

Majority of February and March- Grace McCormack

# Irish Report

St. Patrick's Catholic High School

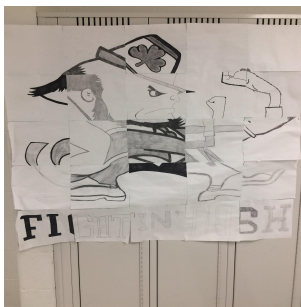
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## Important dates for St. Patrick's:

- February 14th Valentine's Day
- February 18th course selections due for upcoming school year
- February 17th and 18th snow days
- February 23rd pink shirt/anti bullying awareness day
- February 25th student trustee applications due
- February 25th black history month presentation
- February 25th semester one recap assembly
- March 2nd Ash Wednesday assembly
- March 3rd student trustee election
- March 8th school reconciliation
- March 10th and 11th Think Fast Program
- March 11th back to the beach day
- March 8th International Women's Day
- March 14th-18th March Break
- March 21st first day back to school after break

## Semester One Recap



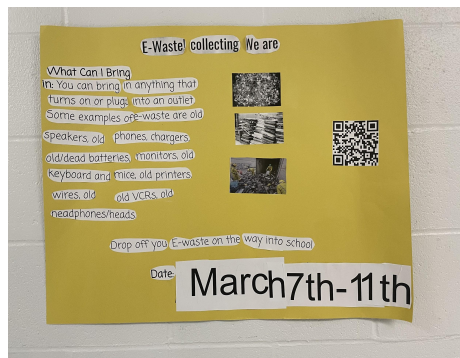
About three weeks into semester two, our school revisited our last semester. A virtual assembly, put together by Mr. Walicki's tech classes and various students, aired on February 25. A sports recap video, trivia challenge, Christmas concert clip, link day throwback, and ball hockey tournament synopsis provided students with nostalgia and happy memories. The assembly also featured student interviews, in which students answered questions regarding what makes them happy to be back to four classes a day, and what they struggled with during the pandemic. The assembly was concluded with the playing of a Breakfast Club themed minecraft video, created and filmed by grade twelve students Jasmine Pole, Riley Free, Cora Kline, and Kailyn Wright.

## Extracurricular Activities



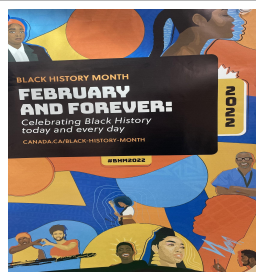
Extracurriculars and school related activities have been at an all time high this semester! Our school has a new snack shop opened every day during lunch, called the Shamrock Shop. Additionally, our school's coffee cart has continued to visit classrooms each morning. As of right now, the following clubs are in session: swim team, drama club, senior girls' volleyball, coding, football, senior boys' soccer team, girls' hockey, senior boys' basketball, Irish media team, girls' and boys' curling, dance team, and rugby. Students were also encouraged to partake in the 2022 Think Fast campaign, and apply for the YMCA celebration of youth awards.

## E-Waste Initiative



From March 7th-11th, students were encouraged to bring in their old e-waste (which includes old cell phones, chargers, batteries, monitors, old speakers, and others) for the grade 10 business class. This collection is another way our school is becoming more environmentally informed and aware. If the target collection number is reached, students will be rewarded with a jean day!

## Black History Month



On February 11th, our school viewed the first of many black history month informational videos. These videos informed students on topics such as the underground railway, the end of slavery in North America, and black pop culture/music. During February, Ms. Woodward's business leadership class created and hung posters about inspirational leaders who advocated for equality among races. Needless to say, students' eyes were opened to the wide array of people who helped gain equality for minority groups during this month.

## Standing With Ukraine

Stand with Ukraine

EUROPEAN ALLIANCE

Another tragedy students have been exposed to this semester is the Russian invasion of Ukraine. To show our support during this time of tragedy, our school hung the Ukrainian flag as a backdrop for our morning announcements. Our morning prayer often offers words of encouragement and peace towards Europe. Donations for Ukraine were being accepted in the week leading up to March Break. Lastly, a priest from Sarnia with family and friends in Ukraine visited our school on March 10th to pray for his country with us. Despite this difficult time, our school stands united as we pray and advocate for the people of Ukraine.

## Valentine's Day



Our school had a wonderful time celebrating Valentine's day this past February! From dressing in Valentine's day colours, to each student receiving a Valentine on their locker, to Valentine's day trivia on the morning announcements, our school certainly celebrated this saint and the holiday. To the left you will see a picture of our library all decorated in red and white.

## Back to the Beach Day



On March 11th, for the first time in two years, our school celebrated back to the beach day! Students were seen walking down the hallways with beach and swimming attire. This school wide volleyball tournament, featuring twelve junior teams and twelve senior teams, provided lots of fun for the entire school. While the final games were live streamed to classes, classes also had an opportunity to watch the game in person by winning a door decorating competition or a TikTok competition. The class that raised the most money for Ukraine also got to watch the games in person. While various classes won the door decorating contest, Mr. Dibrata's class was the only one to win the Tiktok competition. Ms. Dubois' class raised the most money for Ukraine and got front row seats and free snacks to the tournament. At the end of the day, The Black Knights were declared the junior winning team, and the Speedy Spikers were the senior winning team. It was wonderful to see our pre-covid events slowly but surely returning to school.

## International Women's Day

In honour of International Women's Day on March 8th, each of our female teachers received a flower. Pictured left is one of these flowers.



## Interview with Ms. Ennett

Recently I interviewed Ms. Victoria Ennett, our school's child and youth worker. As a mental health advocate who has been in this field for nearly five years, her expertise and perspective is invaluable to the experiences and emotions of St. Patrick's students. Ms. Ennett's career began during her third year of post secondary education, when she became Ms. Lynne Ducharme's (our school's previous child and youth worker) placement student. After experiences in Chatham and Wallaceburg elementary schools, Ms. Ennett felt entering St. Pat's for the first time was "intimidating, but a good kind of intimidation". We are always nervous when we try something new," she said. "But after you get your feet on the ground, you will hit the ground running," she emphasized.

When asked how she enjoys promoting well being for students, Ms. Ennett discussed using the announcements, social media, and interactive activities. For the upcoming mental health week in May, our school's wellness team plans to tape positive quote cards on to items from the morning breakfast cart. "Taking in student voice is so important," Ms. Ennett noted when discussing her creation of our school's student wellness committee. Ms. Ennett pointed out that our school can improve the mental health discussion by encouraging staff to discuss emotions in the classroom. "Everyone, even teachers, have bad days," she noted. "One emotion can change the whole class space." If we want to remove the stigma associated with mental health, everyone needs to own their emotions and apologize when necessary.

Furthermore, Ms. Ennett described the challenges students and staff have faced during the pandemic. "The word 'virtual' makes everyone very nervous," Ms. Ennett said. Social and emotional learning is put on the back burner when in virtual learning. The return to four classes a day has been a great advantage for students, Ms. Ennett believes. Our school's most recent wellness climate survey demonstrated that students need the connectivity a normal semester provides. Ms. Ennett hopes this schedule will stay in our lives for the foreseeable future, mentioning that "we get more comfortable with something the more we practise it."

From creating a GSA alliance at St. Patrick's, to planning for mental health week during May 10th-16th, to wanting to bring tables and benches around our school's hill, Ms. Ennett will be very busy during the coming months! But no matter how busy we get, we need to "continue to consider student voice". "Without it, we can't do our job," Ms. Ennett attested. In conclusion, Ms. Ennett is a wonderful new addition to our Irish family. I look forward to sharing all the future work she does in our school with you all.

