



WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!



We can make a Difference

September 9, 2011

Welcome back to Maple Grove for the 2011/2012 School Year! Hopefully you have had a relaxing summer. It is my privilege to serve as your Vice-Principal this year and I am looking forward to getting to know each of you.

Returning to our staff this year is Sarah Nyman teaching K/1/2. Jerome Black will teach 3/4/5, Denise Blaney will teach Health/Science/Social Studies and we welcome Tonia Ventresca teaching French. Mrs. Lianne Smith is our Secretary and Mr. Lorne Gretsinger is the principal. Special thanks to Katherine Fraser, our Caretaker, who worked to get the school looking so good for our return. I will be teaching Phys-Ed for both classes at Maple Grove.

Our school day begins at 8:45am and classes dismiss at 3:00pm. Please do not drop off students before 8:30am as staff supervision starts at that time. Volunteers are welcomed in every area of the school. Educational research suggests that children whose parents, family members, or friends are visible in helping out in school help foster that sense of community pride, positive attitude toward academic success, and personal accomplishment. Your help with special programs for students is needed and greatly appreciated. Our school library is one area requiring regular help from volunteers to help keep the books and resources in children's hands. If you are available to assist, please contact the office to let us know.

I have heard many wonderful things about Maple Grove and the school community and I look forward to working with students, teachers and parents to continue the tradition of working together to achieve success. Please contact me if you have any questions, concerns, suggestions or ideas to support our students, I would be happy to speak with you.

Sincerely,
Mr. James Willms

Contents of the Student Package (Envelope) you received today:

- ✓ Verification Forms
- ✓ Hot Lunch Schedule
- ✓ Lunch Order forms
- ✓ Photo Day form
- ✓ Self Nomination form for School Council
- ✓ Volunteer Survey
- ✓ Insurance Brochure
- ✓ Bike Voucher for Beamsville Fair

Reminder....
Photo Day is
next
Thursday,
September 15th!



Reminder: Everyone is welcome to attend our Annual Autumn Gathering here at Maple Grove P.S. Wednesday, September 21st at 6:30 p.m. Come share your ideas and thoughts.

FROM THE OFFICE... did you know?



Absences and Lates/Calls Home/Emergency Contacts

The secretary's primary responsibility in the morning is to confirm that all students have arrived to school safely.

If your child is marked absent, my responsibility is to confirm the student's absence. This is done by calling the contacts we have in our database which are provided by you on the Verification form (enclosed in the envelope you received today). Calls are made in sequence/priority that you have listed them in.

The protocol is to call all numbers for each contact until we are able to reach a parent or guardian and confirm/report the absence. The intent is not to harass or inconvenience anyone on your contact list but to ensure the security of your children.

In order to avoid any inconveniences, please call in your child's absence or late arrival by 8:45 a.m. Our answering machine is available 24/7. You are welcome to leave a message anytime!

Instructional class starts at **8:45 a.m.** and the attendance is taken at that time. The secretary must confirm all absences with parents by 9:15 a.m.

If your child is late, they are required to come up to the office prior to going to their class to receive a late slip and to ensure I mark them present and avoid unnecessary calls home.

Verification Forms:

These are the forms I mentioned above that list all your Emergency Contacts. Please ensure that your contacts are updated and are in the appropriate order. If your child is ill or absent the calls are made in which you have listed the priorities. Please ensure all phone numbers are correct and up to date.

Other fields on these forms that is important to review & update:

- **Parent e-mail addresses**
email reminders are often sent for things such as class trips, shared lunch/snack, upcoming events etc... If you would like to get our e-mails please ensure we have the correct address.

- **Backside of the Verification Form**

It is important you complete the back of the Verification form identified as "Freedom of Information" and sign and date the form.

Maple Grove's website is:

<http://maplegrove.dsbm.org>

If you or your child needs any information regarding dates, deadlines, newsletters, monthly calendars please refer to the website. Every form, newsletter and calendar is available in a PDF printable format under the "NEWSLETTER" menu. *If you do not want to print the colors within the communication piece, simply go into "properties" within your "Print dialogue box" and change the printing option to "grayscale".*

From Denise...

This year, I am very happy to be back, but instead of teaching kindergarten I will be teaching Science and Social Studies to the Grades 1 through 4 students. We will start the year off with a unit of Science first and follow later with Social Studies. As many of you are aware, music is my favourite subject, but what I am sure you don't know is that Science is my second favourite subject. Back in my high school years, I yearned to become a medical scientist. Obviously, I didn't follow that passion but I'm sure to have a lot of fun teaching your children to love science as much as I did. One of the features that I really like about Science is the Inquiry Method; asking questions and then finding out answers. To help you understand the Science program, I have selected a few paragraphs from the Ontario Curriculum that will explain what your child will be learning.

