

# The Cougar Chronicle



## Martha Cullimore Public School

3155 St. Andrew St.  
Niagara Falls, ON L2J 2R7

Principal:  
T. Chilcott

### Important Dates:

**Sept. 9 -**  
Verification forms  
due to the office

**Sept. 13 to 16 -**  
Book Fair

**Sept. 15 –** Open  
House 5:30pm

**Sept. 16 –** Early  
Release Day

**Sept. 27 –** School  
Council 6pm

**Sept. 27 –** Photo  
Day

**Sept. 28 -**  
First Cross Country  
Meet

**Sept. 30 -**  
Walk-a-thon  
Fundraiser

## Principal's Message

### Welcome Back To School!

I am thrilled to be at Martha Cullimore School and to invest in this wonderful community. We have been anticipating the start of another great school year, and my first at Martha Cullimore. A warm welcome is extended to all students, parents and staff who are returning. If you're new to our area, we extend a special hello to you and hope you enjoy your year with us! We have a tradition of high academic standards and positive school participation and, we as a staff, expect our students to work at their best to achieve their best results in all endeavours. As the new principal at Martha Cullimore, I look forward to getting to know each student and celebrating their unique accomplishments. I encourage parental interest, support and participation as we form a team that supports students to reach their full potential. We look forward to working closely with you as we ensure the best possible education for all our students.

### Go Cougars!

If you are a Cougar, you know how to work hard and have fun! There is so much going on at Martha Cullimore that makes it the very best place to be each day...from Colour House Huddles to end-of-month celebration assemblies for students and parents, and all of the learning, sports, clubs and community events that happen in between! We are excited about seeing you and your family out for the many venues we will provide throughout the year. Please keep updated by logging onto our school website at <http://marthac.dsbni.org/> and reading our newsletters monthly. You and your children are the most valued members of the Martha Cullimore community. We want you to have a rich and dynamic school experience!

Each student at Martha Cullimore belongs to a special cross-graded colour-house team and remains an important member for their entire school career! This year, students will wear coloured T-shirts with two important words across the front, "I Matter". Every individual who steps foot in our school matters, has worth and is valued for what they contribute to our school family. Martha Cullimore is a place where all cougars belong! It is our intent to strengthen this sense of worthiness and belonging as we wear our T-shirts at Colour House Huddles each month and go about our daily work at school. We will kick off our Colour House Huddles for our annual Terry Fox fundraiser on the 30th. As usual, we'd love to have you join us for this event.

I value your partnership and would like to encourage you to become part of our School Council. Our first meeting is Tuesday, September 27th at 6pm --- I hope to see you there!

Have a great start, Cougars! I'm proud to be a part of this great school!

Mrs. T. Chilcott

## Staffing Assignments for 2016/2017

To start the school year, the following school organization is in place:

Kindergarten with DECE - Mrs. Hollemans and Ms. Empey

Kindergarten with DECE - Mrs. Brennan and Ms. Longhouse

Grade 1 - Mrs. Carnegie

Grade 1/2 - Mrs. Reid

Grade 2/3 - Mrs. Niven

Grade 4 - Mrs. Semerjian

Grade 4/5 - Mr. Fortuna

Grade 6 - Mr. West

Learning Resource Teacher - Mrs. Stewart

French as a Second Language and Primary Health and Physical Education & Arts - Mme Michaud

Rotary - Mrs. Bellinger

Educational Assistants - Ms. H. Richardson and Ms. W. Lachance

Youth Counsellor - Ms. A. Sample

As usual, these assignments can change through the middle of September based on updated enrolment and staffing allocation. Please keep in mind that there are caps in Grades 1, 2 and 3 (of 20 students) and in the 3/4 class (23 students). These caps must be adhered to in our planning and organization. Due to these guidelines, the number of students in primary and junior classes may fluctuate based on new enrolment. A personal phone call will be made to any family impacted by these changes. Thank you for your patience and understanding with classroom organization!

## We Are Nut and Scent Aware

Please DO NOT send food to school that contains nuts. We have students with life-threatening allergies. It is our policy that students do not exchange or share food for the safety of all. If staff notice a student with a nut product in his/her lunch, the product will be taken to the office, disposed of, and exchanged for another non-nut-containing food.

