

PWS UPDATE

Park West School Newsletter

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Principal: Mr. D. Carter Vice Principals: Mr. B. Melanson and Ms. D. Olson

October 4, 2018

Receive the PWS Update electronically! You can receive the *PWS Update* electronically via e-mail. If you wish to be among the first to receive the latest editions of our school newsletters by having it sent to your e-mail address simply e-mail your request to Mr. Carter at dcarter@hrce.ca The *PWS Update* is published **approximately every two weeks**.

Walking & Running for Terry: Park West School will hold its annual Terry Fox Walk/Run on **Friday, October 5**. This event will start with an assembly in the gym @ 1:00 p.m. The **grades P-5** students will walk/run around the track on our back field. **Grades 6-9** students will follow a route through our community: exit from the front of the school, proceed down to Langbrae Dr., cross at the crosswalk and continue north on the Linear Pathway, cross at Farnham Gate and proceed to the end of the path at Parkland Dr. near Castlehill Dr. The students will then turn back towards the school and remain on the sidewalk along Parkland Dr. When they get back to the corner of Langbrae Dr. and Parkland Dr., they will cross the street and proceed back to the school along Langbrae Dr. They will be supervised along the route by school personnel. All students are encouraged to bring a loonie or toonie to school that day to donate to the Terry Fox Foundation. Coins will be collected at the door as the students enter the gym for the assembly. We hope to raise over \$800 for this worthy cause. We can do it if every student donates at least one dollar. Parents and guardians are welcome and encouraged to join us for this event.

SAC Meeting: Our next SAC meeting will be held on **Wednesday, October 17, 6:30 – 8:00 PM**, in the cafetorium. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the results of the address verification process that we implemented in the spring and recently completed. All members of our School Advisory Council and two HRCE representatives will be in attendance to participate in the discussion. If you have any questions please contact Ms. Karen Saweczko (SAC Chair) at lcdr.saweczko@ns.sympatico.ca. Minutes from this meeting will be posted on our school website.

No Child Without: The Canadian MedicAlert Foundation is a charitable organization which is the leading provider of emergency medical information services linked to customized medical bracelets and necklaces. They are pleased to be able to offer MedicAlert memberships to students (from age 4 to their 14th birthday) through the No Child Without program at Park West School. The financial support of the Government of Canada and Lions Clubs allows students to receive the MedicAlert membership for FREE. For more information and to register your eligible child visit www.nochildwithout.ca

Newcomers Welcome & Orientation Meeting: One of the most unique and enviable features of Park West School is our diversity. We are proud of this. We embrace it. Families from all over the world, from many different countries, have chosen to make their homes here in our community. These parents and their children face many challenges in such unfamiliar settings. We want all students, and their families, regardless of their origins, to *feel at home here at Park West*. Our vision is to be a school that is inclusive, safe, accommodating, and welcoming. We are working hard to nurture a *culture of acceptance*. To ensure this continues in a collaborative manner we would like to invite those parents in our community who may be 'newcomers' to Canada, who may have origins in another country or who in some way represent our rich diversity, to a meeting on: **Wednesday, October 10 at 1:30 pm** in the cafetorium. You are encouraged to attend this very important meeting and participate in the dialogue as we review our efforts and progress in becoming a truly inclusive school that recognizes, promotes and celebrates diversity. We also invite those in our community who are not newcomers to help welcome and support our new friends and neighbours. There will be lots of guests from our community who will share how they, and their organizations, can support you. It will also be a time for Mr. Carter (our principal), our vice principals, and Ms. Grinnell (our YMCA newcomer support worker) to receive suggestions from you as we plan for the future. We want to move forward in a positive and meaningful way. We want you to be part of it. Welcome home!

Grade 9 Trip Meeting: Plans are underway for a possible spring trip for our grade 9 students. This year's destination is Toronto/Niagara Falls on the dates May 29 – June 1, 2019. Transportation will be by air to and from the destination. The total cost of the trip will be *approximately* \$1400 (which can be paid in installments). A meeting will be held for **all interested students and their parents** on **Wednesday, October 10 @ 6:30 pm**, in the cafetorium. All details of the trip will be presented at that time. Parents will be invited to form a fund raising committee if they are interested. Their children could then be given opportunities to raise funds to pay their trip fees. Information will be presented about financial assistance possibly being available to families who may need it. There will be an opportunity for parents and students to ask lots of questions. We need **at least 40 students** to commit to participating or the trip will not be viable. For more information, contact Mr. Carter (dcarter@hrce.ca)

We'll Get Back to You As Soon As We Can: Park West School is a big and busy operation! We have almost 840 wonderful students who need our attention on a daily basis. When they are here at school they are our **first priority**. On any given school day we are busy teaching them the prescribed curriculum, assessing and evaluating their work, supporting their learning, ensuring they are successful, helping them solve problems and overcome challenges, and keeping them safe. Communication with home (parents and guardians) is extremely important to us. During the course of the day teachers,

support staff, and administrators receive numerous telephone calls, voicemail messages, email messages, notes, and letters. Most of those require a response. **We will strive to respond to you within 48 hours** during the school week. If you don't hear back from us right away, please be patient.

