Administrator’s Message
March, 2013

We have had a busy two months at Pierre Berton. Our students have been working hard on the curriculum expectations for their grade using assessment to help them to understand their strengths and to identify areas for growth. The term one report cards provided an opportunity to identify levels of achievement and set goals for next term. It is important for students and parents to continue to dialogue about learning at home and to ensure regular routines are in place at home to complete homework and to engage in daily reading.

We held our first movie night at our school. Approximately 200 parents and students attended the kindergarten to grade three movie night to enjoy the viewing of ‘Wreck-It Ralph’. It was great to see the community come together for a relaxing evening. We are looking forward to hosting a movie night for our junior and intermediate students in April.

Our Dance-a-thon was a great success. We appreciate the support from all of our families to raise funds to enhance programming at our school. We raised $4 909.55. The students had so much fun dancing with their friends. It was a nice way to lead into the March Break.

Today, we are launching our new Pierre Berton website. We hope that you will find it user-friendly and it will provide you with helpful information about the school and the board. Please check out http://pierreberton.ps.yrdsb.ca/.

We will be celebrating Earth Hour at our school on Friday, March 22, 2013. Families can participate in the ‘official’ Earth Hour on Saturday, March 23rd at 8:30 pm.

Planning for the Next School Year

If you are planning to move prior to the beginning of September 2013, please let the office know as soon as possible. We are in the process of planning for next year and this information is extremely helpful when we make enrolment projections.
EQAO will take place at PBPS between May 27—June 7. If your child is in grade 3 or 6, please ensure that vacations and appointments are not booked during this time period.

The EQAO tests students’ skills in reading, writing and mathematics at key points in their elementary-school education.

Students are tested twice while in elementary school:

-at the end of Grade 3, to assess what they have learned throughout the Primary Division (Grades 1-3) and

-at the end of Grade 6, to assess what they have learned throughout the Junior Division (Grades 4-6).

Teachers and students have been working hard all year and continue to do so in our grade 3 and 6 classes in order to be ready for the testing. The EQAO test is not the same as classroom tests and has different goals and provides different kinds of information about student learning. Classroom tests provide the richest and most comprehensive measure of your child’s educational progress and measure how well students have learned specific information about topics and themes that have been taught in the classroom. EQAO assessments test students on the same skills, using the same questions used for every other student in the province.

The best way to support your child in writing the test is by supporting his or her success at school throughout the year. You may also want to prepare them by making sure that they get enough sleep and a good breakfast on the days of the test. Encourage good study habits and challenge critical-thinking skills. Stay in good communication with your child(ren)’s teacher. Good reading skills are also important so reading daily is encouraged.

You can also browse their website at www.eqao.com. There you will find a parent section with sample questions and more detailed information.

Student Leadership Team

The months of January and February have been busy ones for our student leadership team. They had a very successful Twin Day, Crazy Hat Day and Pink day in honour of Anti-bully. These days were organized by our Student Leadership Team. Many students and staff members had fun dressing up like each other, wearing a crazy hat or coming in pink. It is great to see such school spirit at Pierre Berton P.S.

Light It Up Blue!

Once again, Pierre Berton will Light It Up Blue to raise money for Autism Awareness. We encourage all of our students to wear blue on April 2, 2013 in support of Autism awareness. We also ask students to bring a toonie for Autism so we can support this cause as a school community.
Healthy Schools

Students are bringing in healthy snacks at Pierre Berton thanks to our Healthy Snack Bingo.

Each morning during announcements a healthy snack is announced and students have an opportunity to colour in the square representing that snack on the class bingo card. The winning class gets to host our school friend “Freggie.”

Pierre Berton Public School “Huddles Up” Against Bullying with The Toronto Argonauts!

On February 25th, The Toronto Argonauts visited Pierre Berton Public School as part of our monthly Tribes Assembly. They came to speak and share their stories about bullying.

