



JOHN MARTIN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2016

I can't believe we are half way through the first month of the 2016/2017 school year and the weather has been amazing. Like the weather outside the atmosphere within our building has been amazing as well. Our new students seem to be adjusting to JMJD school culture and climate. Returning grade 8 and 9 students are stepping up to the plate in presenting positive role models and leadership attributes.

We continue our commitment to high expectations of all of our students and greatly value our partnership within our JMJD family, including staff, students and parents/guardians in maintaining these expectation so that all students learn, improve and reach success. We continue to focus on our Student Success Plan (SSP, formally CSI) goals and strategies in literacy and math. Details of our SSP Plan can be found within our Community Report on our school Web-Site, <http://www.johnmartin.ednet.ns.ca/>. Also on our Website under *Families*, you will find our *School Plan for Communicating Student Learning* and links to the Provincial School Code of Conduct, the Provincial Homework Policy and HRSB policies in general.

We also strongly believe in the development of the "whole" child to build character and citizenship. In addition to our educational priorities, staff members volunteer their free time to offer students the opportunity to participate in a number of noon-hour and after-school clubs and sports. Students should listen to announcements for the start-up of these activities. We also partner with community organizations and individuals to provide a wide range of guest speakers, activities, and field trips. Our first assembly was held Thursday, September 15th. In honour of *Stand Up Against Bullying Day* we welcomed Eric Croockshank and friends for his Bench Bullying presentation.

At John Martin we are committed to providing a safe and inviting learning environment. With the underlying philosophy of restorative approaches, we are committed to establishing positive relationships among staff and students, teaching and modeling expected behaviors and giving positive feedback when students display respect for self, others and the school in general. We also hold Positive Participation/School Spirit assemblies recognizing students for their citizenship and positive efforts. Students are expected to follow the Provincial Code of Conduct; however we believe in being proactive so that negative incidences are lessened.

To hear what some of our students have been saying about their experience at John Martin go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggRTMNZVHYw>.

As a school community we are committed to helping our students reach excellence. My door is always open to parent questions, concerns and suggestions. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 464-2408.

Anne Johnson-McDonald - Principal

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sept 29 – Curriculum Night 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Sept 30 – PD Day (no classes)

Oct 10 – Thanksgiving (no classes)

Oct 11 – Bus Evacuation drill

Oct 12 – Picture day

Oct 12 – SAC meeting 5:00pm – 6:00pm

Oct 25 – School Dance 6:00pm – 8:00pm

Oct 28 – Provincial PD Day (no classes)

NEW YEAR AND NEW INITIATIVES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

As we head into year two of Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education, there are many more exciting initiatives for students at all grade levels this school year.

This fall, students in grades primary to 3 will benefit from hands-on learning, including using floor robots to learn sequencing and programming. Students in grades 4-6 will benefit from Innovation and Exploration Kits that include Spheros and Makey Makey invention kits. **Students in grades 7 to 12 will learn coding through events, such as the Hour of Code and STEAM Olympics**, and courses, such as Computer Programming 12. Coding promotes problem solving, teamwork, critical thinking, creativity and innovation. These skills are not only related to learning math, science and the arts, but they are also directly linked to many careers, including computer programming and the marine industries. **With the province's first literacy strategy for students in all grades, there will be a greater focus on the teaching of reading and writing and the development of oral communication skills.** Reading Recovery support has been increased for grade 1 students. Students in Grades 4 to 6 will have a renewed curriculum, with more time for literacy and math. Class caps are expanded to grades 4 to 6. To help more students succeed in math, additional supports will be made available for both teachers and students. Career education outcomes will assist students as they begin thinking about their futures and the many possibilities ahead. To learn more about what is new this year, go to <http://novascotia.ca/educationactionplan/> to sign up for ongoing updates from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

INFORMATION UPDATE

We are currently updating our student information files. A printout of your child's current registration information was sent home during the first week in September. If you haven't already done so, please review this information and correct or update as necessary and return the form to the school. **I ask you to ensure we have your correct phone numbers and address at all times, advising the school of any changes as soon as possible.** I would also like to bring your attention to the voluntary self-identification section. Information gathered in this section could help us secure additional resources for our students.

STUDENT FEES

Payment of student Fees in the amount of \$20.00 are due now. Student fees help cover the cost of lock and locker rental, Student Handbook, Student ID and incentives such as school spirit assembly items and awards.

Students playing on a school team are required to make a one-time payment of a \$10.00 sports fee to help cover the cost of tournaments and referees.

Band students who choose to rent an instrument from JMJD are required to pay a total rental fee of \$60.00. The first \$20.00 must be paid before Sept 30th and the remainder can be paid in installments and through class fundraising activities.

Any concerns regarding payment of fees can be directed to the office. A reduced amount can also be arranged for families with more than one child in our school.

CURRICULUM NIGHT

Curriculum Night at JMJH will take place September 29th, 6:00pm – 7:00pm. The purpose of this evening is to provide parents the opportunity to meet their child's teachers and find out what they will be learning throughout the year. Teachers will focus their discussions on curriculum outcomes, unit plans, homework policy, class routines, expectations, activities and goals. They will not discuss individual students during this evening's event. Please join us at 6:00pm. Refreshments will be served.

