HIGHVIEW PUBLIC SCHOOL

240 McCLELLAN WAY
AURORA, ONTARIO
L4G 6N9

905-727-6642

Principal:  Ms. Margaret Roberts
Vice-Principal:  Ms. Theresa Martin
Website:  www.highview.ps.yrdsb.edu.on.ca

York Region District School Board
Community Education Centre - Central

Superintendent:  Mr. Gordon Campbell
217 Centre Street East
Richmond Hill, Ontario
L4C 1B3
(905) 884-4477

Trustee:  Susan Plamondon
905-727-6967

Staff focused on
quality,
service,
teamwork!

Classrooms which are
dynamic,
inviting,
purposeful!

We unite in our purpose to inspire and prepare learners for life in our changing world community

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HIGHVIEW’S HISTORY

Our history is a fragile thing, too easily lost or forgotten. More than 150 years ago, Aurora was well-known as a farming community.

Highview Farm once stood where we now find a bustling school. Sharing the name of Highview, with its historic roots in the farming spirit, offers a rich heritage. In his remarks at the Official Opening Ceremony on May 4, 1994, Mr. Jennings, the previous owner of the Highview property, spoke of work ethics, cooperation, determination, and a strong sense of pride in achievement. The same fertile soil upon which Highview Public School is growing, will germinate the seeds of the joy of learning, the triumph of achievement, and the satisfaction of teamwork. As the Highview Public School community grows together, these seeds will produce the strands to weave traditions for present and future students. Together, the challenge to maximize learning opportunities for all members of the Highview Public School community will be eagerly accepted.

Ms. Margaret Roberts                  Ms. Theresa Martin
Principal                                            Vice-Principal
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JK/SK</td>
<td>Mrs. M. Van Nie</td>
<td>JK/SK</td>
<td>Mrs. E. Vyriotes</td>
<td>JK/SK (Alternate)</td>
<td>Mrs. Dubeau/Mrs. Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Mrs. M. Frazer</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Ms. M. Robar</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Mrs. B. VanHoogenuize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Ms. J. Anderson</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Mrs. S. Landsberg</td>
<td>Grade 2/3</td>
<td>Ms. S. Taylor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Mr. Boyle</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Mrs. Wright</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Mrs. R. Saxena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Mr. J. Anderson</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Mrs. C. Davidson</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Mrs. K. Mako</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Mrs. J. Sepkowski</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Mrs. J. Sepkowski</td>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Ms. K. Brizland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Mr. J. Keith</td>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Mrs. D. Jamieson</td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Mr. M. Biemiller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Mrs. D. Durno</td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>Mr. S. Porretta</td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Ms. K. Gabriel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Ms. S. Flohil</td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Ms. N. Newman</td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>Ms. Nagra/Mrs Shariff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Mrs. D. Croker</td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Mr. N. Desario</td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Ms. K. Lindberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Mr. R. Shaver</td>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>Mr. B. Payne</td>
<td>ISP</td>
<td>Mrs. D. Halinaty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF

1. Please do not enter the school parking lot if at all possible. The traffic flow and parking situation have increased substantially in the last few years. When picking up or dropping off your child, please use the west or east sidewalk of the parking lot as a drop-off area. The children can enter the playground by way of the sidewalks, thereby avoiding the busy parking lot. Private vehicles are not allowed in the parking lot between 8:10 to 8:25 am, and 3:00 to 3:15 pm.

2. PLEASE note that vehicles are not permitted in the bus loop AT ANY TIME. When picking up and dropping off students during the school hours, please stay on McClellan Way, so that students can walk safely through the parking lot.

3. PLEASE be vigilant about the crosswalk in the centre of the parking lot. Have your child cross here, as well as using the crossing guard on McClellan Way.

4. As our school population matures, more and more students are choosing to walk or ride to school. This is good exercise and lessens the vehicular danger at the school.

VEHICLE PARKING AT HIGHVIEW

There are presently 67 parking spaces on our site, 8 of which are for day care staff/parents. All available numbered spaces are assigned to school staff. Parents, itinerant staff and visitors are asked to park on side streets where allowed by the municipality, and to keep 60 cm away from residential driveways. The Town of Aurora does not allow parking on McClellan Way during school hours. Please do not park in a way that obstructs others or prevents staff cars from leaving.

A Parking Committee composed of parents, staff and Town of Aurora staff met in the spring of 2000 to discuss the safety of students on the school property and the increasing volume of parent traffic in the school vicinity. Many options were considered at the weekly meetings. The Town of Aurora conducted a traffic count, and the board’s consulting company (Cole Sherman) was requested to analyze the traffic situation at the school. The Town of Aurora requested that the police create a “Community Safety Zone” for McClellan Way, establishing stricter fines for speeding drivers and increased vigilance near the two schools. Events were held to encourage students to walk to school, and the Mayor participated in many of these.

After careful consideration, the committee recommended the prohibition of parent traffic on the school property during peak pedestrian times (i.e. 8:15 am to 8:30 am, 2:45 pm to 3:15 pm) in order to ensure the safety of students and parents walking on the property. The parking lot was re-painted to create 7 more spaces, allowing almost all the Highview staff to park on the property. A request was made to the board to add creation of an additional parking area to the capital budget, but this was not approved due to more pressing needs in other school buildings. In the event of requiring an additional parking spot, it is suggested that visitors use the residential streets (Chiswick Cres. and Tradewind Terrace) which are located directly across from our school.
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

For the safety of our students and staff, all VISITORS to Highview Public School are required to check in at the office upon their arrival. If you are volunteering, you can pick up your Highview Volunteer button at that time so that you will be easily recognized by both staff and students. Welcome tours for new parents and students are available upon request and are offered weekly in the month of May and June. Families from other towns and countries that are planning to attend our school may request a tour in July and August as well.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS

The school day begins at 8:25 a.m. and dismissal is at 3:05 p.m. If a student has incomplete school work, it will be completed at a time deemed appropriate by their teacher, possibly after school, or during recess.