The Main Expectations and the Goals of the Science Program in all grades are to:

1. Relate science and technology to society and the environment
2. Develop the skills, strategies, and habits of mind required for scientific inquiry and technological problem solving
3. Understand the basic concepts of science and technology

Within each Unit, there are "Big Ideas" and Specific Expectations". Big Ideas are the broad, important understandings that students should retain long after they have forgotten many of the details of something that they have studied. In Grade 1/2 our first unit will be under the science strand "Understanding Earth and Space and Space Systems" with a focus on "Air and Water in the Environment". The Big Ideas of the Air and Water in the Environment Unit are:

Air and water are a major part of the environment.

Living things need air and water to survive.

Changes to air and water affect living things and the environment.

Our actions affect the quality of air and water, and its ability to sustain life.

In Grade 3/4 our first unit will be under the science strand "Understanding Life Systems" with a focus on "Growth and Changes in Plants & Habitats and Communities".

The Big Ideas of the Growth and Changes in Plants & Habitats and Communities Unit are:

Plants are the primary source of food for humans.

Humans need to protect plants and their habitats.

Plants and animals are interdependent and are adapted to meet their needs from the resources available in their particular habitats.

Changes to habitats (whether caused by natural or human means) can affect plants and animals and the relationships between them.

Society relies on plants and animals.

So, how can you help your child with Science? Since your child will be working on this unit 7 out of every 10 days, the topic should always be fresh on their minds. Ask your child about what they are working on at school and discuss how it relates to your lives at home. Try some "I wonder" questions... they always lead to very interesting conversations.

I am also looking for: a) donations of house plants to help create a more natural environment in the classroom and b) the loan of fish bowls or small fish tanks for water habitats and for making a closed ecosystem.

-Denise-


NEWS FROM THE K/1/2 CLASS...

Welcome back to another school year! Our first week has gone very well. We are all getting used to our classroom routines, making friends, and learning a lot! I'm excited to have parent volunteers to lead reading/spelling groups again this year. At this point, I am hoping to conduct **reading groups from about 9:00 - 10:15 am on Tuesday mornings**. I have 2 volunteers who are able to help out so far. If you are available to volunteer during this time each and every Tuesday, please let me know. It would involve you taking a small group of children to a quiet area to read a book together and then complete an already prepared activity together that relates to the story.



Spelling group leaders are parents who are able to come in and help small groups of children work with their word wall words each week. In the past they have helped the children complete fun, motivational activities such as word wall concentration games, cut and paste, typing words on a keyboard, etc. I do not yet have a set time for spelling groups...but am hoping to schedule them first thing Wednesday or Thursday mornings. Please let me know if you are available. Spelling and Reading groups will likely start near the end of September. Even if you are unable to commit to a specific day each week to volunteer, you are more than welcome to come in when you are available! Also, if you have a special skill to share (e.g., art, baking, technology, etc) please let me know!



 Our class will have **agendas** again this year. Please help your child to demonstrate responsibility by returning them to school each day. If your child has homework or an important message about an upcoming school event, we will keep track of it in the agenda. If you need to send me a note, please jot it down in the agenda or put it in the clear, front pocket. If there is **Nothing To Report**, your child will write **NTR** under the date. Please sign/initial the agenda every night to show that you've read it, and I will put a date stamp on it to show that I've seen it. Thanks in advance for your help!

In our classroom, we have a behavioural management system called "**Golden Time**". Please see the attached letter explaining Golden Time. Please do not send toys to school on any other day besides Fridays. This helps to make Golden Time extra special and encourages cooperation and imaginative play during recesses and lunches throughout the rest of the week.

Here's to a wonderful year!

Have a lovely day,
-Sarah-

News From the Basement

Welcome to another school year! I hope that everyone has had a good summer break and is ready for the mad, mad world of learning! We've been spending the first few days getting some routines down and just starting to get the ball rolling but so far we're off to a good start. There are lots of kids in the room again this year, so one of our big goals will be to develop the attentive listening skills needed for us all to work together and learn together.



In these first few weeks, we'll be sprinkling the schedule with lots of activities to help me get to know the kids and their learning styles. I'm hoping to read with each of the new-to-the-class students to help me set up our reading groups and such. In the meantime, lots will be happening, of course. In Language, we're going to spend a little time reading, writing, and thinking about what it's like to be a kid in 2011 with a newly dusted-off-and-spruced-up version of *What it Means to Be Me*. Expect kids to come home now and then with questions about their early days on the planet (you know, back when they were *young*). In Mathematics, we're going to start off the year working with numbers and patterns as we read, write, compare, and manipulate them. Here's a little experiment you can do at home while setting the table or in the car while driving to school: ask your whippet very simple questions like, "What's one more than ...?", "What's one less than ...?", "What's two more than ...?" etc. Pay attention to how quickly they respond or whether they actually have to count it. You might be surprised! Practising simple addition and subtraction ($+/- 1$, $+/- 2$, $+/- 5$, and $+/- 10$ in particular) can make a big difference down the road. For older students, work adding and subtracting those small amounts to large numbers. Set a family goal and work to meet it.



