

Hello Parents,

We hope you are well. If possible, please take the time to read this Earth Month Update and request from our Eco club! To kick off Earth month we watched an eco-dance performance on April 7th in our gym called, **The Fourth R : (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and....Revolutionize!)** We are very excited to announce that our school is in the process of *revolutionizing* eco practices as a follow-up.

In April, students engaged in 2 competitions between classes that will hopefully set the tone for the rest of the year and even the next school year starting in September: our Lunch Waste contest (to see which class brings the most Litterless Lunches or Boomerangs their lunches the most often), and our Lights Out contest (to see which class remembers most often to turn their lights out when they leave the room). We'd also like to see our students begin to carpool more often to reduce emissions. **By revolutionizing these three aspects of school life - our lunches, lights and commutes - we will be making our school a greener, more sustainable and healthier place for our students.** These guidelines will require a little effort on everyone's part, but we believe this is crucial to combating climate change. We can't wait to come together and get started!

First, we want to eliminate unnecessary waste during lunches. We ask that you kindly send your student with a clean tupperware, fork, knife, spoon, plastic bowl and reusable water bottle to school everyday, if possible. Please also encourage your child to bring any other containers (juice boxes, pop cans etc.) home to recycle, and to bring food scraps home at the end of the day to compost at home. Currently, our facilities are creating enormous amounts of waste everyday (even during our Earth Month competition) so it's important for us to get proactive. Having the students bring their own tableware will not only help them learn about creating less waste but it will also help reduce our school's carbon emissions. Since classrooms can only recycle paper, taking other recyclables home reduces greenhouse gas emissions that would otherwise be released when products are made from raw materials rather than from recycled materials. For example, recycling one aluminum can uses about 95% less energy than producing aluminum from raw materials, meaning 20 cans can be made with the same amount of energy as one can made from virgin materials. Recycling also saves resources and reduces pollution compared to landfilling. **We continue to ask that students "boomerang" home any lunch waste to recycle or compost at home. Even wrappers and other waste for the garbage bin should go home in a "Boomerang Lunch" each day, as this gives us the opportunity to reflect on the garbage we are making and to consider how we could reduce our lunch waste further.**

Secondly, we are encouraging students and families to set up carpooling plans with each other. Carpooling is a great way to reduce CO2 emissions and help to fight climate change. Why not choose a friend of your child's and set up a schedule? We think it's a great idea! And while students are being dropped off, please be sure to observe the Hamilton City by-law of no idling for more than 3 minutes. We have signs placed in the parking lot as a reminder.

Finally, we continue to encourage our students to turn off the lights when they are the last one to leave a room. This is an energy saving practice that can be easily implemented both at home and at school. And it helps to save money too!

The Eco Club has further "greened" our fundraising practices by adding fairtrade organic chocolate to our yearly bake sale. We want to thank everyone who donated to or otherwise supported our Earth Day Bakesale this year. We were able to raise over \$500 for our garden and for Eco competition prizes, as well as to help subsidize The Fourth R performance. **Fairtrade Organic chocolate bars, chocolate chips, chips and cocoa is still available for purchase to help us cover our costs. Prices are better than retail and do not have any sales tax applied to them. We will have a table at our Open House in May, or you can contact Mme Anderson Smit for more information at handerso@hwdsb.on.ca.**

We thank you for your patience and cooperation with turning Norwood Park into a greener school. We believe that reducing our lunch waste and emissions (from cars and electricity) is the way forward and can't wait to work on this with you!

Warmly and greenly,

Norwood Park administration & Eco Club