Hi there Jaguar families, here we are at yet another Friday! These four-day weeks usually seem extra busy, and this one was no exception. These last four days have passed in the speediest manner, as we have managed to pack our week full of learning and fun.

This is definitely a challenging time of year for many of us on the west coast. Our weather has changed and the hours of daylight seem very numbered. In addition, the lack of sunshine can have an impact on us sun-seekers. The approaching holidays, although painted with a festive brush by the media, can be a trying time for many families. This is one of those times in our year where I will ask us all to keep a caring eye on those near and dear to us. I know this may be a consistent message from me, but we need to make sure we allow for moments in our busy lives where we can actually count our good fortunes. For myself, I had one of those moments when I arrived home last night. I snuggled up to read with my 12 and 15 year old--something that we have not done as a trio in way too long. My family is everything to me, and what helps to bring perspective home even on the most challenging of days. Please take a chance to grasp on to similar moments within your own lives, as these are the types of memories that help to keep a smile on our faces and allow us to approach each day with a positive outlook.

Here is a snapshot of the week we have had here at John Muir:

\* On Wednesday we had a visit from Ryan Laird who provided us with a Bigger Than That! Performance. This was a fantastic show! Ryan is a gifted singer and presenter, whom was able to share his country tunes and interact with our eager crowd like a professional. He brought with him a very powerful message, which revolved around the importance of having a dream and believing in yourself. There were a few highlights for me, but probably my most memorable would be the moment he created the "Jaguar" band to come up and perform. With two air-guitarists and a brave singer, our Jaguars did not disappoint! All in all it was a great afternoon, listening to a talented singer whom shared a very important message with our students.

\* Wednesday also marked the introduction of Gus the dog at John Muir! Gus is the therapy dog owned by our very own counsellor, Mrs. Carter. In last week's weekly I included a picture of Gus along with an explanation of his role at our school. He was so well received by our students! In fact, they were definitely looking for him the next day! Mrs. Carter is at our school every Wednesday and every second Friday, so we can mark our calendars for Gus days!

\* Friday was a busy day for many of our students, but quite a quiet one around our school. We had five classes out on field trips for the majority of the morning, which is outstanding! Division 8 & 9 embraced the upcoming winter theme, and enjoyed a morning of skating on the ice at Seaparc. They had a blast! Our Divisions 1, 2 & 3 enjoyed a great morning with the salmon over at Charters Creek. They had originally planned to return in the afternoon, but the weather swept them back to school just before lunch. Although a little on the damp side, they all came back with smiles plastered on their adorable little faces.

And now for a little message from our Music teacher, Ms. Parliament:

Students have been rehearsing in their music classes with Ms. Parliament for the Annual Winter Concert. The concert will take place on Thursday, December 14 at 6:30 pm at the EMCS Theatre. The John Muir Choir and each division will perform two pieces of music at the concert. More information will be sent home soon including lyrics for songs, what your child needs to wear, and how to get tickets. Stay TUNED for more details. Exciting times ahead!

Here are some important upcoming dates:

Monday, Nov. 20 Photo Retakes

Thurs, Nov. 23 Early Dismissal (11:57) and Shared Learning Night (1-7)

Fri, Nov. 24 Non-Instructional Day (No School)

Wed, Dec. 6 PAC Craft Night

Thur, Dec. 14 Winter Celebration at EMCS

Next week will literally fly by. Thursday is an early dismissal, with our Shared Learning Night to follow. You will be receiving a separate email regarding the Shared Learning times for each classroom at some point this weekend. This has proven a very enjoyable evening in past years, and I look forward to seeing many of you at our school on Thursday. Friday is a Non-Instructional day for our students, as the adults in our building set out for their own learning adventures for the day.

Thank you again to all of you for sharing your children with us on a daily basis. This is a privilege that we do not take lightly here at John Muir. We value the trusting relationships that we have all worked so hard to build, and it is so fulfilling to all be working towards the same goal--the healthy growth of our children.

Please have yourselves a wonderful weekend filled with laughter, love and great memories in the making.

Gord