In addition, we have students with sensitivities and allergies to artificial scents (perfumes, deodorants, colognes, body sprays, etc.). Kindly choose odorless options for hand creams, sanitizers and deodorants to allow every child to enjoy a comfortable learning environment.



## Important Paperwork – Please Return ASAP!

During this first week of school, your children will be bringing home a multitude of papers containing vital information. This will include:

- a Trillium Verification Report (due back to the school by Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup>);
- school accident insurance information;
- "DSBN Information Technology Digital Citizenship Agreement form" which must be signed in order for students to use computers within the school; and
- a 'Permission to Participate' form for Physical Education.

Please take a few moments to carefully complete the required pages and return them with your child as soon as possible. Many thanks!

## Arrival and Dismissal Routines

Supervision before school begins at 8:15 a.m. Parents are asked **NOT** to drop off their children prior to 8:15 as there is no supervision on the playground until that time. Kindergarten students will remain at the north-east end of the school (front yard) until entry. All other students (Grades 1-6) should report to the school yard at the back. We are asking parents to drop off their children before school and pick them up at dismissal, by waiting just outside their official entry/exit doors. The students will be expected to use these doors as a regular part of their routine each day. Allowing students to enter and exit independently will foster their sense of independence. For those older students with Kindergarten siblings, we are happy to arrange one pick-up location for parents/guardians. Please speak with your child's kindergarten teacher or Mrs. Chilcott if this is the case. Any children not picked up promptly at the end of the day will return inside the school to wait at the office until their transportation arrives. We appreciate your cooperation and promptness with drop off and pick up times.

K – front north-east kindergarten doors  
Gr1 to 2/3 – west primary doors (mid-tarmac)  
Gr 4 to 6 – south-west junior doors (back tarmac)

Students who take the bus will have attendance taken on the front sidewalk and will board the bus.

## Visitor Sign In

We ask all parents/guardians and other visitors (including co-op students, older siblings, etc.) who wish to enter the school building at any time to comply with the Ontario Ministry of Education's Safe Schools guidelines. To ensure student safety and to meet the Ministry's guidelines, all parents and visitors must:

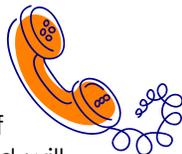
1. Only access the school through the front door.
2. Check in at the office before going into the hallway or a classroom.
3. Sign in using the "Visitor Sign In" book located in the main office.
4. Use washrooms designated for adults, as student washrooms are for children only.

It is our hope that the 30 seconds it takes to sign in will not inconvenience or hinder our wonderful parent volunteers and visitors to the building. We welcome your presence at Martha Cullimore!

**Thank you for your support in this matter of student safety.**

## Absences, Lates and Attendance Calls

Please help us to ensure the safety of our students by calling when your child will be absent or late to school. Office hours are 8:00a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Outside of these hours you may call anytime, day or night, and leave a message on our answering system. The number is 905-358-5142. We always need to know the whereabouts of each and every student. Your co-operation in calling us will assist our office staff immensely! If you haven't called us, we'll be calling you. We will call your home first, followed by your place of business, and if necessary the numbers you have listed as emergency contacts. Also, all students who arrive late to school (any time during the school day) must report to the office to receive an admit slip. In addition, students leaving at any time during the school day will be required to sign-out at the office.



**WHEN YOUR CHILD WILL BE LATE OR ABSENT, PLEASE CALL 905-358-5142.**

## Let Us Take Care of That!

If you are dropping off items for your child (lunch, homework, clothing etc.) please leave them at the office and let staff take care of delivery. We will see that your child receives them.

### Volunteers

We encourage volunteer help in all aspects of our school program. Please consider being a school volunteer (i.e., classroom assistance, reading volunteer, etc.). Please notify your child's teacher or call us at the office if you are interested.

**There is also a tear-off at the end of this newsletter that you may send in.**

## Student Medications

The safety of all students is of great importance to every staff member and parent. Any over-the-counter and prescribed medication that is to be administered to students at school must have an authorization form completed and on file. Forms are available at the office and via our website. Medication must be in the labelled prescription bottle, with name and dosage information clearly marked. Over the counter medications must also be in the proper container with dosage information clearly marked. Medications of any kind must NOT be left in students' backpacks. If your child requires any medication, please bring the medication to the office and we will review the completed form. Any medical conditions or concerns MUST be brought to the attention of Mrs. Chilcott or Mrs. Lamb. A form entitled "**EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**" needs to be completed for highly allergic [anaphylactic] children and asthmatic children. These forms are kept with the necessary medication in an appropriate area of the school and the names and photographs of affected students are compiled so that all staff are aware of our students' medical concerns. Epi-pen training is provided to our staff by our school nurse from the Niagara Regional Health Department every October.



