

PRINCIPAL'S FOCUS

Okay, by my calendar we have had our summer and today marks the start of the 2009-10 School Year. The problem is I cannot recall any truly "summer" weather – at least for stretches longer than a few days. Despite that challenge, I trust that everyone has enjoyed the summer hiatus and is all recharged and ready for another excellent year at Alton Public School. I am certainly eagerly looking forward to spending ALL DAY, EVERY DAY at Alton! While I certainly enjoyed the experience of the two-school principalship, it is about time that both Alton and Belfountain schools had a full-time Principal. The students, teachers and communities deserve the total support of one person. I thank and congratulate the Peel District School Board on the recent decision to make this a reality.

Last week, during our scheduled Professional Development Days (September 2nd and 3rd), the teaching staff and I spent some very productive time outlining program and instruction for each individual student for 09-10. Our intent was to identify strengths and needs for every learner at Alton P.S. and to apply pertinent research findings to develop strategies that will take each learner to his/her academic potential. Judging from the resulting plans that we now have in place, I feel very confident that our excellent Alton Teachers will enable our excellent Alton Students to achieve more of that excellence than ever before. The theme for our two P.D. Days was

*SUCCESS results from the relentless accumulation of small effects
that grow into a critical mass
that becomes invincible.*

In other words, every day's efforts to learn new information and develop new skills will, ultimately, result in overall student success. By taking care of the details of learning, education will take care of itself.

Of course, as has always been the case with student success, it is essentially the result of school and home working together in a concerted effort to support student efforts. To this end, the Alton staff has planned a series of Family Literacy Nights to continue the growth started when we initiated this type of parent/child input evening last Spring for our Grade Ones and Twos. This year, we intend to have specific nights that will focus on all grades from Kindergarten to Grade 6. Watch for dates to be announced in future newsletters.

Now being full time at Alton, I anticipate many areas of school life that I will now be able to support to such a greater extent. One practice that I have enjoyed at other schools where I have been the full-time Principal is to schedule regular meetings with small groups of parents during the school day in order to discuss ideas and answer questions. I anticipate doing just

that this year at Alton. Included in the body of the newsletter is the outline for these "Coffee Time With the Principal" sessions.

So, as we now embark on another year of teaching-learning interactions, I wish you and your family all the best that the next ten months have in store. Together, we will make 09-10 an outstanding year for **STUDENT SUCCESS AT ALTON P.S.!**

From all of me,

Michael Walmsley

1. FOOD ALLERGY ALERT!

Typical to so many other schools, Alton Public School has amongst its student population a number of students who face the day-to-day challenges associated with severe food allergies. This school year, the same as last year, our specific concerns are nuts and kiwi. Parents who have children in the specific classrooms containing students with noted food allergies will receive a letter on the first day of school to alert them of the specific needs associated with their children's classroom. Certain classrooms will be designated "Nut Free Zones". Realizing that it is virtually impossible to make an entire building nut free, if all Alton parents remain vigilant when putting together lunches, then we should be able to eliminate the risks for our students who face the challenges of food allergies.

All staff, including lunch supervisors and bus drivers, receive annual training re the emergency use of Epi Pens in the event that a child suffers an allergic reaction. It is indeed an additional pressure for parents when their child has to deal with a severe food allergy. Together, our Alton Learning Community can lessen that pressure by realizing that all of our actions to eliminate the presence of nuts in school means that a child's safety is taken care of. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

2. MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

If your child requires doses of medication during the school day, either on a prescribed short-term basis, a regular long-term basis or as the result of an emergency allergic reaction, all medication must be delivered to the

Office and registered with the school Secretary. There is also requisite paperwork that must be completed before a medication can be administered at school. Please contact the School Office if you have any questions pertaining to your child's need for medication.

3. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Please endeavour to have your child maintain a good attendance record during this 09-10 School Year. When a student misses a day of school, then he/she will have missed valuable teaching-learning interactions. Every effort will be made by teachers to bring an absent student "up to speed", but ongoing absences may make this very difficult to achieve. Of course, if your child is ill, then we would recommend that he/she stay home to recuperate.

