

Google Classroom comes with an integrated calendar within the tool. Students and teachers can see a full week display of all assignments or questions (as long as a due date was set initially) posted to all Google Classrooms they are a member of. I know several teachers who created a second, parallel Google Classroom to their main one but call it something like “Agenda” and make posts to it using the assignment option. These posts do not relate to projects or academic work; they are typical agenda type items like field-trip reminders, letters home (digital), forms, reminders, and so on. Students can see, in the Google Classroom calendar view, colour-coded posts from each of their Classrooms. It’s clean, simple and free.

Another method actively being used by teachers who want to provide even more detail to parents is to use a portfolio app like **Seesaw**. The free version of the app allows for photos, videos, announcements, and so on to be posted to a Seesaw class. Posts can be tagged to individual students or the full class. Parents/guardians get invites to the Seesaw class and the teacher approves them. Once connected, the parent can only ever see posts tagged with their child’s name or with the “Everyone” tag which is the key tag used for reminders, field trip forms, letters home, and so on. Once the app is set up with a class of students, and parents are connected (they download a parent version of the app), it becomes very easy to communicate and share with parents and guardians of students. ■

My School Library Rocks!

Darren Pamayah

TIME TO HEAR DIRECTLY FROM STUDENTS!

We all know that school libraries are amazing places, featuring outstanding literature to inspire learning and offering fantastic activities to captivate the interest of every student. However, when was the last time we heard directly from students about what their school libraries mean to them? That is the goal of the “My School Library Rocks” campaign—to highlight students’ opinions about the importance of school libraries.

The Ontario School Library Association has created an online space where students can share why their school libraries rock: sites.google.com/view/myschoollibraryrocks. On this website, students can fill out a simple form with their first names, their grades and the names of their schools. There is also a space where students can explain why their school libraries rock.

So far, the response has been strong with submissions from Kindergarten all the way up to Grade 12. Students have shared their enthusiasm for vibrant library spaces with books, makerspaces, book clubs, art projects and technology. What also stands out is our students’ appreciation for the work of teacher-librarians and library technicians. “Our librarian is awesome! She always helps us to find the right books to read,” says a Grade 11 student.

The Ontario School Library Association hopes to highlight these student voices as they affirm the work of teacher-librarians and the importance of school libraries. The campaign runs through January 2018. Please direct your students to the website so they can contribute.