I have the pleasure of teaching the grade fives for Science this year, and our first unit is about animal habitats, communities, and food chains! The students chose a focus on marine life and sea creatures (which will become more apparent later in our study), so our unit title is *Darling it's Better Down Where it's Wetter*, with thanks to Sebastian the crab.



As I get things organized for the year, I'd like to put out an invitation to parents who would consider volunteering in the classroom. Being a volunteer helps everyone at Maple Grove get individualised attention and builds our sense of community. Knowing that someone *else's* mom or dad cares how a student is doing can make a big difference. As usual, I would love some volunteers to lead small reading groups, but I'd also love a few who are able to stay at least until break each day to assist with math. As I'm sure you can imagine, this is one of the most challenging areas with three grades in the class, and some small-group or one-on-one time can make an enormous difference in the types of activities, lessons, and games that we can play to consolidate our learning. If you're a bit scared about math, don't be! It's not nearly as bad as you may think. It's actually a load of fun. If you are able and willing to volunteer one morning a week, please let me know so I can put you to good use.

Have a fantastic start to the year!

Jerome



Terry Fox Run

We'll be holding our annual Terry Fox Run on the morning of Friday, September 23rd (the Early Release Day). This way the kindergartens will also be able to participate. As is my tradition, I (Jerome) will sponsor each student a nickel per lap, so the more the kids run, the more I will donate. Watch for more information, including pledge forms, to come home early next week after our "Kick Off" at assembly. As always, parents are welcome to join us on Run Day!



Nous te souhaitons la bienvenue Mlle. Ventresca!!!

Dear Parents,



I am excited to be at Maple Grove and teaching the 3/4/5 French. There are some familiar faces in Jerome's room and some new ones. Last year my grade 4 class, as well as Jerome's class, worked with Monica Dufault on the circus act and we were able to enjoy each others final productions. In the past I taught grade 6 at Vineland and had the pleasure of teaching some Maple Grove graduates. It is a pleasure to teach some siblings of those students here at Maple Grove since I am now teaching grade 4 at Vineland.

As far as the French curriculum and reporting, the Grade 3 students will join most French classes however a mark will not appear on the report card. Grade 4 students are only given an oral French mark first term but are graded on reading and writing in Term 2. All strands of French (reading, writing, and oral) will be reported on for Grade 5 both terms. This week our focus is learning the alphabet so we can spell new vocabulary in French. Next week we will learn the days of the week, months of the year and numbers 1-31 in order to be able to say the date daily.

I met and spoke to some parents Tuesday after school and look forward to meeting others. I will be at the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, September 21st, so you can put a face to a name.

-Tonia Ventresca-

A word from Maple Grove's Council Chair...

Welcome back to school all who are returning to The Grove and a special welcome to our new family joining us, Phil and Kristel Niemi. If your little one has not told you already, we have Ben Niemi a new student to Grade 4 and Jonny Niemi has joined the Grade 1's!! If you notice a new face around, please introduce yourself.

I am anticipating another wonderful year at Maple Grove, with 2 of my 4 children attending the school this year. My two eldest, Sydney and Sophie are both graduates of Maple Grove. I am looking forward to all of our kids moving on to the next level of learning, volunteering as much as possible, shared lunches and of course Jerome's much anticipated 2012 Musical.

I hope to see you all at the Annual Autumn Gathering on Wednesday, September 21, at 6:30pm, it is a great time to meet other families, ask questions, and learn all about what makes the Grove the special place that it is.

The School Council and staff are looking forward to another eventful year. What role would you like to take in your school? Do you have time or a talent to offer?

The first opportunity to offer your time is the Vineland Artfest parking duty. We have a time slot of Monday, October 10, 9:15a.m.-1:15pm. Please let me know, if you haven't already, that you are available.

If you need anything or have any questions, please feel free to call me 905-309-1129.

Tracy Mumford
School Council Chair



(Complete and bring in ballot if you are interested in attending this year's Fall work day...)

Maple Grove's Fall Work Day

If you are interested and are available in volunteering on our Work Day Saturday, October 1st please submit this tear away form to the office.

I will be available to attend:

Name: _____ **Parent of:** _____

School-Based Immunization Clinics

Did you know that every year in Canada, 1,400 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and more than 400 will die from it?

Almost all cervical cancers are caused by a Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection. The HPV vaccine is an important medical advancement that makes cervical cancer a preventable disease.

Once again this year, the HPV vaccine called Gardasil® will be offered free to **all female Grade 8 students** through Niagara Region Public Health's school-based immunization clinics. In addition, the Hepatitis B vaccine and the Meningococcal vaccine called Menactra® will be offered free to **all Grade 7 students**.

Parent/student information packages will be coming home with your child in September. Clinic dates and times will be announced through your child's school.

For more information, speak to your school nurse or call the Vaccine Preventable Disease Program at 905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074 ext. 7425.

