

important information

Alternative Schools

If you are a parent of a grade 6 student, one of the options your child may be considering for next year is attending an alternative school. Each alternative school has a distinct identity and approach to curriculum delivery. They usually have a small student population, and a focus on a particular programming or theme. For example, alternative schools may focus on an arts-based curriculum or offer programming that is very project-based and student-directed. Many alternative schools seek high levels of parental involvement.

School profiles are available at www.tdsb.on.ca. Once here, click on "Programs" and select "Alternative Schools" from the menu.

What are the local alternative schools?

In the Wilkinson area, two alternative schools offer Grade 7 and Grade 8 programming. They are EAST (East Alternative School of Toronto), which operates out of Blake P.S. at 21 Boulton Ave; and Quest Alternative, which operates out of Withrow P.S. at 25 Bain Ave. A little further a field you will find Horizon Alternative School at 401 College St. and Spectrum Alternative School at 223 Eglinton Ave. East.

How are students admitted to alternative schools?

Most alternative schools admit students by lottery. Application forms are given out at an annual Information Night which both parent and student must attend.

Upcoming Information Nights (see addresses above)

EAST (416) 393-8442
Thursday January 22, 2009 at 7:00pm

Quest (416) 393-9430
Tuesday January 27, 2009 at 6:45pm

Horizon (416) 393-1298
Friday January 16, 2009 at 6:30pm

Spectrum (416) 393-9311
Wednesday January 14, 2009 at 7:00pm

The Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence

The Premier's awards to recognize educators and staff who excel at unlocking the potential of Ontario's young people. Parents and students are encouraged to nominate exceptional members of their school who make a difference in their community and their child's life.

The awards are open to staff in Ontario's publicly funded schools and boards. You can nominate teachers, support staff, principals and vice-principals, supervisory officers, directors of education and many others.

There are six different award categories:

- Teacher of the Year
- New Teacher of the Year
- Excellent Support Staff
- Excellence in Leadership
- Team of the Year
- Lifetime Achievement

Nominations must be submitted by January 31, 2009. For more information on these awards, how to write a compelling nomination letter and/or to download a Nomination Form, visit www.ontario.ca/teachingawards.

contact us

Have an article to contribute to the newsletter? Interested in helping out? Compliments? Go to our Web site at www.wilkinsonschool.ca or leave a message at (416) 393-9575.

Thank you to this month's contributors: Carol Bennett, Julie Found, Grant Kechnie, Karen Wiseman

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Design/Layout: Kim Diamond

This newsletter was subsidized and printed by:



WILKINSON NEWSLETTER

December 2008

Published by the Wilkinson School Council

principal's message

December is upon us and first term will shortly come to an end. It's been a busy time at Wilkinson and December will be no exception.

Reporting to parents will take place on Wednesday December 3rd and Thursday December 4th. Friday December 5th is a P.A. Day and there will be no school.

We hope to see many of you on December 17th (6:00pm) at our annual Winter Concert as we're confident that it will be another exceptional performance. Please note that the time is earlier than usual (in order to accommodate the band and string instructors) and that it is a week later than was announced back in September. Also, on Friday December 19th we will have our annual Carol Sing from 1:00 - 2:00 in the gym.

A lot of great things have been happening in and around the library - Read on to find out what the students have been up to!

I encourage you to pay particular attention to Ms. Found's letter accompanying this newsletter that talks about an exciting school-wide project happening at Wilkinson - The Telling Bee! While this is a great opportunity for students to develop their story-telling skills and have them captured in a book, parents can also contribute to the success of this initiative.

Mr. Kechnie, Wilkinson's physical education teacher also has an important message to par-

ents included in this newsletter that I urge you to read.

Finally, on behalf of the staff, I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday. We look forward to an exciting second term at Wilkinson!

As always, feel free to call Ms. Watt or myself at the school if you have any questions or concerns.

Tanya Sterioff
principal

important dates

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|-------------------------|---|
| Fri., Dec. 5: | PA Day - No School |
| Mon., Dec. 8: | Council meeting @ 7pm
Eid-al-Asha |
| Fri., Dec. 12: | Pizza lunch
(for those who have pre-paid) |
| Wed., Dec. 17: | Winter Concert 6pm |
| Fri., Dec. 19: | Carol sing @ 1pm in the Gym
Last day of school |
| Thurs., Dec. 25: | Christmas Day |
| Fri., Dec. 26: | Boxing Day |
| Thurs., Jan. 1: | New Year's Day |
| Mon., Jan. 5: | Back to school |
| Mon., Jan. 12: | Council meeting @ 7pm |

clubs & teams

Storytelling at Wilkinson

Many thanks to the School Council for funding our visiting storytellers this year. The students who saw Anna Kerz really enjoyed her performance and are now enthusiastic about the idea of telling stories for themselves. Over the next 2 weeks, storyteller Cheryl Thornton will be visiting our Primary students to share multi-cultural stories about Fall/Winter and heritage.

Wilkinson is also starting up our Storytelling Club for grades 2-4. This club will focus on developing oral communication skills that children need to understand and interpret ideas and to interact with others. They will also develop the confidence to express and present their ideas fluently. The club started on Tues., Nov. 25th and meets at lunchtime from 12:00 to 12:30pm in the library.