The student timetables used at Highview are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Timetable</th>
<th>Junior / Intermediate Timetable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Period 1 8:35-10:30</td>
<td>Period 1 8:35-9:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recess 10:30-10:45</td>
<td>Period 2 9:25-10:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 2 10:45-11:20</td>
<td>Recess 10:15-10:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch 11:20-12:20</td>
<td>Period 3 10:30-11:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 3 12:20-1:45</td>
<td>Lunch 11:20-12:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recess 1:45-2:00</td>
<td>Period 4 12:20-1:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 4 2:00-3:05</td>
<td>Period 5 1:10-2:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recess 2:00-2:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Period 6 2:15-3:05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Library Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
**SCHOOL YEAR**


**SCHOOL HOLIDAYS**

The School Holidays will be as follows:

- **Thanksgiving Day**  Monday, October 14, 2002
- **Christmas Vacation** Monday, December 23 2002 to Friday, January 3, 2003 inclusive
- **Mid-Winter Break** Friday, March 7 to Friday, March 14 2003, inclusive
- **Good Friday** Friday, April 18, 2003
- **Easter Monday** Monday, April 21, 2003
- **Victoria Day** Monday, May 19, 2003

**PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY DAYS**

Dates for Professional Activity Days will be as follows:

- Friday, September 20, 2002
- Friday, November 29, 2002
- Friday, May 2, 2003
- Friday, June 27, 2003
ATTENDANCE

Class attendance is taken every morning (8:35 a.m.) and every afternoon (12:20 p.m.). If your child is not in school and is not accounted for by a note or phone call, the school will initiate:
   1) a call home to see if your child is there, and if not accounted for;
   2) a call to the parents at work, and if not accounted for;
   3) a call to the emergency number given, and if still not accounted for;
   4) a call to the York Regional Police. This call is a check, please do not regard it as an intrusion of your privacy.

SIX-DAY CYCLE

Highview operates on a six-day cycle system. This system ensures that each scheduled day is always intact and not interrupted by holidays and P.A. days, thereby allowing for the completion of the required hours of learning for the core subjects.

SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM AND STUDENT ABSENCE

We wish to ensure the safe arrival of all students, both in the morning and in the afternoon. With this in mind, we ask that parents notify us each and every day that your child is to be away, unless a prolonged absence (such as a family vacation) is anticipated. The school answering machine (727-6642) will be on to receive your message from 4 p.m. until the following morning. You will be contacted after attendance is taken if we have not heard from you.

While we encourage our pupils' regular attendance, children who are not well are best cared for at home. Highview does not have the facilities or staff to supervise children who are sick.

If your child becomes ill or injured at school, it is our policy to make a sick child as comfortable as possible while you are being contacted to determine your wishes. In a case where an injury appears to be serious, the Principal or Vice-Principal may take the child to a hospital, or an ambulance may be called. In all cases, we shall do our best to contact you or the emergency number you have indicated on the emergency form.
STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY IF ABSENT

Students are responsible for all lessons, tests and assignments missed during their absence for any reason, including extra-curricular activities. For prolonged periods of absence, a reasonable extension to a deadline may be granted at the teacher's discretion.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

Ongoing communication is essential to the welfare of your child. This may be in the form of communication books, notes and letters, phone calls or personal conferences. Formalized reporting occurs once each term. The formal report card usually corresponds to a P.A. Day used for interview purposes. If you have concerns regarding your child's progress, contact the teacher immediately. Teamwork between home and school will enhance your child's success. An explanation of the different sections in the report card can be found on page 29.

Reporting intervals are as follows:
TERM 1 - September to November
TERM 2 - December to March
TERM 3 - March to June

EMERGENCY FORMS

It is very important that the office has up-to-date information in the case of an emergency. Please ensure that the Emergency Information Form is promptly completed and returned. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the office of any changes as they occur.

MEDICATION

The York Region District School Board recognizes that some students in attendance at its elementary schools require oral medication on a regular basis or may require medication in an emergency situation. In order for employees of the Board to administer oral medication to a child, a parent/guardian must complete a release form that is available from the school office. The release form terminates on June 30th of each school year or when the prescription changes or expires. Non-prescription medication may NOT be administered at school without a doctor's written permission.
HEALTH CONCERNS

1) HEAD LICE
Head lice continues to be a recurring problem in school-aged children. When lice are found on a child, the parent/guardian will be contacted. We would ask that you check your child's head on a regular basis. Please remind your child not to share hats, combs, and bike helmets, etc. Children who have contacted lice may return to school once they have completed treatment and there are no visible nits. Students will be inspected by the office staff upon their return. When lice are found on a student, written notification will be sent home to all students in that class so that they too can be checked.

2) PINK EYE
This is an infection of the eye caused by bacteria. It is spread by direct contact with the discharge from the affected eyes to another person. The infection causes the eye to turn a pink to red colour, with yellow sticky discharge, that often causes the eyes to stick together in the morning. A person is contagious during the time the eyes are reddened. Once ALL redness and sticky discharge disappears, the student may return to school, though the full course of treatment from the doctor must be followed.

3) GENERAL ILLNESS:
Students should remain home if they are vomiting, experiencing diarrhea, running a fever, or have any contagious illnesses.

4) HEPATITIS B: Each year, Grade 7 students will receive a series of 3 Hepatitis B inoculations. Proper documentation will be provided prior to inoculation.

TRANSPORTATION

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES (STS)coordinates transportation services for both school boards. If you need to find out more about Student Transportation in York Region, please call the STS office at 905-713-3001 or 1-877-330-3001.

Board policy states that the following pupils do not have the right to transportation:
- Kindergarten to Grade 3: children who live within 1.2 km of the school, and
- Grade 4 to Grade 8: children who live within 1.6 km of the school.

BUS INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Every pupil is responsible to the Principal of the school for his/her conduct while traveling on the bus. Students must ride on the bus to which they have been assigned. In the event of misconduct, bus transportation privileges may be withdrawn by the Principal.
TRANSPORTATION CHANGES BY PUPILS

We remind children that it is extremely important that they go home by the same method and at the time their parents expect. If a teacher requests that a child remain later than usual, the teacher will notify the parent, usually ahead of time, and transportation will be arranged, if needed. Changes in transportation must be handled by sending a note to the office. Approval will be granted by the office pending space on the bus. If a student wishes to use the phone, they should have a quarter available to use the pay phone in the main hall. Our office phones are often busy and are unavailable for students use.