The Anti-Bullying Committee at Pierre Berton has been working very hard to gather school data, prepare morning announcements, create posters, produce an anti-bullying music video and design the banner pictured above. We are now having every student in our school sign the banner as a mark of their commitment to keeping our school safe and bully-free!

The Anti-Bullying Committee has been working and will continue to work hard to further educate our student body and remind us that we all hold responsibility to ensure we have a safe and bully-free school!

Eco Schools—The Golden Garbage Can

The Golden Garbage Award is the award given each month to the class that consistently turns off the lights when no one is in the class, turns off their net books and properly disposes of their garbage and recycling. This past month’s winner of the golden garbage award is...

Mr. Li’s Music Classes

The BIG Crunch at PBPS

Building healthy school communities, bite by bite! On March 7th at 2:30 p.m. every student and teacher took a giant synchronized crunch into a locally grown apple. Food Share's annual Great Big Crunch invites school communities across Ontario to learn about healthy eating and local food systems.

Yearbook Committee

After March Break, a group of students in the junior and intermediate divisions will begin to work on our school yearbook. They are very excited to begin uploading photos and designing the pages.
Coming Soon....
School Council Presents
Movie Night
at Pierre Berton Public School
Grades 4-8 Students only

Thursday, April 11th
@ 6:30 p.m. in our school gym

Stay tuned for more information about ticket sales to be sent home from our school council.
Tickets will include a drink, popcorn and the movie.

The YRDSB has launched a new web reporting tool that allows students, parents and community members to report bullying incidents as well as positive behaviours and events related to our students and learning environments. The online tool, called Report It!, is a web button on the YRDSB homepage (www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca) that links to an online form where users report bullying or positive behaviours that are consistent with Character Matters.

French as a Second Language Programs

Recommendations based on YRDSB’s French as a Second Language (FSL) review are being implemented to allow YRDSB to continue to offer its total early FI program while also accommodating the growing number of students who wish to participate. These recommendations will also enable our Board to strengthen its Core French program to provide more active and authentic learning. One of the recommendations was to establish consistency among elementary FI schools in terms of the hours of French instruction and the subjects taught in French. Regardless of where students attend a YRDSB French Immersion program, they will have access to the same number of hours of French instruction. All subjects will be offered in French in Grades 1 to 3. Starting in Grade 4, English will be introduced as a subject, math will be taught in English and a portion of the Physical Education, Health and Arts subjects will also be taught in English. Starting in Grade 6, the program will be shared equally between French and English instruction. We’ve also developed an accommodation plan to ensure we can continue to welcome all students who wish to enrol in the French Immersion program and provide long-term consistency and equity of access to all students in York Region. Implementing the recommendations from our FSL review will allow YRDSB to continue to offer high quality, sustainable FSL programs throughout the Board.
The Learning Commons is a place where students come not only to read but to inquire. It’s a place where you can ask questions about the world and find answers. As I have mentioned in previous newsletters, there is a large amount of information available to students today and it is easily accessible.

In the Learning Commons there is a continued focus on teaching students the life-long skills they need to navigate an information-rich society. This month, many classes have been preparing for report writing and the preparation is beginning in the Learning Commons.

Students are learning that before beginning to collect facts from books or the internet, there are a few very important steps. Research begins with an action called activating schema. Students are familiar with the term schema; they know it as the information we already have in our mind about a topic. When we activate our schema we begin thinking about all the words that we know connected with a particular topic. To make our thinking visible we record all the words in a brainstorm. When brainstorming, students record all the words that come to mind about a topic.

After the brainstorm is complete, students can then begin grouping words together and labelling the groups with category names. The wonderful thing that happens next, is that once the categories are labelled more words come to mind and more of the schema is activated.
It is these words and categories that students will use to begin to search for new information. They can search on the internet using the category words or in the index of a book. Once they go to the appropriate spot in the text, they will discover that there is more to know about the topic than when they began with their brainstorm. So begins the research and inquiry process.

