

June 10th, 2011

Information regarding the Lord's Prayer

Memo: To Parents of Sturgeon Heights School

Over the years our school community and our country, has become more diverse. With this in mind, we at SHS want everyone to feel valued and respected as members of the SHS community. We recognize the long traditions of our community and its' contribution to where we are today. Part of our Sturgeon Heights culture is to be welcoming and open.

Over this past school year, the school-wide broadcast of the Lord's Prayer has been a topic of discussion. The school administration has determined that we have an ethical and legal responsibility to recognize the rights of all members of our school community. Conversations resulted in communication via the school newsletter that changes were proposed for September, 2011. In order to keep you informed, it is important to send out this memo regarding our most recent conversations which included parents and administration.

We plan to broaden the scope of our morning exercises to be more inclusive of our diverse community. It has been decided to end our practice of broadcasting the Lord's Prayer over the P. A. system. O Canada will continue to be broadcast daily and our seasonal celebrations will remain unaffected.

Options to broadcasting the Lord's Prayer over the P. A. system may include one or a combination of more than one from the following:

- Recitation of the Lord's Prayer in designated classrooms as part of daily morning exercises
- Personal reflections in designated classrooms as part of the daily morning exercises
- School wide, quiet, personal reflections as part of daily morning exercises, in place of Lord's Prayer
- A more holistic (including all faiths) approach to spirituality school wide as part of daily morning exercises
- Students sharing moments of reflection about personal gratitude school wide as part of daily morning exercises rather than Lord's Prayer
- A non-denominational affirmation school wide as part of daily morning exercises in place of the Lord's Prayer

At 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 6th we will hold a meeting with parents in the Sturgeon Heights School gymnasium to provide clarity on how these options would materialize. If you would like to contribute additional options to the above list that support our intent to be inclusive, please submit, in writing, to the Principal of Sturgeon Heights School on or before September 1st, 2011.

The September 6th meeting will be an opportunity to come together for further clarity and to develop solutions to move our school forward collectively. After options have been outlined, parents will be anonymously surveyed to rank their preferences. Data will be compiled and reviewed by the committee of parents and administrator to determine preferred outcomes. We look forward to implementation of one or more of the options above, the week following September 6.

This communiqué has been developed collaboratively by a committee of parents and school administration.