
COOK COUGARS**NEWSLETTER**November 1st, 2016Issue #3

MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

November certainly arrived quickly! Fall has officially arrived. The beautiful colored leaves are almost off the trees and the rainy days are here!

November is the month that teachers write report cards. Teachers do many informal and formal assessments as they teach students. They also encourage students to assess their own learning. The most important kind of assessment for student learning is what educators call 'Assessment for Learning'. This is feedback that teachers give students as they are working. It guides student thinking and provides insights for improvement. This 'Assessment for Learning' is done every day in classrooms as students work and interact. Some teachers this year at Cook are sharing students' learning through e-portfolios on line. This is another way for you to get a "glimpse" into the classroom and see all the exciting things that your child is learning at school.

When teachers talk about 'Assessment of Learning' they refer to the kind of assessment done at the end of a unit of study or at the end of a term. This kind of information is helpful to parents and to teachers but is less helpful for students as they learn. It is not immediate enough for students and the suggestions can't be easily applied to the new work they are doing.

Report card time is a great time to set new personal learning goals. Parents may want to talk to their children about what they are good at in school and what they want to get better at in school. Setting small goals is a great routine for children to get into when they are young. It helps them become life-long learners!

CONFERENCES A GREAT SUCCESS

The Parent Teacher conferences earlier in October were very well attended. Teachers truly appreciated the time they got to spend with each family, learning more about their students and asking many questions.

At Cook School we want parents and teachers to work together to support children's learning. When students know that home and school communicate, they feel safer and are more focused on their work.

Thank you to all the parents who took time out of their busy days to attend their meeting!

REPORT CARD DATE CHANGE!

We have changed the date that report cards will be sent home. There is a new report card template being used by teachers this year that has just been released by the Ministry of Education. We will be sending reports out one week later – on **Thursday, December 15th**.

HALLOWEEN ASSEMBLY

We had an entertaining Halloween Assembly. We started the assembly with a Costume Parade by the primary students. We also watched performances by Divisions 14, 16, 5 and 6 who performed a song and a dance with Ms. Quan. There was a scary Haunted House in the Multi-purpose room that was put together by the Leadership students and staff. Thank you so much to those staff and students for planning such a thrilling experience!

COOK'S CANDY CHALLENGE

Cook Elementary School along with the McMath Secondary Leadership students are challenging the 'trick or treaters' at both schools to donate a portion of their candy to charity. We will collect the donated candy at the school the week following Halloween (November 1 – 7).



REMEMBRANCE DAY ASSEMBLY

Parents are invited to attend our Remembrance Day ceremony on **Thursday, November 10th at 10:40am**. The program will commence at 10:40 a.m. and will be approximately 50 minutes long. Again this year, the planning committee has organized a *Parade of Nations* highlighting the many different countries of the world that our students were born in. Several classes will be performing during the assembly.

For this assembly students who are part of Brownies, Cubs, Sparks, Beavers, Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, Cadets and St. John's Ambulance are encouraged to wear their uniforms on this day.

All students will receive a poppy on November 10th. We ask for a small donation for the poppy. All funds go to the Poppy Fund that provides support to the veterans of wars.

The assembly we have each November is solemn and serious. Students are asked not to clap at the presentations they watch. They are expected to sit quietly and listen carefully. Parents are welcome to attend this assembly. Friday, November 11 is the Remembrance Day holiday in Canada. All schools will be closed on that day.

TEACHER CANDIDATES AT COOK

Starting this week, we will have four Teacher Candidates at our school for their two-week practicum. The Teacher Candidates are teamed with experienced teachers. Our Teacher Candidates are Ms. Charlton who will be with Ms. Rawlick, Ms. Brar who will be with Ms. Kay, Ms. Smith who will be with Ms. Rollo and Ms. Driscoll who will be with Ms. Neudorf. The Teacher Candidates are completing their teacher education program at the University of British Columbia. Once they finish their two-week practicum, they go back to the university for courses and will return to us in the spring for a much longer practicum experience. They have been visiting for a few weeks and we are enjoying getting to know them.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION:

This year Kindergarten Registration will begin on November 1st, 2016. For children and parents with Canadian Birth Certificates or Citizenship Cards or Canadian Passports, registration can happen at the catchment school November 1st –

30th. For children and parents who are NOT Canadian citizens, parents must register at Central Registration at the School Board Office starting on November 1st.

