



Sister Mary Phillips School

Dear SMP families,

Happy New Year! And welcome to 2017! I hope your Christmas was restful, full of friends & family and brought many blessings to your family. Our family enjoyed our time together with no extra curricular activities or schedules. We cherish this time.

I pray that 2017 proves to be much better than 2016 was. I pray that we are all blessed with good health, good luck and good friends in this new year.

We will be starting Gr.4-6 skiing this month. Additionally, we will be having Shine Dance and Judo during our PE classes this month.

Our School Council Sno-Fest Dance is on Friday January 20th. This is a beautiful evening that is a fund-raiser for our School Council. You can support this evening by attending, purchasing basket tickets and/or donating to the basket. You will enjoy this time with your family!

Our Family Christmas Craft Night was an ultimate success! Thank you for attending and supporting our Christmas activity. We hope you loved it!

Wishing you a joyous January.

God bless...

Lou Ann Demers-Noble
Principal

December Bucket Winners

EEP – Luke Abbott/Deanna Culligan
EEP/K – Abigail Taylor/Abheri Azad
K – Ryan Sen/Emily Garces-Guillen
1B – Mariah Pennell
1E – Grayson Dempsey
1P – Precious Muca
2B – Caiden Hunt
2F – Benjamin Schimpf
2H – Joshua Fitzpatrick
3B – Dhyana Rav
3C – Alyssa Kosch
3H – Sadie Antoine
4F – Ava Hartigan
4R – Bella Howard
5B – Avery Fraser
5S – Jade Gillgower
6M – Taylor Breen
6V – Nana Umperville
PE – Gabriel Benteau
Platinum Bucket Class Winner – 2H
Most Tokens – 72 – 1E

Grinch Day!



The students in 1P and 1B look great in their Grinch Day masks!



Lots of wonderful creations on Crazy Hair Day!

Thank you to all the parents who park in the church parking lot, bus loop stalls and on the street, instead of in our staff parking lot (which is designated for staff only). We appreciate you putting our students' safety first!



Father Reddy visited our grade 4 class to teach them about the Christmas Story.

January

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 NO SCHOOL	3 Welcome Back!	4	5 HL- Chez Max	6 HL- Meals & Things Catering 10:30-Epiphany Liturgy (1B/1E)
9	10 AM-Gr.5 needles SHINE – EEP- Gr.6 SMP Clothing/Colours Day!	11	12 HL- Pizza Hut	13 HL- Subway
16 Judo in Gym (K-Gr.6)	17 Judo in Gym (K-Gr.6) Jersey Day \$1 for SMP Giving Cupboard	18	19 HL- Opa!	20 HL- Wok Box Gr.4-6 Ski Day SnoFest Dance!
23	24	25	26 HL- Boston Pizza Family Literacy Day at SMP	27 NO SCHOOL
30	31 2-Assembly – Tacky Tourist Theme			

Interested in SMP School Clothing?
<http://sistermaryphillips.entripyshops.com/>



A monthly publication provided by your child's school in recognition of your role as a partner in education.

Resources for Families

Autism Conference

January 25 – 27, 2017

There will be a three day event hosted by Children's Autism Services of Edmonton.

The conference will feature guest speakers: Deepak Chopra, who will discuss "the Future of Wellbeing"; Carol Gray, known for the development of 'Social Stories' – an evidence-based practice used worldwide with people of autism of all ages, and Michael McCreary, a self-labelled "AspieComic".

For more information visit: www.ablhdemautism.ca

Teaching critical thinking skills

Online research is one of the most important ways students gather facts and resources for homework and school projects. Students and schools use digital tools the same way we all do: to access libraries of information anytime, anywhere and for any purpose.

Having this information at our fingertips is useful and has reshaped education in many ways. The problem is when questionable, non-credible sources are cited as fact.

It is critical that students learn how to distinguish good Internet sources from bad – or unreliable – ones. But that is not always something students understand how to do.

Preparation for your child's future

Alberta Education has "critical thinking" and "managing information" as two of its eight core competencies.

<https://education.alberta.ca/competencies/competencies-services/>.

Managing information, means in part "evaluating authenticity, reliability or validity to appropriately interpret or use information." Also, as students

develop critical thinking skills it is expected that they will learn to "[question] and [analyze] evidence, assertions or assumptions."

These skills are important in today's world, and important for your child's success in it.

How parents can help with critical thinking skills

There are many helpful educator guides and resources for classroom critical thinking lessons. Parents can reinforce these lessons at home by using many of the same tips.

Learning to think

Microsoft's Educator Network provides free tools for teachers, including a Critical Thinking Teaching Guide that has video guides for younger students.

These guides start with a simple reminder for students. To be good at thinking, you have to:

1. Decide to be a good thinker. Ask questions, be clear, think for yourself.
2. Practice thinking every day. Critical thinkers look for problems in their thinking.

According to the site, "These materials can help you teach students how to ask the right questions, to think for themselves, to research subjects more effectively, and ascertain the validity and reliability of information skills that will be critical to their future success in the connected 21st century digital world."

<https://education.microsoft.com>

Think critically to determine reliability online

Reading critically is a necessary skill for both digital and printed sources; however, research suggests that the problem is more pronounced with online sources.

"Reading online is not like a textbook, where you know the information has already been vetted."



Resources for Families

8233 Elena Forzani, University of Connecticut
research.
<https://files.eric.gov/fulltext/ED582333.pdf>
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311111111>

Use the CRAP test (Currency, Reliability, Authority, Purpose/Point of View)

Pardon this slang term, but the acronym may help you remember the four content tests for determining good online sources:

- **Currency:** How recent is the information? How recently has the website been updated? Is it current enough for your topic?
- **Reliability:** What kind of information is included in the resource? Is content of the resource primarily opinion? Is it balanced? Does the creator provide references or sources for data or quotations?
- **Authority:** Who is the creator or author? What are the credentials? Who is the publisher or sponsor? Are they reputable? What is the publisher's interest (if any) in this information? Are there advertisements on the website?
- **Purpose/Point of View:** Is this fact or opinion? Is it biased? Is the creator/author trying to sell you something?
https://bit.ly/1H_9vNz

Resources for parents

There are many websites that offer tips to parents who want to help their children improve their ability to think critically.

See these sites for more information:

Enhancing Critical-Thinking Skills in Children:

Tips for Parents
<https://tipshere.com/ask/822>

Teaching critical thinking: An evidence-based guide

www.teachingwithaheart.com/teaching-critical-thinking.html

Critical Thinking: Basic Questions and Answers

www.criticalthinking.com/parents/critical-thinking-basic-questions.asp?srsltid=AfmBOopw1409

Think About It: Critical Thinking

www.sebastia.com/parents/resources/articles/thinking-skills-for-nine-11s/think-about-it-critical-thinking