



Gordon Denny Community School

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Principal: Scott Hepworth
Coordinator: Shelly Lobb

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School Secretary: Margie Weflen

October 21, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

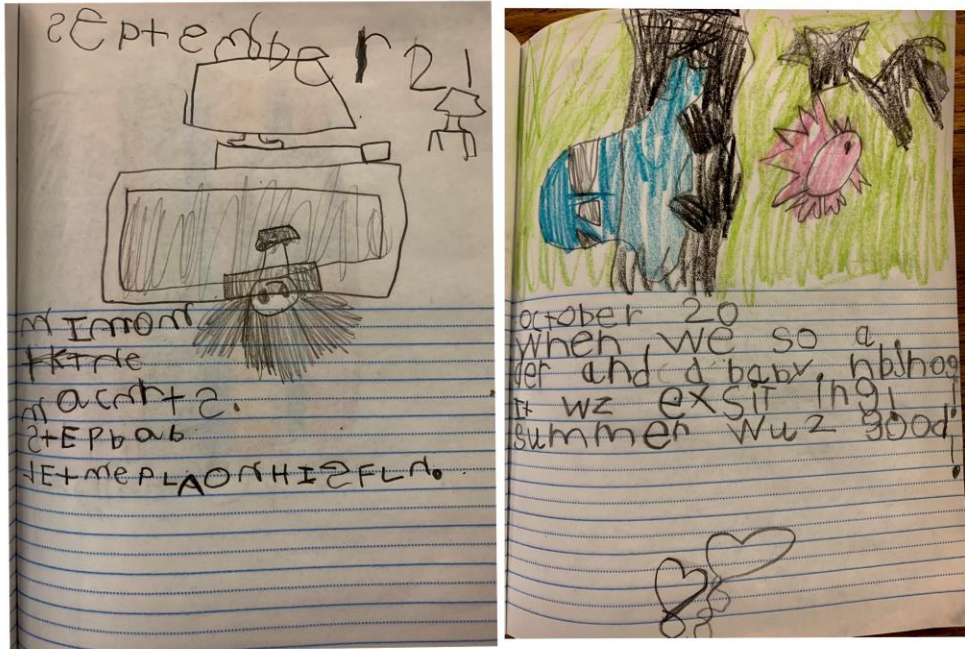
With the recent positive cases in our own and neighboring communities, the level of anxiety amongst people has naturally increased. Since recent events have occurred, our attendance at school has decreased significantly. Please be reassured that the following are being done to keep your child(ren) as safe as we possibly can. Gordon Denny remains open at Level 3.

- Classes will continue in cohorts AM/PM. Classes are at half capacity allowing for ample physical distancing between students
- Regular handwashing and sanitizing is explicitly taught and role modeled and expected in the school
- Both staff and parents/students are doing a great job at self-monitoring and remaining home if they have any symptoms and communicating with 811 for guidance.
- Masks are being worn when 6ft or 2m distance cannot be maintained. Masks are mandatory for staff and grade 4-6 students in common areas and hallways. (Encouraged but not mandatory for PreK-3 students)
- Regular cleaning of high traffic surfaces continues to be done multiple times daily, with a deep cleaning occurring between cohorts and each evening.
- All Washrooms are cleaned 4 times per day.
- The Northern Population Health Unit is diligently working with the education division to take all the precautions to keep everyone safe.

We understand the fear that exists about the Covid19 Virus presently resulting in your apprehension to send your child(ren) to school. We as a staff felt compelled to share our long term concern for your child's(ren) wellbeing if we don't strive to maintain the balance between safety and education.

Students across the division, province and country have already missed almost half of the last year of school. Students that have moved on to the next grade have only had half of a year in their previous grade. We are seeing the impacts of that in our school already this year. Many students are significantly behind following the closure and the summer break. We see what is called "summer loss" every fall. This is a natural loss of skills because we are not practicing them throughout the summer. However, this fall has proven to have extended that loss to levels where we are concerned for students academically.

Below is an example from a grade 1 student's Journal this year. This shows the rate of growth that is achievable in just 19 days of school. We know that children in the early years, (Prek-3) have an incredibly challenging journey that needs to result in being able to read and write independently by the end of Grade 3. According to Statistics Canada, children that are not reading at grade level by the end of grade 3 are: less likely to graduate high school, have an increased risk of going to jail, and have an overall lower life expectancy.



Please know that we are here to support you and your family. We truly appreciate your help and support as we work together to mitigate as much risk as possible while still looking out for the long-term needs of your child(ren). Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,


Scott Hepworth
Principal,
Gordon Denny Community School