The earlier date will allow parents to register without rushing to fill in transfer forms. Transfer forms will be accepted AFTER the winter break, starting on January 9th until February 10th, 2017. As always, the District Programs Options (French Immersion and Montessori) are decided through a draw process and so applications are not time sensitive but must be submitted by January 11th, 2017

For more information, please check our district website www.sd38.bc.ca

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHTS

The district will hold three different Parent Information Nights this year:

Nov 23rd Early French Immersion
Montessori Kindergarten
@ General Currie Elementary

Nov 24th Kindergarten Students with
Special Needs
@ Cook Elementary

January 11th Late French Immersion
@ Whiteside Elementary

Further information regarding start times can be found on the district website and on the Parent Board in our school.

VOLLEYBALL TEAM IN ACTION

We have a large and enthusiastic grade 6 & 7 Volleyball team this year. They have been practicing and playing games after school games to get ready for the MacNeill Volleyball Tournament. This exciting tournament will be on Wednesday, November 16th.



SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR COMING

Mr. Rosell will be hosting the Scholastic Book fair in the library the week of November 28th. This will be a great time to pick up holiday gifts for the children! More information will be coming home closer to the date.

BREAKFAST FOR LEARNING



Our school is proudly supported by Breakfast for Learning, which provides funding towards our breakfast programs so we can offer our students a healthy start to their day.

Breakfast for Learning, founded in 1992, aims to educate and empower communities to start and sustain child nutrition programs to enhance learning and healthy development of Canadian children and youth.

As the country's first national charity dedicated to child nutrition programs, Breakfast for Learning provides program funds, nutrition education resources and research to promote and demonstrate the vital link between child nutrition and learning.

For more information and additional resources, visit www.breakfastforlearning.ca

SELF-REGULATION and MINDFULNESS AT COOK

Self-Regulation and Mindfulness are important aspects of Social Emotional Learning, which is one of our school goals. This past term we have been introducing the concept of "mindfulness" with the students and using some lessons from the MindUp program. MindUp is a research-based curriculum featuring 15 lessons that use the latest information about the brain to dramatically improve behavior and learning for all students. Each lesson offers easy strategies for helping students focus their attention, improve their self-regulation skills, build resilience to stress, and develop a positive mindset in both school and life. Cook staff received

two days of professional development last year to learn about the MindUp program and will be using this curriculum throughout the year. We have just introduced "mindful breathing" as a way to calm our bodies and minds for learning. If you have any questions about the MindUp program please ask your child's teacher for more information.

PAC NEWS

Movie Night: We will be hosting a Cook "Movie Night" on Thursday, November 10th. Using PAC funds, we have purchased a video license to allow us to watch movies for pleasure (rather than educational purposes). The movie being shown will be the **BFG** (Big, Friendly, Giant). The video license allows us to rent a 'pre-release' movie to watch. This is a movie that is not at theatres but hasn't come out on DVD yet. Please watch for a notice coming home soon!

Fundraising: The PAC will be organizing an M&M Meats Fundraiser for later in November. More information to come.

Pizza Days are also fundraisers for our school. Thank you to all families who participate. The children enjoy the treat and our PAC raises money for school equipment and activities such as dance presentations and playground equipment! Thank you PAC!

Our next PAC meeting will be on Tuesday, December 6th at 8:45. All parents are welcome!

EASY TIPS FOR LIMITING KIDS' COMPUTER, TV, GAME, AND MOVIE TIME.

