

# 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](mailto:dcarter@hrce.ca) The *PWS Update* is published **approximately every two weeks**.

**Update on Drinking Water at PWS:** Earlier this year Health Canada set a new guideline for lead in drinking water. You can learn more about this guideline at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/news/2019/03/health-canada-sets-n...> Along with the new guideline, which reduces the maximum acceptable concentration of lead in drinking water, are sampling protocols for how and when water can be tested. As a result, all water sources in all schools in Nova Scotia will be sampled for lead. This sampling must take place in warmer weather between June and October, according to Health Canada's Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality. On December 19, the provincial government announced that all public schools across Nova Scotia will be provided with drinking water starting in January, if they have not yet been tested for lead; or they have been tested and it has been determined alternate water is needed. **Park West School** has *not* been tested to the new protocol. Therefore, **as a precaution**, an *alternate* source of drinking water has been provided at PWS for our students and staff. We now have water coolers located throughout the building, with bottled water, available for our students and staff, if they wish to use them. Individuals will need to provide their own water bottles or reusable cups. The Halifax Regional Centre for Education takes the health and safety of our students and employees very seriously. They are ready to sample the more than 6,000 water fountains and faucets in our 139 school buildings in June in accordance with the Health Canada guideline.

**Congratulations!** All our grade 9 students recently participated nationally in the Junior Achievement Stock Market Challenge. Congratulations to Tasneem Issak, Mya Yang, and Jood Shikara. They were the top performing team in Nova Scotia this year. We're proud of you.

**Thank You Grandma:** The grandmother of one of our students has been busy. She has spent countless hours knitting child-sized wool hats in various colours and designs. All made with love. She recently kindly donated lots of her handmade hats to our school, and would like us to give them to any of our students who need them to keep warm this winter. We are very appreciative of her thoughtfulness and generosity. If any students would like to have one of these special hats for free they are invited to come to the school office with a note from parents/guardians with their request.

**What do I like about my school?** Recently we asked our students (in grades primary to nine) what they like about Park West School. Here are some of their responses:

- Learning and making new things.
- Making new friends and seeing old friends.
- Everyone is so nice. People help each other.
- It's diverse. We learn from each other. We are all one big team. All for one and one for all.
- What I like is that everyone is different. There are kids from all kinds of different countries, religions, and beliefs. No matter where you're from you'll be accepted here. Everyone comes together and celebrates their differences.
- My favourite thing about Park West School are the teachers. All the teachers are unique in their own way and that is the reason I love Park West so much.
- It is a safe environment for all students.
- There are lots of opportunities to hear and play music: music class, band, concerts, violin, and assemblies.
- I love the extremely cool and nice teachers.
- Here at Park West we have great guidance counselors who can help students with many different needs, including: mental health issues, help with high school, and anything else students might come in for.
- "The Brotherhood" (i.e. the lunch club for junior high boys)
- One of my favourite things about Park West School is the staff. If not for the kind, caring, and understanding staff and teachers, I feel our school would not be itself. I have switched 6 schools in the past from the U.S. to India, and I have never met such an amazing group of individuals.
- My teacher, because she has great teaching methods and she is always there for a student in need. She lets us do more hands-on work instead of book work; which is great for me because I HATE book work!
- My teacher teaches us great life lessons; like "always choose to be kind instead of being right." She makes learning fun and understands that everybody learns differently. She sees the potential in everyone, and she stretches our way of thinking beyond a grade 6 level.
- I've been lucky enough to have the same teacher in grade 4, and now again in grade 6. She inspires me to try my best each and everyday. She finds the perfect balance between work and crafts! She's great at encouraging all of her students to be creative and find their own voices.
- The thing I like best about Park West is the entire school itself; that's because Park West was the best school I ever been to in my life.
- At my first day in coming to Park West I became nervous, but when I spent more of my time in this school I got used to it. Then Park West became my favourite school.
- Park West was the best school I have been to in my entire life. Thanks to the school administration I was able to get used to the school much faster. This is because of the rules used in the school and how appropriate they are. That made me understand how to be respectful.

