



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

March 14, 2007

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA OPENS WELCOME CENTRE FOR NEWCOMER FAMILIES

On Wednesday, March 21, 2007, the District School Board of Niagara will host an Open House to launch its Welcome Centre for newcomer families. Located at the Board's Education Centre at 191 Carleton Street in St. Catharines, the Welcome Centre has been created to warmly receive newcomer families who are new to our Board. It will also serve to receive the growing number of international students who join our Board.

The Welcome Centre will also provide newcomer families with a variety of information resources regarding schooling in Ontario and the many educational programs that the District School Board of Niagara has to offer. These parent resources are available in many different languages. Also, the centre will contain information on all of the regional agencies that provide services for newcomers.

The Open House is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate our English Language Learner (ELL) students. Students will be performing oral presentations and have samples of their school work on display. English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers will be available to meet with families and answer any questions parents may have about our ESL programs or any other aspect of school. The goal of this event is to allow newcomer parents to become more familiar with the public school system and to encourage them to join school based parent councils.

Many community agencies will also be participating in the Open House. These participants include: The Welland Heritage Council, The St. Catharines Folk Arts Council, The Fort Erie Multicultural Centre, Information Niagara, The YMCA, The Ontario Early Years, The Early Childhood Community Development Centre, Niagara Health Systems, Niagara Brighter Futures, Employment Help Centres of St. Catharines and Niagara Falls and the Municipal Libraries.

The District School Board of Niagara warmly welcomes all newcomer students and their families to attend the Newcomer Open House on March 21, 2007 at 6:30 pm. A dual language book display from Toronto will offer parents an opportunity to purchase books in the home language and English. Application packages for international students will be available. There will be many door prizes to give away and refreshments will be provided.

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