CANCELLATION OF BUSES DUE TO WEATHER

If the weather conditions are severe, there will be a radio announcement from the York Region District School Board given on CFRB 1010 AM, CFGM 1310 AM, CKEY 590 AM and CKAN 1480 AM. Reports are given after 7:00 a.m. that day.

Parents have the right and the obligation to make the decision to send children to school or to keep them at home when severe weather conditions are experienced. DO NOT let an announcement on the radio over-ride good judgment! A child's safety is more important than a day at school. If bus transportation is cancelled in the morning, the buses will not run in the afternoon. Parents who deliver a child to school will also be responsible for transportation home at the end of the day.

IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY that parents have a standing arrangement with a neighbor or other person so that every child will know where to go if he/she arrives home and finds nobody at home. There will be no early dismissals during severe weather. On an exceptionally stormy day, buses may leave slightly earlier in the afternoon in order to deliver students home on time.

LUNCH PROCEDURES

A letter is sent home in September, asking parents to indicate whether their child will stay at school or go home for lunch on a regular basis. Students are encouraged to go home for lunch when possible. Staying for lunch is a privilege (not a right). We expect good manners from all who stay for lunch. If a problem arises, parents will be contacted. If the problem persists, parents will be required to make alternate arrangements for their child at lunch.

Students in Grades 7 and 8 only may go to the plaza near the school on designated days only. These days will be outlined in September permission letter, and this privilege is based on good behaviour. The York Region District School Board's policy (#355.0) clearly states that the school has no responsibility for students who leave the school property without prior authorization.
LUNCH SUPERVISION

Students eat lunch in their classrooms or in the school lunchroom, and are supervised by a 'roving' team of school assistants supplemented by staff. The lunch hour is split into two parts, to enable half the school to be outside on the school yard at a time. This ensures plenty of space and ease of supervision for playtime activities.

To reduce the loss of lunch containers, all students will return to their lockers or hallway hooks to put their bags back before going outside.

RECESS

Recess breaks are legislated for students. If students are well enough to attend school, then they will be expected to go outside for recess, where supervision is provided (unless a doctor's note states that they must remain indoors for a specified period of time). If it is raining or there is a severe wind-chill factor (approximately minus 25 Celsius) then students will remain in their classrooms for their recess.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND CLUBS

Student Activities and Clubs are provided through the combined efforts of staff and interested community volunteers. Participation in all events requires teacher supervision.

SCHOOL ATHLETIC TEAMS:
- Softball Team
- Cross Country Team
- Volleyball - Senior Girls, Senior Boys and Junior Co-Ed teams
- Basketball - Senior Girls and Senior Boys teams
- Relay Team
- Track and Field

INTRAMURAL SPORTS: Junior and Intermediate House League Teams throughout the school year. (usually at lunch)

BANDS: Grade 7 and Grade 8 Bands

ELECTIVES: These take place in the winter during the month of February.

HONOUR ROLL: Celebrates the attainment of high academic achievement (80%) coupled with consistent effort and participation.

HOUSE CAPTAINS: Annual election of 10 colour house captains, who will lead various events throughout the school year.
STUDENT OF THE WEEK AWARDS AND HOMEROOM ASSEMBLIES:

Highview has a tradition of weekly assemblies celebrating many of the positive things happening around the school. Each homeroom will host an assembly throughout the course of the year. Your child's class will attend every other assembly to avoid overcrowding in the gym. All families are welcome to join any assemblies, however siblings in other classes should not attend unless their homeroom class is scheduled for that day.

One of the traditions we have involves recognizing one student from each homeroom during the regular assembly schedule. The "Student of the Week" is a student who embodies character traits identified in the school board’s “Character Matters” program.

SCHOOL STORE: Operates at lunch and is run by the physical education department.
WIN-IT SEALS: Awarded to students over their elementary years for participation in school activities.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips and excursions provide valuable learning experiences that are an integral part of the school curriculum. Hence, all trips are either preceded and/or followed by in-school activities which reinforce concepts learned as part of an overall theme. Trips may vary from short walks in the local neighborhood to a multi-day visit (overnight) at a location several hundred kilometers away. Regardless, parents will be notified of field trips in advance and will be asked to sign consent forms. Parents are encouraged to accompany classes on most field trips. Students are often asked to pay a share of the cost of school trips, primarily to help subsidize the high cost of bus transportation.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Intermediate and Junior students must change into shorts or sweat pants, T-shirts, and running shoes for physical education. Primary students are encouraged to dress appropriately as well. This is for comfort, ease of movement and for safety. It is strongly urged that all students have running shoes that have non-marking soles and are kept at school for gym use only. All equipment should be clearly labeled. Exemption from Physical Education activities is permissible only upon the recommendation of your doctor and with a note from home. Pupils with heavy colds, etc., which are serious enough to prevent them from taking part in physical education, recess, or other outdoor activities should remain home until this condition improves. This will likely benefit the pupil concerned and prevent the spread of this condition to others.
**HOUSE SYSTEM**

Every child and staff member is part of the Highview House System. It is a system intended to promote school unity, pride and spirit. There are four House Team Colours - yellow, red, green, and blue. Each child will be assigned a colour upon entering Highview Public School. This House Colour remains with them throughout his/her attendance at Highview P.S. At the end of the school year, the top House colour is recognized with a plaque.

There are many opportunities for students to accumulate points for their house colour, a few examples are:

- Participation in special events
- Teamwork
- Sharing and cooperation
- School teams
- Courtesy
- A job well done

**COMPUTERS**

Computer Literacy is crucial to a student's development. Our library, which is truly known as a 'Resource Centre' has a mini-lab of several computers available to accommodate student and teacher needs. Our teachers will routinely sign out a bank of computers for class use during specific times of the year. The computers are used as a resource for the students in obtaining or developing information to further demonstrate and acquire knowledge of the concepts being addressed in class. A very strict "Internet User" policy is also sent home in September for parental consent.

**HOMEWORK POLICY**

In the primary years (Kindergarten, Grades 1-3), students have time to complete their work in class. When the work has not been completed, it may become a homework assignment. Formal homework may be assigned in Grades 2 and 3.

Students in the primary grades are expected to do between 10 and 20 minutes of recreational reading (familiar reading and shared reading) and/or writing (letters, lists, creative writing) each night. Books will be brought home regularly to facilitate this.