No School: There will be **no school for students** on the following dates this month: Monday, **October 9** (Thanksgiving Day holiday); Thursday, **October 18** (PD Day for staff); Friday, **October 26** (Conference Day for staff).

Student Attendance and Engagement Policy: The Education and Early Childhood Development Dept. in Nova Scotia (EECD) recently introduced a new policy that sets clear and consistent expectations for regular and punctual attendance at all grade levels. One quarter of public school students in our province miss at least 16 days of school per year. Regular and punctual attendance at school promotes greater student success and achievement. The entire policy may be found at <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/student-attendance-and-engagement-policy> Some highlights of the new policy are:

- As per the Education Act, students are required to attend school regularly and punctually.
- All reasons for absence from school must be communicated to the school by the students' parent/guardian.
- Teachers and school administration may exercise their professional judgment and flexibility in cases of *extenuating circumstances*.
- Teachers are not required to prepare additional materials or release text materials prior to their release to the class.
- Teachers are not required to prepare 'work packages' for students on extended absences from school, unless medically related.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring and ensuring their children maintain regular attendance and arrive at school on time.
- In instances of *chronic* lateness and/or absenteeism parents/guardians will be contacted by the school.

Let's Party...At Home: We must insist that parents refrain from sending birthday cakes, treat bags, and other party treats/favours to school on their children's birthdays. Please do not show up at the classroom door with these items and assume the teacher will cease teaching and learning to conduct a birthday party for your child. These celebrations should happen at home. What happens in our classrooms is governed by strict guidelines from the EECD. Time has to be dedicated to address curriculum outcomes. As well, we must also abide by strict Healthy Food in Schools Policy guidelines. Some of our students have severe food allergies, so we strictly regulate food consumption in our school. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

We Need Some Important Information Back: We need some important information back from you (parents and guardians) about our students. On **Tuesday, October 9**, all students in grades primary to nine will bring home to their parents information and forms to read, and complete. Please ensure all completed forms are returned to the school by **October 12**. It's essential we have this information **for each student**. These forms will be sent home: **EARLY SCHOOL CLOSURE FORM** and **MEDIA RELEASE FORM**. Also, if your child has a **medical condition or concerns** (including allergies), of which we should be aware, please ensure we have the most up to date information. You may need to complete a **Medical Awareness** form. If you need to update that information please contact Mr. Cobean (guidance counsellor) at tcobean@hrce.ca

Shared Responsibility: Park West is a large school comprised of over 830 students (in grades Primary to 9) in 32 classes, and 90 people who work in our building on a daily basis. That's over 900 people! They all have needs, and require attention and support. In order to provide the support and assistance they need, and operate our school effectively and efficiently, we have divided administrative responsibilities among our principal and two vice principals (our admin team). For instance, some of the responsibilities assigned to **Mr. Carter** (the principal) include: finances, grade 9 trip, building maintenance and cleaning, primary orientation, and diversity. **Mr. Melanson's** (Vice Principal) responsibilities include: technology, athletics, lunch program, and hiring new staff. **Ms. Olsen** (Vice Principal) is responsible for substitute teachers, scheduling, assessments, SSP, and school photos. To better assist and support teachers, their classes, and parents we have divided our homerooms between the two VPs as follows:

Mr. Melanson	Grades: primary, 1, 2, 3 and 4	Please contact the appropriate Vice Principal (depending on your child's grade assignment) to assist you at any time with issues, concerns, and matters of behaviour and discipline.
Ms. Olsen	Grades: 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9	

If parent/guardians have questions or concerns: **1.** Start with your **child's teacher**. **2.** If necessary, follow up with one of our vice principals. **Mr. Melanson** looks after grades primary - 4 classes. **Ms. Olsen** looks after grades 5 - 9 classes. **3.** Further assistance could be provided by our principal, Mr. Carter.

Relocation Site: In the unlikely event we have to vacate our school building during the day all students and staff will be evacuated to the **Canada Games Centre** on Lacewood Drive. We would walk there in classes using paths, accompanied by teachers and school staff. Parents, guardians and our community would be informed of the relocation (via telephone and media) and instructed to pick up children at that site. We strive to be prepared for all emergencies and urgent situations.

Dates to Remember:

OCTOBER		
05	Terry Fox Run/Walk	1:00 pm
08	Thanksgiving Day (<i>schools closed</i>)	
10	Bus Evacuation Drills	Morning
10	Newcomer Welcome and Orientation meeting	1:30 pm
10	Grade 9 Trip meeting for students and parents	6:30 pm
12	PTA Popcorn Day (one sale for \$1 a bag)	Morning
16	Symphony N.S. concert @ PWS (grades P – 9)	1:30 – 2:30 pm
17	SAC Meeting	6:30 – 8:00 pm
18	PD Day (<i>no school for students</i>)	
23	Photo Retakes / Family Photos	
25	PTA Hallowe'en Family Dance	evening
26	Provincial Conference Day (<i>no school for students</i>)	
31	Hallowe'en	

