

Waterloo Independent Secondary School

March 12, 2020

A WORD FROM A WISS GRAD

Ping, a 2019 WISS graduate, sends along a few words to his teachers:

I appreciate all the teachers in the school. They helped me to get through the hard times. All the teachers are willing to answer my questions and help me out. They are not only my teachers, but also friends.

... and to students:

Your life comes to a new turning point [at university]. You will meet new friends and get more happiness. However, life in university is not as good as you think. You need to spend more time on study. But there is a long vacation for you after you graduate. Enjoy it!

Success correlates strongly with good learning skills and work habits, says Ping.
(I think I missed the vacation part when I graduated!)

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Communicating with a parent can contribute to positive results for a student to the extent that the evidence that the school brings to the table shows a pattern in learning skills/work habits, or student behaviour. As educators, we know that behaviour exerts significant influence on grades. So, using pointed words (distracted, drowsy/sleeps, unprepared) in a report card comment is very helpful to Owen in guidance and to administration in our communication with parents.

REMINDERS

- If your travel through the school takes you into the Directors' area, please check first with Courtney to avoid interrupting a meeting.
- If you see something that could be improved in the facility (e.g. cleaning), let Ms. Cheng know.

POLICY PART B: Progress Report - Learning Skills/Work Habits

'Manages Time Well' means that the student:

- Is on task and gets started right away.
- Completes work in a specified time.
- Takes short washroom breaks and not during teaching time.

A student who does not manage time well allows him/herself to be distracted by the Chromebook.

'Prepared for Class' means that the student:

- Has the required materials (textbook, pen, etc.) for the class.
- Has charged the Chromebook.
- Is sitting in his/her desk at the bell, ready to learn.

A student who is not prepared brings a cellphone or food to class.

Thanks to teachers for getting us to common understandings on LS/WH. The full policy will be shared with everyone soon.

MID-TERM REPORTING

Keep in mind that students find it very hard to shift their thinking from their Chinese school days about how grades are determined. In China, they sort using test/exam results to sift chaff from wheat. These results drive grades and there are 2 high-stakes exams: mid-term and final. Combining those 2 marks gives the final grade in a course. It's a calculation. In the Ontario system, mid-term is not test time. The purpose of the mid-term report is to report an accurate grade of progress to date using different data gathered over time: POC. While calculations are a component, **grades** (mid-term and final) are **determined** using **judgement** and **evidence**.

CELEBRATING CANADA'S DIVERSITY

"I really enjoy getting together as a school, especially the moments [assemblies] where we can celebrate the diverse culture of Canada." (RM)

Here are ways that WISS could celebrate our diversity and help our guest leave with a deeper understanding of our country:

March: Maple Syrup and Canada's early days, the indigenous connection, cultural importance in Quebec, and current economic importance.

April: Vimy Ridge and its contribution to Canadian identity

May: Celebration of the Queen's Birthday - Is monarchy the glue that holds Canada together?

June: (early) Canada Day

What do you think? Do you have other ideas? Pass your ideas along to Greg.

BEGINNING LESSONS WITH A PURPOSE & WITH THE END IN MIND

*In most educational jurisdictions part of a teacher's job is to assess how well students have learned what they are to learn. **This task is part of criterion-referenced assessment.** We no longer compare or rank students as we did [and as they do in China] when we were asked to do norm-referenced assessment in the past. Now we clearly **identify what students are to learn** [thereby giving lessons a clear **purpose**] and **what success looks like**, and we **make judgements** about how well students have learned what they are to learn. (Making Classroom Assessment Work, Anne Davies)*

ENJOY THE BREAK!

If you are traveling, be sure to consult these government sites before you go:

[Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Travel advice](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/coronavirus-covid-19/travel-advice)

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus#section-8>

In matters of healing the body or the mind, vacation is a true genius!" – Mehmet Murat Ildan