for you child to have at Christmas. Every order, gives the class bonus coupons which allows me to add to our classroom library of books. If you would like your order kept as a surprise for your child please just put a note in with your order and I will keep them and contact you to arrange pick up outside of giving them to your child.

Report Cards/Parent Teacher Interviews: Progress reports go home on **Tuesday November 15th** and Parent Teacher Interview Night is **Thursday November 17th from 4-7 p.m.** Another note with specifics on how this night is going to be scheduled will be coming home soon; however when looking at the numbers in the class, and if everyone wants to come in, it looks like everyone in this class will have a 10 minute interview time slot. This is not a lot of time, and we have to stay on schedule as much as possible, so I ask that you come to this interview with any questions or concerns that you have already in your mind. I will start my interviews with your questions or concerns and then add anything I feel is specific to your child's needs. This is the only reporting period where there are times set aside for these interviews. The following two report cards are on a need to see basis. I am asking, if it is possible and fits your schedule, that I can see all of you during these assigned times. Some of you may not have any concerns about the report (as a lot of the marks you will already know due to the evaluation portfolios being sent home at the end of each month), however I feel it is important that we touch base early on in the year, even if it is just to put a face to a name. This would be greatly appreciated.

Curriculum Coverage: In **Math** our focus has turned to Number Sense and Numeration and a separate note will be going home discussing the expectations of this unit. In **Science** we have moved our focus to "Properties of Liquids and Solids" (the expectations of this unit were laid out in October's newsletter). In **Language** the students will continue to do more independent writing focusing on proper sentence writing, simple paragraphs and the text form "recount". This month they will be receiving take home books to read with you at the level they are currently reading at. Please remember when reading with your child that they should be making it sound like talk (fluent) when reading (reread if necessary), looking at the pictures and beginning sounds for clues to an unknown word, instead of instantly trying to sound it out. Comprehension is also important when they are reading (being able to answer questions about what they read, retell what they read and connect parts of the story to themselves or other texts they have read). Your feedback on their reading at home is appreciated in the duotang that will accompany their take home books. Specifics on an incentive program, that I run in my classroom and with my Reading Success Group, that will accompany their take home reading program will also be explained at a later date. Weekly word work will be sent home next week to complete for homework. The expectations of what they are expected to do is on a white sheet of paper in the front of the book. The students have also practised how to do this work for the last 3 weeks in class so they should be able to do this independently at home.

Things You Can Do To Help: Please read with and/or to your child nightly. Word Wall list words should be practised during each week in order for the students to use them accurately in their everyday writing activities. Counting by 1's, 10's and 100's to at least 200, or if you would like beyond, will assist in our Number Sense unit in Math. Lastly, give lots of praise to your child for the effort they put forth when doing any of these activities. If you have any concerns about any areas that are covered please drop me a note in the agenda or drop me an email (Susan.Vandekraats@dsbn.edu.on.ca). Thank you for your support in these areas!!

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