In the junior years (Grades 4-6), formal homework is more likely to be assigned. Up to 60 minutes of homework a night may be expected. Homework includes reviewing notes and assignments for future tests. At least 30 minutes of reading for pleasure should occur each day.

In the intermediate years (Grades 7 and 8) students are expected to do between 60 and 90 minutes of homework a night. As well, at least 30 minutes of reading for pleasure should occur each day. If the student has completed all assigned work, reviewing notes for tests and assignments is a good use of time.
Please Note: Homework is to be completed daily and brought back to school each day. It is the student's responsibility to remember to bring their work in. Phoning home and asking for their work to be brought to school is not acceptable.

In cases where a student's quantity of homework seems to be overwhelming due to the overlapping of major projects from different teachers, a parental contact with the teacher is recommended. Consideration and changes to the due dates may be dealt with if necessary and after consultation with the teacher prior to the due date. Please also note that students are expected to start their assignments promptly so as to minimize the chances of having to work on several projects at once or at the last minute. Time management is an important skill for all students to develop.

**HOW TO CONTACT YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER**

If you wish to meet with a teacher, please make an appointment ahead of time. It is best to either write a note into your child’s agenda booklet or phone the school to leave a voice mail message. Appropriate times for discussing issues vary with each teacher. There are many occasions in which a teacher may need to leave the school promptly to attend a meeting or workshop at another location. Our teachers do attempt to check their voice mail daily, however with only four lines available, it is often difficult to return calls promptly.

**STUDENTS CAN APPROACH TEACHERS FOR EXTRA HELP**

We encourage our students to self-advocate for additional teacher help as required on a daily basis. Informal extra help sessions are offered by each teacher and can occur throughout the day depending on schedules or during the student working time of a lesson. Some of the more frequent times that may be used involve recesses, class time during conferencing or when tasks are completed early, and brief after school sessions if time allows. On occasion, Special Education Resource Teachers are also available for extra help while in your child’s classroom during the day. In some cases, a ‘peer buddy’ or older student in our school can be paired with your child as a sort of informal tutor. Please note that classroom teachers may not tutor their students at home or at school for payment.
DETERMINING STUDENT GROUPINGS AND CLASS SIZES

The current agreement between the York Region District School Board and the Elementary Teachers Federation (Section D.1.3) recognizes that every effort shall be made to organize each school for a school year using the following optimum class sizes and ranges as guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JK/SK</td>
<td>15-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>17-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>20-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>22-32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our primary goal at Highview P.S. is to develop balanced classes. A balanced class reflects the diversity of our community and allows the variety of interests and talents of learners to emerge and be appreciated. The class unit provides a balance of opportunities for a range of learners to succeed through appropriate challenges. The learner develops the feeling of belonging and the feeling that, in a variety of ways, she/he makes a noticed contribution. Each new year brings opportunities to meet new friends and expand our circle of acquaintances.

Listed in order of consideration and importance are the criteria we use to build classes:

1. Balance of Ability, Interest and Talents
2. Balance According to Gender
3. Learning Style: How does the learner go about the process of learning? What kind of environment best allows that style to be utilized effectively?
4. Teacher Style: How does a teacher go about the teaching/learning process? What kind of learners might best flourish with this teacher?
5. Social Blending: What is the best cluster of individuals to effectively and efficiently learn? This should not be viewed as a grouping of friends. At particular stages, some close friends learn best in separate classes.
6. Parental Input:
   Parents are invited to communicate with their child’s present teacher information regarding learning styles and other pertinent social issues that would help us make the best decision possible.

Our staff is a group of dedicated professionals. Years of meeting the needs of children give them the unique qualifications to make these decisions. It takes hours of discussions and reflection and consideration of alternatives to arrive at the best organization for our school. The best may not be perfect, but represents what we believe is our best chance for success.
SCHOOL COUNCIL

The advisory role of the school council will be to provide ideas and opinions to assist the Principal and, where appropriate, school board trustees in their decision-making on educational issues. The advice should be based on the general views of the school community, and the best interests of students throughout the school. School councils must operate within the Ministry of Education and Training and Board policies and procedures. They will deal with issues of particular relevance to their communities and establish their priorities on an annual basis. All meetings are open to the public and as such in order to accommodate all people, we will be holding evening meetings. Dates and times of meetings will appear on your monthly calendars.

School Councils are established to improve student learning and to foster an increased sense of shared accountability for public education. The Council communicates with, and provides advice to the principal, participates in the development and implementation of the School Improvement Plan, volunteers in various capacities, promotes parent education and learning at home, and coordinates community resources.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

School councils are advisory bodies. A school council will provide advice to the school principal and, where appropriate, to the school board on any of the matters listed below that the council has identified as priorities:
- local school-year calendar
- school code of student behaviour
- curriculum and program goals and priorities
- the responses of the school or school board to achievement in provincial and board assessment programs
- preparation of the school profile
- selection of principals
- school budget priorities, including local capital-improvement plans
- school-community communication strategies
- methods of reporting to parents and the community
- extracurricular activities in the school
- school-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational, and nutrition programs
- community use of school facilities
- local co-ordination of services for children and youth
- development, implementation, and review of board policies at the local level
The provincial policy will require that a school board's policy direct the school principal and, where relevant, senior staff and trustees of the board to seek advice from the school council as part of the process of making decisions with regard to the matters listed above.
In addition to its advisory responsibilities, the school council seeks to:

- establish its goals, priorities, and procedures;
- organize information and training sessions to enable members of the council to develop their skills as council members;
- hold a minimum of four meetings per year (all meeting shall be open to members of the school community);
- communicate regularly with parents and other members of the community to seek their views and preferences with regard to matters being addressed by the council, and to report on the activities of the council to the school community.
- promote the best interest of the school community.

The 2002/2003 School Council Consists of the Following Members:

Chair: Susan Walmer    Co Chair: Greg Smith    Treasurer: Naren Leava
Secretary: Janet Luscher    Parent Members: Don Hussey, Debbie Killens, Stephanie Lee, Carol McCreesh

Student Representative: Bonnie Devine
School Members: Margaret Roberts, Debbie Halinaty / Kirsten Wright, Gus Warren

VOLUNTEERING AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Your support is greatly valued as it adds to the development of student growth and school programming. As a volunteer, you will be working with students, staff, and other volunteers. It is essential that you, and the people you work with, establish a mutually satisfying relationship which will prove helpful to our students. This relationship should rest on trust, co-operation and a clear understanding of the volunteer role.