At home, the most helpful thing you can do for your child is to talk to them about the world around them. As they communicate with you, they are consolidating the ideas and understandings that they gather from their experiences. In this way, their schema expands and they have more to bring to learning experiences at school.

The Forest of Reading has arrived at PBPS! We have received a large number of books that have been nominated for an award by the Ontario Library Association. It is a kid-only vote and students across Ontario will be participating. The winning author will receive an award in April. Students from grades 3-8 have signed on and are busily reading every chance they get! Students in grades 1 and 2 meet weekly in the Learning Commons to hear a read aloud from their selection of books. It is an exciting time!

In keeping with our focus on critical thinking at PBPS, students will help to create the criteria for selecting the book that will win. As I tell the students, this is a real award for a real author so, we want to make our selection carefully and thoughtfully.

Over the next few months, I will keep you updated on how our reading is going!

As always,

Happy Reading!
## 2012—2013 Pierre Berton School Council

**Co-Chairs**  
Linda Aversa  
Rajesh Dhoum

**Treasurer**  
Hannah Mark

**Secretary**  
Lisa Simonelli-Rennie

**Parent Members**  
Navneet Chandok  
Maurice Guzzo  
Erica Lien  
Hardev Pabla  
Aruna Sharma

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## Pierre Berton School Council

The Pierre Berton School Council met on February 27, 2012. Highlights from the meeting include:

- **Fundraising Update:** Plans to begin ‘Panini Lunches’ in the spring; Dance-a-thon plans well underway; QSP fundraiser for May
- **Input sought for new PBPS website** — it will go ‘live’ in March
- **Sharing of School events:** Tribes/Huddle Up Assembly; Grade 8 Graduation; Yearbook; Forest of Reading & Light it Up Blue Campaign

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## 2012–2013 School Council Meeting Dates

- April 15, 2013
- May 27, 2013

All School Council meetings take place at 7:00 pm in the Learning Commons. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend.

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## Pizza Lunches

The School Council has organized the next round of pizza lunches for the school year. Pizza lunches continue to be on Wednesdays. Please note the dates for this term:

- March 20, 2013
- March 27, 2013
- April 3, 2013
- April 10, 2013
- April 17, 2013
- April 24, 2013
- May 1, 2013
- May 8, 2013
- May 15, 2013
- May 22, 2013
- May 29, 2013
- June 5, 2013
- June 12, 2013
- June 19, 2013

Thank you to the School Council for organizing this fundraiser to support the students at Pierre Berton Public School.

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## QSP Magazine Fundraiser

**MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL TIME**

Renew your magazine subscription orders through our upcoming magazine fundraiser for Mother’s Day. When renewing directly through the publishers, Pierre Berton Public School does not receive a potion of the sale for fundraising.

Our magazine fundraiser will commence at the end of April 2013. Stay tuned for more information.
### March 2013

**Character Matters!**

**Honesty**
We behave in a sincere, trustworthy, and truthful manner.

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#### Event Calendar

- **3rd March**
  - **International Women's Day**
- **9th March**
  - **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**
- **16th March**
  - **MID-WINTER BREAK**
- **21st March**
  - **Earth Hour**
  - **Naw Ruz**
- **28th March**
  - **Friday Schedule / Pizza Lunch**
  - **Magha Puja Day**

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**Notes:**
- **Pizza Lunch**
- **Dance-a-thon**
- **Updated: 8-Mar-13**

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  - eMail: pierre.berton.ps@yrdsb.edu.on.ca

**Online Resources:**

- www.tumblebooklibrary.com
  - Username: pierreber + Password: books
  - Ebooks: my.abdodigital.com
    - Username: pbebooks + Password: pblibrary

**Website:**

- www.pierre.berton.ps@yrdsb.edu.on.ca

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**Pizza Lunch**

- **Friday Schedule / Pizza Lunch**
- **Tribes Assembly**
  - **PASSOVER / PESACH**