An Important Message to Parents from Wilkinson's Gym Teacher

There has been an explosion of footwear entering the marketplace in the last 10 years, and much of it has been geared toward fashion. However, students need proper sports shoes to enjoy, participate, and succeed in the physical education program at Wilkinson.

Now that winter has arrived, please ensure that your child has a pair of shoes appropriate for the gym that can stay at school. Crocs, winter boots, etc. are not suitable footwear for the gymnasium as they present a safety issue when worn for sports and other indoor activities and do not allow children to participate fully. If you have any questions about what is and is not considered appropriate footwear, feel free to contact me at the school.

Thanks and Seasons Greetings from Mr. Kechnie.

Boys Volleyball

Mr. DePasqua, Mr. Banton (yes, he has interrupted his leave of absence to coach!) and Mr. Enticknap are all coaching the boys' volleyball

team this fall. If they win against Withrow on Wednesday November 25th, they will advance to the finals. Otherwise, it's the end of the season for them. So far, they've won 2 games and lost 1 game. Great effort!

Girls Basketball

The girls' basketball team has enjoyed a good level of success this year. Their playoff life starts Thurs., Nov. 27th as Wilkinson hosts John Ross Robertson. Mr. Kechnie decided to carry all girls who wanted to play this year since he has wanted to focus on fitness and basketball skills, as many of our players will be graduating in June. It is a difficult game to understand, and they have learned a lot, as most of their experience can be translated to other sports that appear on the athletic calendar.

In January, the sports flip as the boys start playing basketball and the girls start their volleyball season.

Intramural Sports

The second round of Intramurals are heading into the playoff stage. Our Kickball season went quite well with a dramatic overtime championship, and we're sure the same will be seen with the Dodgeball Tournament. Dodgeball has been a bit hit (no pun intended!) with students in the junior grades - An incredible 124 kids signed up and have been placed on 8 teams. After a few rounds of games, they understand the rules and are very good sports. The teachers have enjoyed the coaching and bonding with students they normally don't have contact with in daily life at Wilkinson. The games take place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at lunch time from 12:00-12:30pm. The regular season ends this week and then they will go on to the finals.

Intramurals will continue in January with an adaptation of floor hockey called Floorball, which allows girls to be on a more competitive level with the boys (no stick checking). In May, we will continue with the success of Ultimate Frisbee, concluding a very active Intramural year.

library news

Literacy Initiatives

The Silver Birch and Blue Spruce reading programs will be starting in December. These programs are both really important as they encourage a love of reading amongst our students. Once again, a big thank you to the Parent Council for funding this program.

We have some teaching moments also happening in the library this term. Let's celebrate the great things that happen when we work together at Wilkinson:

- Rooms 22 and 27 researched internet safety and cyber bullying this term. They learned some new research skills and created beautiful posters to help spread their message to other students. Look for those posters in the halls.
- Room 7 worked on a media literacy unit. They found out about how advertising uses gimmicks to sell products to customers. They took a trip to the IGA to check out some products before designing their own packaging for cereal.
- The kindergarten students drew pumpkins on the computers as well as helping to create a Halloween display in the library!
- Room 15 made an "Important Book" this term using the computers to type up each page. Ask them to tell you about it.

fundraising

Wilkinson Water Bottles

Not only are these stainless steel, BPA-free water bottles stylish, they're also very practical. They have an easy screw top with a handle and a handy clip to fasten it to your backpack! They hold 750ml and have our Wilkinson lion logo on them. They look great when our students arrive with them at other school events!

They are only \$15 each. To order, download an order form from our Web site at www.wilkinson-school.ca and send it to the school with your payment. Or you can simply leave a note with your payment in the parent mailbox in the school office.

Note: Please make cheques payable to "Wilkinson School Council".

Supperworks

Our Fundraising team has arranged with Supperworks to assist in the council's fundraising efforts. A fundraising code for Wilkinson - WPS - has been set up on their registration system through www.supperworks.com with a start date of Dec. 1, 2008 ending May 31, 2009.

How it works... Supperworks will donate 4% of the gross proceeds from anyone that enters the code "WPS" in the fundraising code field when they book a session at SupperWorks (Toronto-Beach location only). It is important that everyone enters the code or they will not be able to track it for Wilkinson. At SupperWorks, you can prepare 12 entrees in about 2 hours. They do the menu planning, shopping, washing, chopping, grating, slicing, and clean-up! You prepare the tasty, nutritious meals!

Stay tuned for more fundraising opportunities with local providers! If you have any suggestions or other fundraising ideas, please drop us a line at wilkinsonparents@yahoo.ca.

Wilkinson Choirs

The following groups will be performing at the Winter Concert on Wed., Dec. 17th:
Band, Strings, Orff Ensemble,
Junior Choir, and grades 2 & 3
(otherwise known as the primary choir).

If your child is in one of these groups, please be sure that you send back the concert letter filled out confirming whether your child be performing in the concert. Your child must return this in order to participate.

If you did not receive this form, please download a copy from our website (www.wilkinsonschooll.ca) or contact Ms. Levy at the school.