The following are a few points in defining your role as a volunteer, and in making your experiences as a volunteer with us a success.

1. Confidentiality is of the highest priority. Volunteers may come to know sensitive information regarding a student's academic ability, relationships with others, behaviour etc. We ask that this information remain confidential, and not discussed with the community at any time.

2. Please remember that any evaluation of school personnel, students or programs is the responsibility of the teachers and/or the school administration only.
3. As a volunteer you may be involved in a variety of activities in our school. Please be aware that you are ultimately responsible to the school principal and will work at all times under the direction of a designated staff member. Please remember that the school principal and/or staff members are always there to respond to any questions or concerns that you may have.

Parent volunteers are an important and integral part of our Highview community. The benefits of parent involvement are realized by the students, staff, and quite often the volunteers themselves. There are many opportunities for parents to volunteer their time and talents ranging from helping at the library, in individual classes or attending any of the committee meetings held at Highview. When you come into the school to volunteer, please ensure you check in at the office and get your Highview Volunteer button. Wearing this button enables staff and students to identify you as a volunteer.

PARENT CORNER: This information board in the office hall displays the current newsletter, calendar and any upcoming events at Highview. Don't forget to look at it whenever you are in the school.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE: Responsible for implementing fund raising events for the extra needs of the school including books for the library and computer software. Fundraising events occur throughout the year

PARENT/PARTNER READING COMMITTEE:- This is part of Highview's Early Literacy Focus. Parent volunteers partner with one or two assigned students for half-hour sessions each, on a weekly basis. The sessions include reading, letter recognition and writing activities.

PIZZA LUNCH COMMITTEE: Responsible for organizing and overseeing our weekly Friday Pizza Lunches. (In order to avoid menu boredom, we will have a choice other than pizza approximately once a month.) Involvement includes your choice of collecting orders, sorting money, or helping to serve the pizza.
**STUDENT DRESS CODE**

The School Council has helped determine parental wishes regarding appropriate dress and student compliance. In keeping with the provincial directive of establishing a dress code policy, Highview students will be expected to meet the following requirements:

Students will be expected to wear clothes that:

- are clean and in good repair, free of holes, tears and slashes
- have positive slogans, or are appropriate for a school setting (no beer, alcohol or drug advertisement)
- are appropriate in size, specifically shorts and skirts
- do not expose the midriff skin between the top and the waistband and pants or skirts
- cover all undergarments at all times (no spaghetti strap tops or crop tops)
- include sensible footwear, in keeping with anticipated school activities such as physical education (non-marking indoor footwear)
- do not cover the head (hats, bandanas) except for medical or religious reasons
- are appropriate for physical education (shorts, t-shirts, running shoes, sweat pants and sweat shirts) and
- meet all requirements as deemed acceptable by the principal or vice-principal

Students who arrive at school with inappropriate clothing will be offered the chance to wear gym clothing and/or contact parents to arrange for a change of clothes.

**SEARCH AND SEIZURE:**

Lockers are property of the school and not the student. At the beginning of each school term, the principal shall ensure that all members of the school community are made aware of the right of the school to search school property, such as lockers and desks, without notice to or permission of any person. The principal shall also make the community aware that police may from time to time be invited onto school property to conduct their own searches and the searches may be conducted without notice or permission from any member of the school community. Principals shall document the manner and the date of the dissemination of this information. EXCEPT WHERE THERE WOULD OTHERWISE BE AN IMMINENT RISK OF DEATH OR SERIOUS BODILY HARM, NO BOARD EMPLOYEE SHALL CONDUCT A SEARCH OF A PERSON OR THE PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF A PERSON (such as a purse or knapsack). When conducting a search of school property, persons, or personal property, the police shall conform to all legal requirements with respect to searches, including the obtaining of a warrant to search in appropriate circumstances. Students are expected to keep knapsacks and purses in lockers.


**DUTIES OF PUPILS**

Regulation 262 of the Education Act, section 23 outlines the following duties of pupils:

1. A pupil shall:
   
   a) be diligent in attempting to master such studies as are part of the program in which the pupil is enrolled
   b) exercise self-discipline
   c) accept such discipline as would be exercised by a kind, firm and judicious parent
   d) attend classes punctually and regularly
   e) be courteous to fellow pupils and obedient and courteous to teachers
   f) be clean in person and habits
   g) take such tests and examinations as are required by, or under the Act, or as may be directed by the Ministry
   h) show respect to school property

2. When a pupil returns to school after an absence, a parent of the pupil, or the pupil where the pupil is an adult, shall give the reason for absence orally or in writing as the principal requires.

3. A pupil may be excused by the principal from attendance at school temporarily at any time at the written request of a parent of the pupil or the pupil where the pupil is an adult.

4. Every pupil is responsible for his or her conduct to the principal of the school that the pupil attends
   a. on the school premises
   b. on out-of-school activities that are part of the school program; and while traveling on a school bus that is owned by a Board or on a bus or school bus that is under contract to a Board.

**DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Our school community promotes responsible, respectful behaviour. All our students, staff and parents have the right to feel safe at school. We expect that all school members will demonstrate respect, civility and responsible citizenship. Discipline will be meted out for issues concerning physical safety, law-breaking, disrespect, extortion, intimidation, vandalism, and profane or improper language.
Students are responsible to the school principal and vice-principal for the conduct and are required by law to accept such discipline as would be exercised by a kind, firm and judicious parent. Consequences for misbehaviour may include:

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<td>1</td>
<td>Meeting with an administrator (warning)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Counseling</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Meeting with an administrator to complete an action plan to be shared with parents</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Loss of privileges (e.g. recess, school trip)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Assignment of a 'community service' project</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Required apology</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Parental involvement</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Restitution</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Withdrawal from class</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Voluntary withdrawal from school for a day</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Suspension from school</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Involvement of police</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Expulsion</td>
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The school board's Safe Schools/Discipline Policy outlines the conditions under which suspension and expulsion are to be considered. The policy states that suspension and expulsion are not mandatory in circumstances in which the student does not have the ability to control his/her behaviour, the student does not have the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his/her behaviour, or the student's continuing presence in the school does not create acceptable risk to the safety of any person.

