

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**.

Let's Talk About Student Progress: Parents and Teachers will meet to discuss student progress on **Wednesday, November 27 (6:00 - 8:00 PM) and Thursday, November 28 (1:00 - 3:30 PM)**. Teachers, including specialists (French, music, band, resource, phys. ed., guidance, learning centre, EAL, etc.), will be available to meet with you to discuss your child's progress. Elementary teachers will meet in their classrooms with parents by appointment. To accommodate all parents most appointments will be for a maximum of ten minutes each. Information for parents of elementary students (including appointment request forms) were recently sent home with elementary students. Junior High teachers will meet with parents in the gymnasium on a first-come/first-served basis. Jr. High parents are encouraged to take advantage of the availability of afternoon meeting times when possible, as the evening tends to be busier. Junior high teachers will only be available until 8:00 PM on November 27 and until 3:30 PM on November 28. If more time is required to discuss your child's progress then a longer appointment can be arranged for another time. We look forward to seeing you.

There will be no school for students on Thursday, November 28. During the morning teachers will be engaged in professional development.

Come to the Fair: Park West School is having a Scholastic Book Fair in our library just in time for the holiday season. The dates of the fair are **Wednesday, November 27 to Friday, November 29** (until 11:35 AM). The Fair will be open during the day for students and their classes to view and make purchases, as well as any parents who would like to drop by. It will also be open for the afternoon (November 27) and evening (November 28) of Parent-Teacher meetings. Books make great gifts (for Hanukkah, Christmas, or anytime!) and promote literacy. All profits from the Book Fair are used to purchase new books for our library. Parents/ guardians who would like to volunteer at the fair can email Ms. Comeau (our school librarian) at Arlene.comeau@hrce.ca or call 902-457-7800 (ext. 5271039).

Elementary Christmas Concerts Postpone: Our elementary Christmas concerts for grades primary to three classes, scheduled for December 10 and 11, are **postponed**. Ms. Kerr, our music teacher, is off on a leave of absence for personal reasons. Her return date is uncertain at this time. The concerts will be rescheduled for January/February (dates to be determined).

Christmas Band & Strings Concert: Our Junior High Band (grades 7, 8 and 9) and strings ensembles will be presenting a Christmas concert on **Tuesday, December 10 @ 1:00 PM** in the gymnasium. Parents, guardians and friends are invited. Come and enjoy lots of festive music and other selections from our talented musicians.

Getting Ready for High School: Grade 9 Parents/Guardians: We're starting to get ready for our grade 9 students to transition to high school next year. We want you to be part of the transition. There will be a High School Course Selection Information Presentation for parents/guardians on **Thursday, December 5, at 6:30 PM** at the Bella Rose Theatre at Halifax West High School. Counsellors will provide an overview of the course selection process for parents, and families. After the general information session the International Baccalaureate (IB) Coordinator will present information on the grade 10 pre-IB program and the IB program for interested parents / guardians. The Options and Opportunities Coordinator will also present information on the Options and Opportunities (O2) program for interested parents / guardians.

Just In Case: There is now an **AED Defibrillator** on our school premises. It is located on the wall outside the office in the main lobby. Directions for its use are provided at that location. This has been generously provided by our Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

Are You Ready for Winter Weather and Possible School Closures?

- Student safety is the first priority of the *Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE)* when making school cancellation decisions. HRCE staff begins to gather information from various sources beginning at 4:30 am. Staff consults with Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) staff on road conditions, local weather services, and Stock Transportation. By 5:30 am, staff makes a recommendation to the HRCE Executive Director based on the information gathered. If it is safe to have students on the roads and sidewalks, then schools will be open. If not, **all or some schools** may be closed depending on the weather and road conditions in different areas of the board.
- For **full day closures of all or some** schools, the decision will be announced as close to 6:00 am as possible. Announcements will be:
 - Posted on the HRCE's website (www.hrce.ca);
 - Posted on the HRCE's Twitter account www.twitter.com/HRCE_NS;
 - Recorded on the HRCE's School Cancellation Information Line 902-464-INFO (4636);
 - Emailed or texted to subscribers. Receive notice of school and bus cancellations by **e-mail or text** message by following the link on the front page (left side) of the HRCE website;
 - Communicated to local media outlets.
- If conditions deteriorate throughout the day the Executive Director may **close schools early** when weather or road conditions are considered to be a threat to the safety of students. In the event of an **early school closure**, the announcement will be made by 11:00

AM. School busses will be dispatched to schools two hours earlier than their normal regularly scheduled pick-up for the afternoon dismissal. **Walking students** will be dismissed at the start of their regular lunch time (**11:35 AM at Park West**).