**OPEN HOUSE**

September 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm

## Cell Phones and Technology

Students are not permitted to use or wear a personal music device during classes or breaks or on the school yard. The DSBN policy on cell phone use requires that students turn off cell phones on school property. **Students with cell phones are expected to have them stored securely (locked in a locker) and turned off while at school.** For privacy reasons, students should not bring cameras to school, and cameras on phones must not be used. **Students are discouraged from bringing these devices to school, unless they are for a specific instructional purpose in which case students will be directly supervised. In this instance, a letter home to parents will outline the intended purpose, timeline and specific guidelines for educational use.** Please note that the school assumes no responsibility for the safety of these items.

## Parking Lot Safety



We recognize that Martha Cullimore is a busy school with wonderfully involved parents. Often that means that the parking lot is busy, too! In order to ensure the safety of our students at each dismissal time, we require all visitors to our parking lot to follow parking lot guidelines:

- Students must use proper walkways and meet parents before entering the parking lot. All students must be directly supervised by parents when in the lot.
- Drivers wishing to drop students off directly onto safe sidewalk zones should use the Kiss & Ride lane through the parking lot and drop off at south end of the parking lot ONLY. There is access to a school sidewalk from that location. We will continue to monitor how this arrangement is working.
- Never park in the through lane of the parking lot.
- Never park in the area adjacent to the bus lane.

Students are not permitted into the parking lot at any time without an adult. Convenience or timesaving is never worth the cost of a life. We ask that parents please meet their children at their exit doors and then escort them safely to the car. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and vigilance in ensuring the safety of our students.

## Custody Orders

When couples separate or divorce, parents generally share custody of their children. Sometimes, however, other arrangements are made and set out

in a court order. The school cannot comply with these alternate arrangements unless we have a copy of the court order on file in your child's *Ontario School Record*. Should you have such a court order that we should be aware of, please speak with Mrs. Chilcott and share the most current copy with the school office.

## Dressing for Success at Martha Cullimore

The way students dress sets a tone in the classroom and hallways. Our underlying principle is that students should come to school dressed for work, not for a trip to the beach or the mall. The consistent enforcement of our dress code will enhance our educational environment, help create a tone conducive to the achievement of excellence and contribute to an overall positive image of our school.

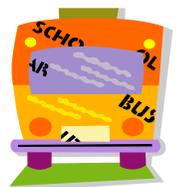
### Please keep in mind:

- Tank tops need to have a strap of at least 3 finger widths
- All apparel should be free from inappropriate language/pictures
- Shorts must be an appropriate length (arms against sides, shorts should meet finger tips on legs)
- Undergarments should not be exposed
- Hats and sunglasses are appropriate at recess, but not indoors
- **Shoes must be worn** indoors due to safety/fire regulations

If students do not comply with the dress code, they will be asked to change, find a sweater to wear and/or remove inappropriate items. In the event of the student not having any accessible appropriate clothing, a phone call will be made to the parent(s) and the student will remain at the office until appropriate apparel is available.

## School Bus

Parents, please do not give your son/daughter permission to bring a friend home with them on the bus. The bus company would appreciate your support, as the teachers who are on bus duty, and the bus drivers will have no choice but to tell the students "No", they cannot get on the bus.



Also, proper and acceptable behaviour on a school bus is critical to making every child's bus ride safe.

### NIAGARA STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The mandate of NSTS is to plan and manage safe, efficient and effective transportation services for the students of Niagara. For information, visit the NSTS website [www.nsts.ca](http://www.nsts.ca) or call 905-346-0290.

## Early Release Day: September 16

On the early release day, all K to Grade 6 busses will arrive to pick up students three hours earlier than the regularly scheduled bus departure times.



## School Council

Our first School Council meeting will be on Tuesday, September 27th. Please join us for the election and refreshments!