As the days get shorter and children spend more time inside than outside, it's a good opportunity for parents to think about how much screen time they want their children to experience. The article below gives parents hints about how to set limits for their children at any age. It was taken off the Common Sense Media website (URL below).

In many homes, getting kids to turn off their cell phones, shut down the video games, or log off of Facebook can incite a revolt. And if your kids say they *need* to be online for schoolwork, you may not know when the research stops and idle activity begins.

It may seem counterintuitive, but getting involved with your kids' media is the first step to cutting the cord. Showing an interest, knowing what they're doing -- even playing along with them -- makes it easier to know how much is too much.

Every family will have different amounts of time that they think is "enough." What's important is giving it some thought, creating age-appropriate limits (with built-in flexibility for special circumstances), making media choices you're comfortable with, and modeling responsible screen limits for your kids.

Preschoolers. There are lots of great TV shows, apps, games, and websites geared for this age. But too much time spent in front of a screen interferes with the activities that are essential for growing brains and bodies.

* **Go for quality and age-appropriateness.** Not everything for preschoolers needs to be a so-called "brain-builder," but there's a difference between mindless and *mindful* entertainment. Our learning ratings can steer you toward titles that help preschoolers work on developmental skills like sharing, cooperation, and emotional intelligence.

* **Sit with them, and enjoy the discovery process.** There will always be moments when you need to rely on the TV or an app to distract your preschooler while you get something done. But as much as you can, enjoy media together. Little hands and developing brains really benefit from your company (and guidance!).

* **Begin setting limits when kids are little.** Habits get ingrained early, so make sure you establish clear screen-time rules when your kids are young. For games, apps, and websites, you may need to set a timer. For TV, just say "one show."

Elementary and Middle Schoolers. At this age, kids love TV shows, games, movies, and online videos. They begin to explore more and hear about new shows and games from friends. Because they can access these things by themselves, it's crucial to continue to supervise their activities and help them stick to your rules.

* **Start with an endpoint.** Use whatever tools you have -- your DVR, Netflix, OnDemand -- to pre-record shows, cue them up, or plan ahead to watch at a specific time. That way, one show won't flow into the other, and you can avoid commercials. If your kids are into YouTube, search for age-appropriate videos, and add them to a playlist to watch later. Because most games don't have built-in endings (and are, in fact, designed to make kids play as long as possible), set a timer or some other cue that says "time to stop."

* **Help them balance their day.** Kids this age need guidance from you on a daily plan that includes a little bit of time for everything. And staying involved works: Kids whose parents make an effort to limit media use spend less time with media than their peers do, according to a 2010 Kaiser Family Foundation study.

* **Practice what you preach.** It's tempting to keep reaching for your phone to check email, texts, Facebook, or the news. But your kids will be the first to call you out for not "walking the talk." Plus, they'll pick up habits from you. Model the media behavior that you want your kids to emulate.

High Schoolers. You'll have more success with teens if you explain the reasons why too much screen time is harmful. For example, too much exposure to violent video games raises aggression and lowers empathy. Your kids may actually be able to see evidence of this in their peers who spend too much time playing games. Even Facebook is a habit that some teens wish they could break.

* **Help them make quality choices.** You still have a say in what they see, hear, and play. Put in your two cents about the importance of quality shows, games, and movies.

* **Crack down on multitasking.** High school kids who've discovered texting, IM, Facebook, and music tend to do them all at once -- especially when they're supposed to be doing mundane tasks like homework. But a University of Michigan study found that humans are terrible multitaskers and that the practice actually reduces the ability to concentrate and focus.

* **Find ways to say "yes."** Look for movies they *can* watch. Find games you're OK with. If your teens ask to see something you don't approve of, help them find alternatives.

Do you enforce any screen-time limits at home? What are your house rules?

This article is taken from a website called 'Common Sense Media' (<http://www.commonsensemedia.org/>) and it is an excellent resource for parents.