**STUDENT SAFETY**

1) **YARD SUPERVISION:** Supervised yard duty begins at 8:10 a.m. until 8:25 a.m., and during morning and afternoon recesses. The lunch hour, which includes time inside to eat and an outdoor recess, will be supervised by hired lay assistants and teachers. The bus students are supervised boarding and exiting the buses.

2) **KINDERGARTEN AREA:** The Kindergarten fenced-in play area is supervised from 8:10 a.m. to 8:25 a.m. Once the gate is locked, PLEASE bring your child through the front doors. NEVER LIFT YOUR CHILD OVER THE FENCES.

In the spring, in order to help with the transition to Grade 1, Kindergarten children join the rest of the school population for supervised outdoor recess.

3) **LEAVING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS:** If your child needs to leave school during school hours, a note signed by a parent or guardian is required. The child must 'sign out' at the office. In September, parents or guardians sign a form stating whether their child is allowed to leave Highview during school hours.
ZERO TOLERANCE TO VIOLENCE

The York Region District School Board's zero tolerance policy towards violence in school has been well communicated to students and parents. It has also been much discussed in the local press.

We know that a child's ability to handle a variety of social situations in acceptable ways develops over time through modeling, counseling, clearly-articulated expectations, and the application of logical and reasonable consequences. We also know that in the heat of the moment, when words fail them, children will frequently resort to arguing, name calling, threatening, pushing, shoving, grabbing, and pinning one another to the ground. Although we continually counsel children on how to resolve disputes without fighting, we accept that emotions run high and conflict resolution skills occasionally fall short.

Unfortunately, children sometimes behave in ways that endanger others. They punch, kick or bite. We think it is important students understand that such behaviour is never acceptable. Parents should be given the opportunity to reinforce this message at home. Communication between home and school is essential. In these circumstances, we will send a letter home or make a phone call informing parents of both the facts surrounding the situation and actions taken.

SAFE SCHOOLS POLICY

In accordance with the York Region District School Board's Safe Schools Policy, some misdemeanors will not fall under the Highview's Discipline Policy. The Safe Schools Policy identifies some behaviours that will not be tolerated and will result in suspension or expulsion. Expulsion shall be recommended for any student who, while under Board supervision or while on Board property or any adjacent property:

- is found in possession of a firearm or prohibited weapon;
- commits an act of violence with a weapon of any kind, or a replica thereof;
- is found to be selling drugs

"A suspension of 20 days for a first occurrence and expulsion for any further occurrence shall be enacted for any student who, while under Board supervision or while on Board property or any adjacent property:

- is found in possession of drugs;
- commits aggravated assault;
- is found in possession of a knife not prescribed for program;
- commits an act of extortion;
- commits a repeated act of intimidation;
- commits any act endangering the lives of others
SUPPORTING NUMERACY AND LITERACY AT HOME

Listed below are a few suggestions you may choose to implement so that your child’s home environment may complement the structure of learning activities occurring at school.

**Primary Division:**
- Count change while shopping
- The Library, Zoo
- Walk on a nature trail, for example Vivian Forest or the wood lot behind our school
- Visit the Science Centre, Museum or Conservation Centre
- A neighbourhood walk, your local park
- Read together and often
- Make family holiday journals or memory books
- Record your family history
- Play educational board games
- Walk together observe the sights and sounds together
- Count together (steps to school, boxes in cupboard, books on shelf)
- Sort, classify and make patterns together (i.e. the cutlery drawer, the junk drawer, bookshelf, clothes, toys, etc.

**Junior Division:**
- Encourage and model a structured home environment with rules and routines. (i.e., a regular place in the house to complete homework,
- Estimate/calculate cost differences while shopping for items on sale, calculate sales tax, then check with receipt, discuss/calculate the significance of a 5 cent change in the price of gas
- Write a review of a TV. program or family outing, read and discuss newspaper editorials, read daily with your child, model reading

**Intermediate Division:**
- Discuss and draw attention to current events in the news with your child.
- Encourage reading of newspaper editorials to help develop opinions on newsworthy or controversial events taking place.
DISCUSSING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR CHILD

Promoting discussion with your child about what is occurring at school is also important. Listed below are some guiding questions which should help at promoting rich discussion with you child about the events taking place at school.

Questions for Primary children:

- What are two good things that happened in school today?
- What books did your teacher read?
- What did you write about?
- What kinds of things are in the tubs in your room?
- Did you work in a group?
- Who was in your group?
- What did your group do?
- Did you use any special equipment - computer, record player, tape recorder?
- Is there anything at school that is hard to do?
- Would you like to teach me something that you learned?

Questions for Junior and Intermediate children:

- What is the most interesting thing that has happened at school recently?
- What is your current theme or unit of study?
- What topics do you enjoy the most?
- Do we have anything at home related to this topic that you would like to share with your class?
- Do you have anything you would like to read to me?
- What is the best book in the classroom?
- What do you like about it?
- Have you done any writing lately?
- Would you like to share it with me?
- Who edits your writing - self, peer, volunteer, teacher?
- What operations are you using in math - division, multiplication?
- Do you know of any special projects, special events, trips, activities planned in the near future?
- Have you been using a computer or any audio-visual equipment such as tape recorders, filmstrip or projectors?
- Is there anything I can do at home to help you with your school program?

*Adapted from FWTAO Newsletter, article by Mary Labatt
DEVELOPING READER-FRIENDLY HOMES

Parents often ask how to support their children at home. Here are a few suggestions for parents which will bring literacy habits into the home. Could you...

- Be a reading model? If children see parents reading they read too!

- Begin to build a family library? Garage sales and book fairs are good ways to obtain inexpensive books.

- Set time aside in your family’s schedule for reading, not just at bedtime, but maybe even a Sunday afternoon Family Reading Time?

- Turn off the TV so you can all enjoy the stories without distracting competition from cartoons, sports or the soap operas?

- Create a safe spot in your child’s room for books - a basket, a plastic tub, a shelf?

- Label items in your child’s room or the kitchen (e.g. bed, cookies, fruit, hot, cold)

- Provide a variety of reading materials in a variety of places? How about a basket of children’s magazines or catalogues in the bathroom or the car?

