

Good Afternoon St. Margaret Mary Community,

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15** is Family Day - there is no school for students or staff. Enjoy your long weekend!

**FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH:** During Black History Month (February 1— March 1, 2021), our school joins Canadians across the country in celebrating the many achievements and contributions of Black Canadians who, throughout history, have done so much to make Canada the culturally diverse, compassionate and prosperous nation it is today. This year's celebration is part of the United Nations' International Decade for People of African Descent, 2015-2024, which recognizes that people of African descent represent a distinct group whose human rights must be promoted and protected. Black History Month is an opportunity for schools to raise awareness about diversity issues. The focus of this year's Black History Month celebration is "Allyship." Being an ally involves supportive association with another person or group or taking on the struggle of another as your own. Our Instagram account (@stmmces) is featuring various activities this month with a focus on Black History Month.

**WINTER COATS:** We do have a few winter coats that have been donated by the Knights of Columbus still available. If your child(ren) need a coat please let myself or Mrs. Walton know.

**WINTER WEATHER:** With the winter weather definitely here students are reminded to dress appropriately for outdoor play. Snowpants, boots, gloves, jacket and a hat should be worn outside to keep warm and dry. We recommend sending extra masks with your child(ren) as they do become quite wet when the students are outside. We also recommend that all clothing and items are clearly labelled with your child(ren)'s name to help us identify what mitten/glove/sweater etc.belongs to which student. When the air temperature drops below -15C or the playground is very icy we will have indoor recess to help keep our students and staff safe.

**BOX OF CARDS:** We have 5 boxes of the mixed box of cards still available from our fundraiser in the fall. They are \$33 each. If you would like to purchase a box please let me know via email.

**COVID PROTOCOLS AND UPDATES:** HWCDSB continues to send out updates around policies and procedures for Covid-19. All students, with the help of their parents, when necessary, are expected to complete the COVID-19 school screening every day. If individuals do not pass the screening, they are to stay home. The screening tool can be found at: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>

**IF YOUR CHILD BECOMES SICK AT SCHOOL:** [Symptomatic at school.pdf](#) Please read over the flowchart. If your child is ill at school, or says that he / she doesn't feel well we will call a parent / guardian right away for pick up. Your child will be asked to remain in our isolation room with supervision (a room separate from the main office to help stop the spread of any germs). Your child needs to be free of any symptoms for a minimum of 24-hours before he/she returns to school - that means if your child becomes ill at lunch time they CANNOT return to school the following morning. **24 hours of being symptom-free is required by Public Health.**

*This pertains to the symptoms listed for Covid and NOT for any known illnesses that a child may have like allergies, known stomach / digestion issues, etc.*

Any student that returns to school after being off for an illness will be required to complete the attestation form : [Attestation for return to school after illness OR self isolation.pdf](#) If you are unsure please contact the school and we can help walk you through the flow chart and decision-making tool for your child.

**MARCH BREAK IS NOW 'APRIL BREAK':** As you most likely heard in the news yesterday, March Break is now scheduled for April 12-16th.

Next Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday. Our school will have a virtual liturgy in the morning. Due to Covid restrictions, we will not be distributing ashes this year.

**Prayer for Families:** *Lord God, I give you all the members of our family. You know them all so well and love them all. I ask that you would cover us with a rainbow of hope. Hope that draws us together to work out our differences. Hope that helps us to celebrate together and care for one another. Hope that rides like a banner in our lives and watches over us wherever we go. Hope that overcomes adversity and gathers strength to overcome. Hope that guides us and gives us vision for our future alone and together. Hope filled with love. Hope that fuels faith. Hope that breathes peace. May our family live in you Underneath your promises. Amen.* (prayer from [www.lords-prayer-words.com](http://www.lords-prayer-words.com))

Wishing everyone a peaceful, relaxing and snow-filled Family Day weekend! We'd love to share photos of your family celebrating the long weekend as a household - DM your photos to our Instagram account @stmmces over the weekend and we will post them.

Keep well, keep safe and continue to love and care for each other,

Mrs. Coletto