The issue of "lates" is also of concern when it comes to getting the most out of those teaching-learning interactions. Teachers plan their lessons in minute detail where every minute of instruction is important. If a student arrives to class late when the lesson has already begun, the teacher is not expected to stop and begin again. Please endeavour to always have your child arrive at school between 5 and 15 minutes before the entry bell. Also, please realize that Yard Supervision is in place only 15 minutes before the morning entry bell. Students arriving at school before that 15-minute time span are not considered the responsibility of School Staff, but are the responsibility of their parents.

4. 09-10 SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE

8:30 a.m.	ENTRY / ANNOUNCEMENTS
8:30 – 10:10 a.m.	TEACHING/LEARNING BLOCK 1
10:10 – 10:55 a.m.	NUTRITION BREAK 1
10:10 – 10:30	EATING
10:30-10:35	TRANSITION (washrooms,dressing)
10:35 – 10:55	OUTDOOR SUPERVISED PLAY
10:55 a.m. – 12:35 p.m.	TEACHING-LEARNING BLOCK 2
12:35 – 1:20 p.m.	NUTRITION BREAK 2
12:35 – 12:55 p.m.	EATING
12:55 – 1:00 p.m.	TRANSITION (washrooms/dressing)
1:00 – 1:20 p.m.	OUTDOOR SUPERVISED PLAY
1:20 – 3:00 p.m.	TEACHING/LEARNING BLOCK 3
3:00 p.m.	DISMISSAL
Kam	8:30 – 11:00 a.m.
Kpm	12:30 – 3:00 p.m.

5. STAFF ROSTER FOR 09-10

Kindergarten a.m.	Susan ANDREWS
Kindergarten p.m.	Julie FERGUSON
Grade 1-2	Tammy DEAN
Grade 2-3	Julie HARROWER
Grade 3	Mary PHILLPOTT
Grade 4-5	Judith PHILLIPS
Grade 5-6	Christina COLLINGS
ISSP/Music	Laurie MOORE
Phys. Ed.	Ken RAE
French	Ellen LAIDLAW
Library	Susan ANDREWS
Beh. T.A.	Liesa BRETT
Secretary	Sharon LOCKE
Head Custodian	Geoff CHING
Night Custodian	Clara JANKOWSKI
Principal	Michael WALMSLEY

6. SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

School Phone Number	519-941-3729
School FAX Number	519-941-2313
Superintendent of Education	Judy MASSEY (905-451-2862)
School Trustee	Valerie ARNOLD-JUDGE (905-838-2125)

7. SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

Our first School Council Meeting for 2009-10 is scheduled for Thursday, September 24th, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. in the School Library. All parents are invited to attend School Council Meetings – your voice on the Council provides pertinent direction and advice for the School Staff to better meet the needs of your children. Please mark the September 24th meeting on your calendar and become an integral part of our School Success!

8. COFFEE TIME WITH THE PRINCIPAL

As noted elsewhere in this newsletter, the "Coffee Time With the Principal" is a series of sessions (once per month) when a small group of interested parents will meet with the principal. There is no set agenda, rather parent ideas and questions will guide these informal chats with the intent being, as always, the success of our Alton learners. The "Coffee Times" will occur on the third Friday of each month between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m.

If you are interested in joining the Principal for the September 18th session, please contact Sharon Locke at the School Office (519-941-3729). A maximum of six parents will be included in a session.

9. T.P.T.A. MEETING

The first scheduled meeting of the Taxpayers, Parent, Teacher Association of Alton P.S. will take place between 7:00 and 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 15th in the School Library. The T.P.T.A. is an integral part of our overall school success, particularly in the area of fundraising to support teaching-learning initiatives. Interested persons are welcome to join us for our September meeting. Hope to see you there!

10. "MEET THE TEACHER" OPEN HOUSE

Between 6:30 and 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 17th, Alton Public School's doors will be open for students to bring their parents to school. Be sure to set aside some time this evening to see your child's classroom for the 09-10 School Year and to meet your child's teachers.

11. SEPTEMBER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY DAY

Please note that schools in the Peel District School Board have a scheduled P.D. Day on Friday, September 25th. No classes are scheduled for students on that day. Classes will resume on Monday, September 28th.