- Write messages to your child using Post-its tucked in lunch bags or stuck on the bathroom mirror? Sometimes make the message a question and encourage a written response. Include paper and pencil in the bag - maybe they’ll write back!

- Create family scrapbooks of favourite cartoons, special days or funny moments? Children will enjoy adding items and looking at them again and again.

- Find a section of the newspaper to share with your child (comics, the weather, sports, movie reviews)?

- Make writing materials - scrap paper, pencils, crayons, used birthday cards, old magazines, glue - available so your children can make their own books

- Read aloud any passages, news, descriptions which grab your imagination?
FIRST STEPS WRITING

The First Steps Writing Resource documents are widely used in the York Region District School Board. The First Steps program provides the framework for teaching students to develop specific writing styles for different reading audiences. There are six major forms of writing and each are emphasized at different grade levels in our school. Listed below are descriptions of each writing form and the grade levels which emphasize their teaching and use at Highview P. S. Note that review or exposure of all six forms can occur at any grade level.

Recount Writing:
(Emphasized in grade 1)
A recount is the retelling or recounting of past experiences. Recounts are generally based on the direct experiences of the author but may also be imaginative or outside the author’s experience. Young children often write recounts which follow directly from their ‘news telling’.

Types:
These are different types of recounts:
Personal recounts recounting an experience in which the author has been directly involved
Factual Recounts retelling an event or incident such as a newspaper report, an accident report
Imaginative Recounts taking on a fictitious role and relating imaginary events, e.g. a day in the life of a new puppy.

Examples:
Recounts may be in the form of biographies, autobiographies, newspaper reports of events, histories, letters, diaries, journals, eye-witness accounts of incidents, accounts of accidents submitted for insurance claims.

Procedure Writing:
(Emphasized in grade 4)
Procedural texts follow a discernible pattern - listing sequences of actions or steps to show the way to do something. Procedural texts can be oral or written.

Types:
Procedural texts play a big part in our everyday life and are used in many contexts. The purpose and audience will dictate the level of technical language used and the way in which the information is organized. Some texts may tell how something is done. These include recipes, science experiments, math procedures, How to play..., How to make a..., and How to do it manuals. Others give instructions for how to use or operate things like appliances and machines. There are many procedural texts used and they aim to get things done.
Report Writing:

(Emphasized in grades 3 through to 5)
Reports are factual texts that present information clearly and succinctly. The stages of a report are context-specific and relate very closely to its purpose. A Report about Reptiles would begin with a classification and go on to describe particular aspects such as appearance, location and dynamics. Whereas, a Report on Pioneer Women may classify them into privileged, working class and convicts and go on to describe and compare aspects such as social status, housing and health. Both texts would be classified as reports but the stages or organizing framework would differ. The purpose of a report is to systematically organize and record factual information to classify and describe a whole class of things.

Examples:
Reports may be written in all curriculum areas, eg.
A Report on Deserts
A Report on Heart Disease
A Report on Birds
A Report on Life in the 1920's
A Report on Computers

Narrative Writing:

(Emphasized in grades 2 through to 8)
A narrative text tells an imaginative story, although some narratives may be based on facts. Narratives are written in many different forms and each form has distinctive characteristics. The main purpose of a narrative is to entertain and engage the reader in an imaginative experience. Some narratives also have other purposes, e.g. they may seek to explain a phenomenon (myths and legends) or to teach a lesson (fables).

Examples:
Folktales, fairytales, fables, myths, legends, science fiction, modern fantasy, short stories, picture-story books and ballads are all narrative texts.
Explanation Writing:

(Emphasized in grades 4 through to 6)
An explanation is an oral or written text that seeks to explain how things come to be the way they are, or to analyze how things work.

Types:
Explanations seem to fall into two main types:
Those that explain how things are, e.g., How a Kite Works
Those that explain how things are, e.g., Why Volcanoes Erupt
Some explanations may combine how and why

Examples:
Explanations may be in the form of essays, handbooks, science, health, and social studies texts.
Health: Explain the process of digestion
Social Studies: Explain why soil erosion occurs
Science: Explain how electricity is generated

Exposition Writing:

(Emphasized in grades 5 through to 8)
An exposition is the critical evaluation of ideas involving argument, persuasion, or debate.

Types:
Expositions may be written:
- to persuade readers to agree with a writer’s particular point of view or thesis
- to compare and/or contrast topics and develop a case that will persuade the reader that the writer’s premise is correct
- to analyze a topic, presenting all points of view and stating the logical conclusion or expecting that the reader will form a logical conclusion (based on the information provided by the writer).
The generic structure of each type of exposition is the same.

Examples:
Expositions may be in the form of essays, letters, policies, critical reviews, advertisements.

English: Does television promote crime in the community?
Health: Sponsorship in sport - is it necessary?
Social Studies: Compare modern and ancient modes of transport
Science: Electricity and magnetism are closely related
SPECIAL EDUCATION

The following are excerpts from parental guide pamphlets which are published by the York Region District School Board. Additional information can be obtained from the pamphlets themselves, or by inquiring through the office.

What is an IPRC?

Ontario’s Education Act requires school boards to provide special education programs and services for children who need them.

School boards are required to establish Identification, Placement and Review Committees (IPRCs) in order to identify those students who need special education programs and services. These committees must have at least three people, one of whom must be a school principal or a board supervisory officer. IPRCs follow a formal process governed by provincial law (Regulation 181/98).

The Parents’ Guide explains how IPRCs identify students who need special education programs, outlines your rights as a parent and describes how your involvement will help to make good educational decisions for your child.

The IPRC:

- decides whether a child should be identified as “exceptional”
- identifies the category and area of exceptionality
- decides on an appropriate placement for the child who is identified as exceptional; and
- reviews the identification and placement at least once in each school year.

Before the IPRC:

The school principal may refer a child to an IPRC if they and the child’s teacher, believe the child would benefit from a special education program. You may also ask the principal of your child’s school to refer your child to the IPRC. The request must be in writing. The principal will give you a written response with an indication of when the IPRC will meet.

What is an Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.)?

