

PWS UPDATE

Park West School Newsletter

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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**.

What We Learned During Mi'kmaq History Month: During the month of October we observed Mi'kmaq History Month here at Park West. Here are some of the things that happened in our classrooms as we learned more about the aboriginal people of our region, honouring their culture, history, and heritage:

- Ms. Martin's grade 9 English Language Arts classes studied Rita Joe's renowned poem, "*I Lost My Talk*". This beautifully simple poem speaks to the power of voice and language, and the effect on a person when her language is stolen. Classes enjoyed good discussion and will continue to study the connections between power, language, and voice.
- Ms. Bennett's grade 6 class investigated residential schools and the impact they had on aboriginal children.
- In our library there was a display of books about the Mi'kmaq. Ms. Comeau (our librarian) read aloud to some classes; books by Mi'kmaq authors and books related to Mi'kmaq culture.
- Grade 4 Clements read and discussed the story *When I was Eight*, by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, which chronicles the experience of a young girl attending residential school. We also learned about "attachment hearts", which represent kinship, connections and relationships. They made their own paper versions with visuals, representing what makes us feel safe.
- Grade 8's in Ms. Moore's social studies classes learned about residential schools, Treaty obligations, and what we can do to honour the recommendations of the TRC. Their investigations included examining insights through the lens of Gord Downie's "*The Secret Path*".
- In grade 9 Citizenship Education classes students continued the exploration of Treaties in more depth, and investigated what they actually look like in Canada today. They also looked into the recommendations of the TRC; asking themselves what responsibilities we have, as citizens, to be part of reconciliation, and how that might translate into action.
- Grade 5 - MacDonald created stories that might have been told by the early Mi'kmaq people. Students gained a greater understanding of the oral tradition of storytelling, which helped them retell their stories to the class.

In Remembrance: To commemorate Remembrance Day, to honour our Veterans and those who protect our country, and to appreciate and celebrate peace in a meaningful way, Park West will be hosting a Remembrance Ceremony on **Friday, November 9, 10:30 am**, in our gym, for all students. The assembly will feature music, student participation, readings, and a special time to remember those who have sacrificed for us. Parents and community members are invited to this special event; especially veterans who live in our community. We are encouraging those who are veterans, in the military, members of police forces, firefighters, Cadets, members of Girl Guides of Canada and Boy Scouts of Canada, or others who wear an official uniform to wear them if attending. If parents and members of our community will be attending in uniform, please email or call our school office to let us know so we can recognize you for your service during the ceremony. All students are requested to wear **Red and Black** on that day. The Royal Canadian Legion has provided us with poppies for this occasion. Students and visitors are invited to buy a poppy at the office by making a small monetary donation.

Safe Arrival: Our Safe Arrival phone number is **902-457-7800 (extension 1)**. Call this number anytime (it's operational 24 hours a day) if your son or daughter will be absent from school (for part day, full day, or more than one day). You will be requested to leave the name of your child, his or her class, and the date(s) and time(s) of the absence in voice-mail. This program is operated by the school for the safety of our students. If your child is absent, and we receive a message from you informing us of the absence, we know your child is safe and accounted for. Please call the Safe Arrival line rather than the school office, or other school personnel, to leave absentee information.

We Love our Volunteers: Many parents like to support their children's schools by volunteering their time and services. These opportunities include: chaperoning a class trip, reading with students, assisting a teacher in the classroom, and coaching a sports team. We value the many roles volunteers play in our school. We recognize our responsibility to ensure that all students attending our schools are protected by taking reasonable precautions to screen volunteers who may be working with students without direct supervision of staff. In accordance with HRCE's Student Protection Policy, prior to volunteering in our school all volunteers must provide:

- A completed Child Abuse Register check form.
- A certified and true copy of a Criminal Records Check with Vulnerable Sector Check (from your local Police or RCMP detachment or through online organizations endorsed by Nova Scotia law enforcement agencies).

The Child Abuse Register Search and Criminal Records Checks must be issued in the three months preceding volunteering, and updated every three years. **Copies of both documents must be on file in the school office.** More information can be found on at www.hrce.ca

Check Out of School Website: You are encouraged to visit our up-to-date school website at www.pws.hrce.ca Once there you'll find lots of useful information about our school and its operations. On the homepage you'll find: **Daily Announcements; What's New; Upcoming Events;** and our **Twitter** feed. Click on the "**OUR SCHOOL**" tab for **General Information** (our visions and goals; cafeteria menu and order information; and our diversity); **Policies and Procedures** (homework; assemblies; late students; winter weather; and more); **News** (the current newsletter and past issues); **School Resources** (EXCEL childcare...and more); **School Advisory Council; For Students;** and **For Parents** (including Grade 9 Trip; Safe Arrival; PTA; Volunteering; Class Trips; Registration; etc.). Other tabs on the homepage include: **Calendars; Staff Directory; and Contact Us.**