- On school days when weather conditions exist that it is not safe to open schools at the regularly scheduled time, but it is predicted that conditions will improve, a **2 hour delayed opening** may be considered. Delayed openings would be considered when a severe weather event has concluded but snow clearing or other operations require additional time. Delayed opening may also be considered when the school building is experiencing an issue (power, water) and additional time is required to prepare the facility for opening. In the event of a delayed opening the following will apply:
 - School opening will be delayed 2 hours (**that will be 10:25 AM at Park West**)
 - School bus pick up times will be delayed 2 hours
 - Excel child care will be cancelled for the morning only
 - Each school will alter morning schedules to best address their timetables.
 - Lunch times will not change (**11:35 AM – 12:35 PM at Park West**)
 - Afternoon class schedules will not change
 - Dismissal time will not change (**2:45 PM at Park West**)

HRCE encourages parents and guardians to use their own discretion when it comes to sending their child to school when the weather is inclement. Students who are unable to attend school due to the weather and/or bus cancellations will not be penalized if assignments are given that day. The weather in Nova Scotia can be unpredictable. Schools can be closed unexpectedly. HRCE encourages parents to have plans in place for their children. That includes making sure your child knows where to go if school is cancelled early, making sure children are dressed properly for the weather conditions, and having a back-up plan in place for childcare if schools are closed or delayed in opening. To learn more about the process on how decisions regarding closures and cancellations are made, visit: <https://www.hrce.ca/about-our-schools/parents/inclement-weather> .

Keeping Our Students Safe: As always, we are striving to keep our students safe at all times while at school. At a school our size this can be an extraordinary challenge; particularly outside during busy times (between 8:00 am and 8:25 am and at 2:45 pm dismissal). At these times we have lots of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on our grounds. Many parents in this community choose to drive their children back and forth to school, rather than allowing them to walk. Part of keeping our students safe is to teach them to be responsible, independent, and to use good safety practices. Please review with your children the following safety practices:

- Use sidewalks at all times, when available.
- Use crosswalks at all times to cross roadways on our school grounds.
- DO NOT cross the traffic loop (especially when vehicular traffic is present) unless using a crosswalk to do so.
- DO NOT cut through the staff parking lot (walking between cars) at any time.

Teachers have reviewed these with their students and have encouraged them to remind their parents of these safety practices.

Grade 9 Trip to Toronto and Niagara Falls: Plans are well underway for the anticipated grade 9 spring trip. This year the destinations are Toronto and Niagara Falls on May 27-29. The price of the trip has dropped. It's now \$1535.00. We have 47 students committed to participate in this exciting opportunity. **The next payment (\$245) is due on November 29.** For more information contact Mr. Carter (dcarter@hrce.ca).

It's Flu Season: This is the time of year when many students and staff are getting the flu and other illnesses. If your child is displaying symptoms of being sick (such as coughing, sneezing, head ache, diarrhea) please keep them at home until feeling better. Students should not be coming to school if feeling unwell and possibly spreading sickness to others. Teachers are increasingly being asked by parents to keep children indoors at recess and lunchtime because of illness. We do not make a practice of keeping students indoors due to illness. We believe our students need to get outside during a long day at school for much needed fresh air, play, exercise, socialization, and a change of scenery. If your child is too sick to go outside then we suggest they should be kept at home until they are feeling better. Everyone is encouraged to practice safe and preventative hygiene by washing hands often and covering mouths and noses when coughing and sneezing. Skin to skin contact and touching surfaces that have been in contact with an ill person are the biggest ways flu and colds are transmitted to people. We care about our students. Let's stay healthy.

Keep Your Head Warm: Limited edition "Park West School" **wool toques** (in our school colours) are now for sale. They are \$10.00 each. They fit adults and children. Purchase them from our school office (cash or cheque) **while supplies last.**

A Christmas Idea to Encourage Reading at Home: Wrap 24 books and put them under your Christmas tree on the first day of December. The books can be new, ones your children already own, or used (purchased from yard sales and flea markets). Starting on December 1st they get to choose one each evening leading up to Christmas. They get to open it up and read it alone, or, even better, with a parent.

How You Can Support Your Child's Learning: An analysis of 37 studies that included over 80,000 students from grades primary to 12 in [Educational Research Review](#) found parent participation in school activities had the least effect on student achievement. What had the most? **Parental expectations of their children, discussions about school activities with children, and helping with reading topped the list.**

Dates to Remember:

November		
27	Parent-Teacher Meetings	6:00 – 8:00 PM
28	NO SCHOOL for STUDENTS / PD for teachers in morning / PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS	1:00 – 3:30 PM
29	Grade 9 Trip payment #2 due (\$245)	
December		
05	Course Selection Info Meeting for Parent/Guardians (Halifax West)	6:30 PM
05	Report Cards (term 1) go home	
10	Band and Strings Christmas Concert	1:00 PM
13	PTA Popcorn Sale (\$1 a bag)	
20	Last day before Christmas vacation	

