

Welcome back OLS families! I hope you had a good summer and spent time doing the things you love most.

As most of you know, our Welcome Back night would have been in the school gym where we would all be present, getting a chance to chat and reconnect since the summer break. Instead, we are having a virtual 'meet the teachers' night, so hopefully you will all take the time to read this letter.

A couple of weeks ago, I got the chance to personally welcome the new Kindergarten families. I'm always excited for these families as this is an important stepping stone for their little ones. The decision to bring them to this school is one that we would all stand behind considering the experience we've all had. This year, my youngest is in Grade 7 and as exciting as it is to see him getting closer to his next stage of school life, I'm also sad that I will be breaking away from what I believe to be the best school ever. I may just try and keep volunteering because I truly love this school.

I know we were all looking forward to a more 'normal' school start this year, but I think we all see that 'normal' is not something we can really get back to just yet – living with COVID and continuing to abide by the protocols and staying up to date with the requirements are things we need to do in order to keep our families safe. I'm not going to get into too much as I know this conversation is one that can stir up quite a debate, but I simply want to say that I know our staff; from Mr. Balletta to our teachers, and supporting staff, will make sure that our children remain as safe as possible. Of course, it's up to families to make sure that they follow the protocols and keep children home if they are not feeling well. At the end of the day, we are all wanting the same thing, and that's to keep our children safe.

I want to praise our teachers and supporting staff, who have been consistently working hard, adapting to the on-going changes, and making sure our children's education is not being compromised with what's going on in the world. They continue to persevere through these challenging times and we owe them a lot of gratitude.

The school sets a high standard for itself, and although we do our best to set protocols in place to ensure the school runs smoothly, challenges may arise. If you have any issues, you are to direct your questions or concerns directly to your child's teacher. If you feel that you need further discussions, you are welcome to contact Mr. Balletta by email or by leaving a message with the office. If you continue to feel that your issues are not being addressed, you may contact the PEC and this can be done in writing and submitting that letter to the school office prior to our meeting. Our meetings are held once a month, every 3rd Tuesday of the month.

With regards to Participation – at this time Bingo continues to be closed. We are having discussions on whether Bingo will re-open in the new year and will update the bingo families once we decide. Just as a side note, when Bingo shut down due to COVID, parents were advised that the job placements they were placed in were on a temporary basis and that if Bingo were to restart, that these families would have to go back to their previous positions. Again, we will follow up with families once any changes are made and will allow enough time for families to make adjustments to their schedules.

Please note that the job position that you were assigned to last year, will not change and will continue for this school year. New families who have not been contacted by our participation coordinator for their job position, must contact Lisa Mannella immediately.

I've always said that this school can not run the way it does without the time and effort we get from our families. Every single job assigned is important and needed. As a committee we try to accommodate families with their schedules, but every family is expected to put their hours in any way possible that they can. This goes for any extra curricular activities that we hold for our community. It takes a village to get things done and our families have always been very good at putting in their extra time for such things as the Halloween Bash, Galas, etc. I know that because of COVID our big events have been at a halt, but our fundraising committee has been awesome at coming up with new and different ways to try and raise money for our school. I ask you to please keep your eye out on future events that ask for parent volunteers and to please sign up or assist in any way you can. Just by contributing your time and/or resources makes a huge impact to our events.

I want to welcome Father Rosemond to our school. I know that our community will show him the love and support we always give to our Pastors. One of Father Rosemond's goals is to bring our community back to church, in a safe way of course.

Lastly, please read your emails from the school and check the school website regularly. These notices are important and will give you key dates and reminders for the school year. If you are not receiving emails from the school, please contact the office as soon as possible to update your contact information.

Let us all pray for a safe, fun and successful school year.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Cidalia Pashalidis
OLS PEC Chair