An I.E.P. is a written plan. It is a working document which describes the strengths and needs of an individual exceptional pupil, the special education program and services established to meet that pupil’s needs, and how the program and services will be delivered. It also describes the student’s progress.
The I.E.P. summarizes the following:
- student’s strengths and needs
- medical/health information
- assessment data
- student’s current level of achievement in each program area
- goals and specific expectations for the student
- program modifications (changes required to grade-level expectations in the Ontario Curriculum)
- accommodations (supports, services that will help your child access the curriculum and demonstrate learning)
- special education services provided to the student
- assessment strategies for reviewing the student’s achievements and progress
- regular updates, showing dates, results and recommendations
- a Transition Plan (over the age of 14)

UNDERSTANDING REPORT CARDS AND GRADING

The Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum has now been in place for five years with the core areas of Language and Math, and four years for other subjects (Science, History, Geography, Arts, Kindergarten, French). As you have noticed from your child’s report card, each section of the provincially report card contains a different subject. English and Mathematics actually contain sub-topics to be reported on as well. There are five different strands of math, and three main sections for reporting on both English and French. Teachers are responsible for reporting on each math strand at least twice during the school year. It is for this reason, that there may be terms which do not contain a grade for certain strands of mathematics.

The grades given in language reflect a student’s ability in three main areas: reading, writing, and oral visual communication. It is important to note that the grade given for ‘reading’ does not reflect a student’s actual oral reading ability. Rather, oral reading is assessed under the ‘oral visual communication’ field of the report card. The ‘reading’ grade is designed to assess comprehension ability while reading from a variety of literature. A student’s comprehension skills reveal themselves when they are required to respond to, or discuss the material they have read. Student’s can demonstrate comprehension abilities through both oral discussions and written forms.

The comments which are used on your child’s report card contain statements which are directly linked to a database of learning expectations provided by the Ministry of Education. The learning expectations are constructed into sentences by combining various descriptions of a student’s ability or achievement for each expectation. Please note that the greatest value in interpreting your child’s report card will come from actually meeting with the teacher so that practical discussion concerning your child’s academic success may occur.

The following article explains many of the concerns both students and parents have expressed when referring to report cards:
The Difference Between Grades and Marks:

Teachers are frequently asked why some work is not always marked, and why this work does not count toward the grade recorded on the report card. Before proceeding, it is important that we have a common understanding about what we are talking about. When we refer to marks, we are talking about the number, letter or score that is assigned to a test or performance throughout the term. When we refer to grades, we are talking about the letter or number that is reported at the end of each term as a summary statement of the child’s performance.

So Why Not Mark Everything?

Why not add up all the marks gathered throughout the term and crunch them together to come up with the child’s grade? In order to answer this question, let’s think about a learning experience that is common to many adults everywhere—learning to drive a car. For most of us, our driving lessons started once we had studied the rules of the road and passed a written test. Most of us struggled when we were first behind the wheel— but with lots of practice and good feedback we got better. We made lots of mistakes during our lessons, and learned from these mistakes. We did not get marks for each lesson and when our instructor felt we were ready to take the driving exam, he or she did not hand a set of marks to the examiner to be averaged into our performance during the exam. While some of us passed the first time around, others did not—and what did we have to do?—practice... practice...practice. Furthermore, when we took the exam again, the examiner did not know, nor did he or she care—how many times we had failed previously. It was more important that we could meet the standard required to receive a driving license. All the examiner cared about was our current performance.

Practice and Feedback:

Two things are of critical importance here—practice and feedback. When we practice driving, we get better at it. When we practice reading we get better at it. When we practice a number concept we get better at it. When we practice anything, we get better at it and we achieve a much better overall performance. When we get better, our earlier attempts should not count because they now misrepresent our current skill and knowledge levels. While marking all practice activities is not always necessary, what IS important is the feedback that we receive when we practice. Feedback is the process of letting the learner know how s/he is doing in order to be able to act appropriately. Therefore, while the teacher may not mark every learning activity, it is expected that practice work will be checked regularly and feedback provided so that the child knows what to do next. Learning activities that provide opportunities for practice and feedback during the instruction period enable the teacher to monitor and guide the learner. It is important to emphasize that excluding these activities from the final grade does not mean they are not important. Known as formative assessments, these activities—homework, quizzes, worksheets, etc— not only support learning but also encourage success.
So What DOES Count?

What does count directly in the assigned grade are those activities that provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills at the end of a unit or period of instruction. Known as summative assessments, these activities include final drafts or attempts, assignments, projects, performances, tests, exams, etc. The teacher uses this information when making a final judgment at the end of a period of instruction.

The driving examination that we took was a summative assessment. The written test was a summative assessment. Your child’s science exam was a summative assessment. Using the information from summative assessments, teachers make conscious and careful decisions about your child’s achievement, and record that information on the report card in the form of a final grade, a single number or letter to represent a whole pile of assessment and learning!

The Purpose of Grading:

The purpose of assigning this final grade is to communicate to you, the parent, how well your child is achieving the intended learning goals. In Ontario, teachers are required to assign grades from grade one onwards. Not surprisingly, you are anxious that your child does well at school, and as a result, many of you place considerable emphasis on these grades. It is essential that you have a clear knowledge and understanding not only of how the final grade is determined, but also the learning that has taken place over the course of the term. It is also essential that this information be used to pinpoint the strengths, needs and next steps in your child’s learning.

The Board’s mission challenges us to unite in our purpose to inspire and prepare learners for life in our changing world community. We are charged with the responsibility of preparing children for life in a world that changed significantly in the past year. While it is appropriate to value the grades your child receives, it is essential that you avoid overvaluing these grades at the expense of the learning that takes place in your child’s classroom everyday.

Written by Janet Lewis with input from colleagues
Source: The Mindful School: How to Grade for Learning, Ken O’Connor SkyLight Training and Publishing, 1999

ATTACHED: GRADE SPECIFIC ADDENDUM INFORMATION

The following section of this handbook contains grade specific information. This information was put together as a collaboration from each teacher of the grade listed on the front cover of this book. It was designed to assist you with any inquiries you may have as a parent concerning the events taking place in our school, and more specifically in your child’s grade. Please do not hesitate to call your child’s teacher if you have additional questions or concerns.

Overall expectations as published by the Ministry of Education have also been included so that you may gain a deeper understanding of the curriculum being taught to your child. Additional information explaining curriculum and expectations can be found at the following government website:  www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/elemcurric.html

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