MATH NEWS

This year our school has been fortunate to be allotted a Math Support Teacher Ms. Cyr to work primarily with grade 7 students to improve their understanding of Number concepts and skills. The Math Support Teacher will provide additional support to students during math class. The Math Support Teacher will also be working with small groups of students outside of the classroom to provide extra instruction and support. The goal of math support is to provide focused instruction to help students fill in identified gaps in their understanding of Number concepts and skills.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL (SAC)

Education is a responsibility shared among teachers, students, support staff, and parents. One key component of this partnership is the School Advisory Council (SAC). This committee is made up of representatives from school staff, student Leadership, Parents and Community. The committee advises the school's principal and staff on policies, curriculum, programs, student discipline, fundraising and parent/school communication all in effort to promote a positive and successful learning environment. We encourage parents to get involved. Our first meeting will be October 12th 5:00 – 6:00pm, please feel free to attend.

HEALTH NEWS

We are pleased to welcome back the support of Mr. Gary MacDonald, IWK School Mental Health Clinician in partnership with Schools Plus. He will work out of our Youth Health Centre Monday mornings.

LOVE (Leave Out The Violence) program is back for our 5th consecutive year. Boys interested in participating are encouraged to sign up on the board outside the Health Centre. First meeting is Thursday September 29th during lunch.

We will continue to provide activities through our Youth Health Centre, through Guidance and community support. Some activities we hope to continue hosting this year are noon hour drop-in healthy lifestyle chats, and Girls Space. Students should keep their ears and eyes open for notices and announcements.

Grade 7 Immunization

Public Health staff will be providing immunizations to Grade 7 students. The students will be offered the following four vaccines on two separate clinics at John Martin to prevent:

1. **Meningococcal Quadrivalent:** bacterial Meningitis Group A, C, Y, and W 135.
2. **Boostrix (Tdap):** Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (whooping cough)
3. **Engerix-B:** Hepatitis B infection (2 doses)
4. **Gardasil:** Human Papillomavirus (HPV), (2 doses)

The following videos have been developed to support parents: <https://vimeo.com/134234183> and students: <https://vimeo.com/134234182>. The first clinic at John Martin will be (November 29th, 2016). Prior to this date consent forms will be sent home and are to be returned to your child's homeroom teacher.

SEVERE ALLERGIES

Our school is a *Scent Sensitive* and *Nut Sensitive* school. There are individuals who have life threatening allergies to nuts, fish and scents; therefore we ask that students refrain from bring these food items into the building. We also ask that they refrain from wearing or spraying scented products.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Our breakfast program has started, providing a nutritious start to the learning day. Students must enter the building through the breezeway doors at 8:15am. The program ends at 8:30am. No students will be admitted after 8:30AM. If the bus arrives late, (after 8:30am) bussed students can see Mr. Blinn (Guidance Counselor) when they arrive if they still require something to eat. All other students must be in the room before 8:30am. Any students interested in volunteering to help prepare breakfast should speak to Ms. MacLachlan or Mr. Blinn.



<http://dacm.hrsb.ns.ca/>

CHECK OUT DARTMOUTH ALL-CITY MUSIC!

Are you in your school band? If so, you can also join us! Please visit <http://dacm.hrsb.ns.ca> for more info and to register for one of our **All-City Bands**! Our Junior Concert, Intermediate Concert and Studio B Jazz Bands do not require an audition. Yes, you **MUST** be in your school band.

Attention grades 7-9 orchestral string students: Are you continuing lessons with us? If so, please visit <http://dacm.hrsb.ns.ca> to register if you haven't already done so. How about registering for one of our orchestras too?

SPORTS NEWS



John Martin athletics has begun 2016-17 with a four team co-ed indoor soccer league. All are welcome!! Magic boys and girls flag football teams will be chosen and compete in the annual tournament. Students are encouraged to get involved and stay involved with a variety of extra-curricular physical activities the school has to offer this year. Volleyball will begin in October. Also if any parents or community members are interested in coaching this year please give Mr. Weren an email to express your interest

jwren@hrsb.ca GO MAGIC GO!

CLUBS



The following clubs will be starting soon. Students should listen to the announcements for start dates and times:

ART (Ms. Vankoughnett)

BOOK (Ms. Sealey)

CHESS (Mr. MacFarlane)

GAME (Ms. MacLachlan)

GUITAR (Mr. McFarlane & Mr. (Rob) Benwell)

Students should listen for the announcements and check the bulletin board for start dates for each club.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES (INCLUDING CELL PHONES)

Students and parents/guardians are reminded to review the use of communications technology as outlined in the Digital Citizenship Policy and the Provincial Code of Conduct. We have been having issues with students texting and receiving texts during class time. This is very distracting to the learning environment. We ask that students refrain from this activity. **As well, if an emergency arises whereby parents/guardians need to contact their child during class time we ask that you contact them through the office phone at 902-464-2408.**



Our fresh healthy pita sandwiches are available in a 6-inch size that's perfect for students. We call it a "petita"! As for nutrition, our chicken breast pita has half of the calories, a quarter of the fat, and half of the sodium of a one-sixth slice of a typical 16-inch veggie pizza, proving that fun food doesn't have to be junk food! All of our options meet Canada's nutritional guidelines as well as Nova Scotia's Food and Beverage Standards for Public Schools.

We will be offering a **Pita Pit lunch day on Wednesdays**, starting next month. Sandwiches will cost only \$4.00 each. Order forms will be sent home with your child and both form and funds will need to be returned on the Monday for a Wednesday lunch.