## Photo Day

Martha Cullimore students will have their individual photos and class pictures taken on September 27th. Please come dressed in bright or light colours, bring a comb if necessary and remember to wear your best smile! Retakes will be in October.



## CHANGES TO SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

The Immunization of School Pupils Act is a law to protect the entire community. Changes have been made to this law to improve the health and safety of Ontario's school children.

To attend school, your child is now required to be immunized for:

- Varicella (Chicken Pox)
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
- Meningococcal Disease

Dose requirements and the time between shots have also been updated for the following:

- Tetanus
- Diphtheria
- Polio
- Mumps



The requirements for measles and rubella have not changed. Go to [www.niagararegion.ca/vaccines](http://www.niagararegion.ca/vaccines) for more.

## Student Organizer

All students in Grades 1 to 6 have been provided with a customized planner. This is an ideal tool for both organization and communication. We are asking that each student pay **\$8.00** toward the cost of the organizer as soon as possible.

Please take a few minutes to discuss the importance of using the organizer faithfully with your son/daughter. Look over the *Code of Conduct* information presented in the organizer and talk about it with your child at an age-appropriate level. Also, please ensure that you and your child build a routine around signing the agenda and putting it back in the backpack daily. This will help tremendously. Your support in this important matter is appreciated!

## Book Fair

We will be hosting a *Scholastic* Book Fair September 13th through 16th in our library. This is a great opportunity to find highly engaging, current titles at reasonable prices. All of our students will have a chance to visit the book fair during break. Scholastic donates a portion of their proceeds back to our library so this is a great way to support our library collection as well!

**HAPPY READING!**

## September Spirit Day and Terry Fox Walk-a-thon

During the month of September we will be holding a joint fundraiser for Terry Fox and Martha Cullimore in the form of a walk-a-thon on Friday, September 30. Proceeds from this fundraiser will be split 50/50 between the Terry Fox Foundation and our Martha Cullimore Playground Fund. In the best interest of students, we endeavor to be proactive in

maintaining equipment and the playground border is in need of costly repair. We will send home more information regarding this special event under separate cover later in the month!

### School Advisory Council

If you are interested in becoming more actively involved in your child's education and the inner workings of Martha Cullimore Public School, we encourage you to join our **School Council!**

This group meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. to discuss current issues, educational trends, and the future of our school. We welcome new members!

Please consider joining us at our first meeting on **Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.** We will be electing our executive and establishing our general membership during this meeting.

Look for our School Council Members at the Meet the Teacher Event or contact the school office if you'd like further information. A council nomination form is attached (self-nomination is permitted) to this newsletter for your convenience.



### From Your School Nurse

Did you know that every elementary and secondary school in Niagara has a school nurse? The school nurse provides teachers, parents and students support and resources on health related topics, including:

- Healthy eating
- Physical activity
- Tobacco use prevention
- Parenting
- Mental and emotional health
- Puberty and sexual health
- Drugs and alcohol

To learn more about the school nurse call 905-688-8248 or 1-888-505-6074 ext. 7379 or visit [www.niagara-region.ca](http://www.niagara-region.ca) search school nurse.

### Before and After-School Daycare

The YMCA of Niagara is pleased to be offering before and after school child care at Orchard Park School. This childcare center will be providing care for children at both Orchard Park and Martha Cullimore Schools. If you or someone you know is interested in child care please create an account on the *Niagara Region Onelist* [www.niagara.onehsn.com](http://www.niagara.onehsn.com). The *Niagara Region Onelist* is a centralized waitlist for licensed child care programs in the Niagara Region. Care will be offered as space becomes available. The centre opens at 7am every morning and is open until 6pm each afternoon. For any specific childcare questions please contact the centre directly at (905) 246-9853.

### September Newsletter Ballot

What do you love most about Martha Cullimore School?

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Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child(ren)'s grades: \_\_\_\_\_

## Martha Cullimore Public School School Council Parent Candidate Nomination Form

I wish to nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for an elected position as a parent/guardian representative on the school council. (If you are nominating yourself, please write your own name on the blank.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I am the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, who is currently registered at this school.  
(name of student)

The person I have nominated is an employee of the District School Board of Niagara:  yes  no

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nominator's (or Candidate's) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please return this form to the school office prior to September 26 or bring it with you to the School Council Meeting on September 27 at 6:00 p.m. in the library. We will be electing our executive and also establishing our membership that evening.