Head Lice (also known as *Pediculosis Capitis*): School boards across the country, on the advice of the Canadian Paediatric Society, are revoking the rule that children with head lice must stay home from school. A few creepy crawlies – which cause only mild itching and don't spread disease – are no reason to interrupt kids' education, the Society says. Head lice don't spread disease (just embarrassment and anxiety) and many kids who are found to have nits don't actually have lice, leading to a lot of unnecessary absences. (source: Halifax Metro). Based on recommendations HRCE advises parents to:

- Check their children for nits and head lice on a regular basis;
- Notify the school if their child has head lice;
- Check other family members or others spending time in the house of children identified as having head lice;
- Provide recommended head lice treatment to a child identified as having head lice as outlined by Public Health in the pamphlet *How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice* (available at http://www.novascotia.ca/dhw/publications/Public-Health-Education/07135_HeadLicePamphlet_En.pdf);
- Complete a first treatment prior to their children returning to school;
- Call 8-1-1 at any time to speak with a Registered Nurse for more information and guidance if head lice are still present after the second treatment.

The school will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of the suspicion that their child has head lice;

- Children suspected of having **nits** (small silver-grey egg casings) may remain at school;
- Children suspected of having **live lice** (insects) will be sent home for treatment.
- Children with head lice maybe return to school after the first treatment.

At all times school staff will maintain student confidentiality. Letters will no longer be sent home to parents indicating a case of head lice exists in their child's class.

Littering: Too many of our students are throwing garbage on our school grounds...mostly at recess and lunchtime. We continually encourage them to put litter in the garbage cans provided outdoors or keep it until they have returned inside the building before discarding it. Some of our neighbours, and those who walk the trail adjacent to our school, have complained; surprised and dismayed by our students' disrespect for the environment. Parents: please assist us in fixing this. Teach your children to be good "earth keepers". Encourage and remind them to dispose of their garbage in a responsible manner. Garbage belongs in garbage cans...not on the ground.

Christmas Concerts: Our Christmas concerts will include students in **grades primary to three** this year. Christmas and Hanukkah selections will be featured in celebration of these holidays. Students in grades 4 – 6 will have the opportunity to participate in a 'musical event' in the spring. Concerts will be held on **December 11 and 12** (storm date: Dec. 13).

DATE	CLASSES PARTICIPATING
Tuesday, Dec. 11 @ 1:30 PM	Grade Primary and Grade 2 + Grades 4-6 Choir
Wednesday, Dec. 12 @ 1:30 PM	Grade 1 and Grade 3 + Grade 3 Choir

Concerts will be presented in the afternoons (1:30 PM) on those dates. Concerts will be 30 - 45 minutes in length. Dress rehearsals will be held in the mornings. **Tickets for admission will not be required.** All family members and friends are invited to attend.

Protocol for Late Students: When students arrive late for school they are disrupting school and classroom routines, missing out on receiving classroom instruction and important information. Arriving on time allows them the opportunity to prepare for learning (getting their materials organized, removing outdoor wear, going to lockers, etc.). Entrance bells ring at **8:25 am and 12:35 pm**. Students should be on school grounds and ready to enter the building at those times. We are striving to teach our students the value of time management, punctuality, respect for others, and good citizenship. We are preparing them for life. Successful people are on time and value punctuality. Successful students are on time for school. **Junior high students (grades 7-9)** who are late for school (i.e. arriving in their class after 8:30 / *O Canada* in the morning; after 12:40 pm after lunch; arriving to the next class) will serve a 20 minute after-school detention on the day the student is late. **Elementary students (grades P – 6)** who are late for school (i.e. arriving in their classroom after 8:30 / *O Canada* in the morning; after 12:40 pm after lunch) will serve a 15 minute recess detention on the day the student is late.

Grade 9 Transition to High School: There will be a meeting for all grade 9 parents at Halifax West High School on **Wednesday, November 22 @ 6:30 PM** regarding the transition of grade 9 students to high school.

Special Request for Students of Park West School: If you see someone struggling to make friends, alone, sad, or being bullied.....please step up. Say "hi", or at least smile at them in the hallway. Offer assistance and support. Perhaps you could invite them to be included in your group of friends. You never know what that person might be facing outside of school. Your kindness might just make a big difference in someone's life.

Dates to Remember:

November		
02	Goatworks African Drumming assemblies and workshops grades P – 9	All day
02	Mr. Carter meets with interested grade 9 students re. the spring trip (trip or no trip this year)	
05	Grade 7 Immunization Clinic	
07	Diwali begins	
08	Junior High Dance (grades 7-9 students) Admission: \$7	6:30-8:30 PM
08	Junior High Student Forum (with our school's admin team)	
09	Remembrance Ceremony *students are encouraged to wear black & red to school *you are invited to attend	10:30 PM
12	Remembrance Day observance (schools closed)	
14	SAC and PTA meetings	6:00 and 7:00 PM
21	Assessment & Evaluation Day (no school for students)	
23	PTA Popcorn sale (\$1 a bag)	
24	Information re. Parent-Teacher Progress Meetings go home with elementary students	
28	Report cards go home	