- Park West is a very educational, respectful, and awesome school.
- I like that you can make new friends very easily, because there are so many people. Also the lunch monitors are very nice and they will do a lot for you to keep you safe. I also like this school because it's very diverse, and all the cultures are amazing.
- This school is very fun, because of fun things such as field trips, school barbeques, and field day.
- What I like best about Park West School is the multiple staff members that work here and care for the students very much. The people who work in the cafeteria who make the delicious food are hard working people. Usually in tv shows and movies the cafeteria food is usually disgusting and not edible, but this school cafeteria food is amazing and delicious. And the next hard working staff members are the phys.ed teachers, because they sometimes have to deal with cheaters and people who don't follow the rules. That's really frustrating for everyone. Now I'm about to tell you probably the most hard working staff members in the whole school; in my opinion, the E.P.A.'s. They have hard jobs. I can't forget the people who work in the office and in the classrooms, because they're hard working staff members too. Oh, who am I kidding; everyone in this school is hard-working. The other thing I like is the diversity in the school; how everyone is so different on the outside, but on the inside we're all alike and not so different. It's easy for new students to make friends because of that.
- I love Park West School because it is a diverse place for students of all ages and cultures. Another reason why I love Park West is that the teachers support all the students as much as they can throughout the years.
- Park West is very diverse. Our school plays the national anthem every morning in various languages. This helps students know more about different languages and cultures. Every year we learn about different holidays and traditions from different countries. There is even a multi-cultural club at our school that makes children feel welcome! This is one of the ways our school is very diverse.
- All our teachers support the students here at Park West. There is a very kind and helpful guidance counselor. He supports people who are going through tough times or just need a little advice. For example, LGBTQ students are welcomed as much as possible. There are signs all over our school! The guidance counselor will help anyone who is bullied or struggling to figure out who they are. The teachers are very supportive of the diverse community of our school.
- I love Park West for being diverse and welcoming students from different countries. The teachers are very supportive of the students at Park West, which makes it a great school to be at.
- What I like best about Park West School is the kindness, friendships and no bullying. The thoughtfulness of a custodian picking up your coats and shoes at the end of the day, the patience of a guidance counselor helping you when you're sad or frustrated, a teacher supporting their student and a student supporting their teacher.
- At some schools bullying is not as controlled as it is here. We talk about it, figure out how to solve it, so when it does happen you know what to do. The friendships here also help, because I know that sometimes learning is not as fun without friends. People here are willing to try to make new bonds and be friends with someone new.

**Be On Time For School:** Too many of our students (mostly at the elementary level) are arriving late for school. 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. Students who arrive late for school (without an acceptable excuse from parents/guardians) will serve a detention at recess (elementary) or after school (junior high). Parents may also receive a phone call from teachers. Parents of students who are chronically late for school will be contacted by school administration. In accordance with the new Attendance Policy for Nova Scotia Schools **parents have a responsibility to ensure their children are at school on time.**

**Digital Citizenship:** As a 21<sup>st</sup> century educational institution Park West School promotes the **appropriate, meaningful and responsible** use of personal technologies (such as cell phones, iPhones, iPads, earbuds, etc.) to support curriculum and learning activities. It is at the **discretion of each individual teacher** (mainly at the junior high level) to determine if, how, and when they wish to incorporate the use of these technologies into their classrooms. Integration of such technologies into teaching and learning is encouraged. Whatever the case, students are expected to be respectful and responsible. The inappropriate use of cell phones (for example) can be highly disruptive to the learning and teaching environment. It is not acceptable for students to use these devices during instructional time for non-academic purposes (such as texting, placing or receiving phone calls, using social media, playing games, etc.). Students may use these devices during non-instructional time for such purposes. Unauthorized video/audio recording and taking photos in the school setting without permission is prohibited. Non-academic use of personal devices by students at inappropriate times may result in consequences.

**Please Make an Appointment:** If you wish to meet with a teacher or member of our administrative team (principal or vice principal) you are encouraged to make an appointment, rather than dropping by the school unexpectedly. During the day teachers are almost exclusively engaged with their students; teaching and facilitating learning. Administrators may not be available to meet with you unexpectedly. They may be busy supporting students, teachers, and other staff members. They may have meetings scheduled, or have responsibilities tending to the operation of the school. If you wish to meet with us please contact the school office or directly contact individuals to arrange an appointment to meet. We want to ensure we make time to meet with you to discuss and address your concerns at a mutually convenient time.

**Dates to Remember:**

January		
15	SAC and PTA Meetings	6:00 / 7:00 PM
17	PTA Popcorn Sale (\$1 a bag)	
24	Grade 9 Trip Payment due (\$245)	
30	Junior High Dance & Social	6:30 - 8:30 PM

