

PWS UPDATE

Park West School Newsletter

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

June 25, 2021

Year End Edition

We continue to live in an era of uncertainty. Our school system has been extensively impacted by COVID-19 over the past two years. We are planning for our students to return for a new school year on September 7. However, nothing is guaranteed at this point in time. It is not possible to predict the continuing impact of the COVID pandemic on our school system here in Nova Scotia.

We don't know what teaching and learning will look like in the fall. There are still many unknowns. In the meantime, teachers and school administrators continue to plan for a new school year. Be aware that any announced plans could change at any time due to evolving COVID-19 circumstances. The health, safety, and well-being of our students, families, and school staff remain the top priority as plans are developed for the resumption of school in September. As always, we continue to take direction from Public Health, HRCE, and EECD. You are encouraged to regularly check out Park West School (www.pws.hrce.ca) and Halifax Regional Centre for Education (www.hrce.ca) websites during the summer months for up-to-date information. You may not hear from us until the end of August. Please ensure we have on file your most current email addresses and phone numbers, so you receive all future communications from us.

Farewell: The Park West School community is bidding a fond and sad farewell to some of our staff members. We thank them for helping to make a positive difference here at Park West School. We wish them well in their future assignments and endeavours. We're going to miss them. The following 'members of our family' will not be returning in the fall:

- Ms. Donna Olsen (vice principal)
- Ms. Colleen Cavanaugh (grade primary teacher)
- Ms. Amy Fuscek (grade 1 teacher)
- Ms. Gina Paterson (grade 1/2 teacher)
- Ms. Christa Bennett (grade 3 teacher)
- Ms. Emma Graham (grade 5 teacher)
- Ms. Heather Collins (grade 6 teacher)
- Ms. Hannah Cusack (school counsellor)
- Ms. Dawn Kerr (music teacher) **retiring*
- Ms. Jessica Waye (physical education teacher)
- Ms. Ellen Taggart (physical education teacher)
- Mr. Jeff Piercey (physical education teacher)
- Ms. Linda Landry (resource teacher)
- Ms. Julia Murphy (junior high student support)
- Mr. Bill O'Connor (EPA) **retiring*
- Ms. Kathy Saleh (EPA)
- Mr. Derek Carter (principal) **retiring*
- Mr. John Kingsbury (caretaker)
- Mr. Dave Carney (IT support specialist)
- Ms. Jodie Baker (psychologist)
- Ms. Wendy Oliver (speech/language pathologist)
- Ms. Robin Jenson (Halifax Regional Arts specialist)
- Ms. Aren Morris (Halifax Regional Arts specialist)

Farewell to our Retirees:

Ms. Dawn Kerr (music teacher): After four years of teaching at Park West School, students and staff will say farewell to our dear music teacher, Ms. Kerr. She has had a very successful teaching career, from going as a student herself to a teacher at many different schools including Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and 13 schools here in Nova Scotia, as well as teaching in the United States. She achieved all these amazing things within her 25 years of teaching. Ms. Kerr says her favourite thing at Park West is all the students and how kind and caring they have shown to be. She loves assembling performances

for both students and parents to enjoy, seeing the smiles on everyone's face makes it worth it. When asked about why she decided to become a music teacher, she mentioned her father as the main inspiration. Ms. Kerr then started to take piano lessons and started teaching in a junior high band and choir. Ms. Kerr states she is rather puzzled regarding how she feels about her retirement. This will be the first time she isn't going to get ready to go back to school although this means she has more time to exercise, go skating at the oval, travel, garden and spend time with her family. Ms. Kerr encourages students to stay positive about the pandemic, make education a priority in your life and continue making and enjoying music. With these touching words, the Park West family bids Ms. Kerr adieu, we will all miss her very much.

- *Written by: Emma Fader, Brenda Furlan, Isabela Dias (grade 9 students)*

Mr. Derek Carter (principal):

From elementary teacher to Park West principal, Mr. Carter has had an eminent career of thirty-seven years! Mr. Carter began his career at Gertrude Parker Elementary school as a grade four teacher, at the age of 22. He was a teacher for nine years before becoming a school administrator. Following a period as vice-principal at various schools for nine more years, he decided to turn his hand to a new venture and became a principal. He came to Park West in 2011. Mr. Carter felt the relationship between he and his teachers was a very positive, professional, and caring one. The Park West School building is a very familiar place to him! Mr. Carter says that the foot of the driveway was his favourite place, as he could greet each student coming to school. Mr. Carter's career was full of challenges, especially in 2019-2021. He found being the principal during the COVID-19 pandemic very confusing, but he learned to work through it with the help of his valued staff. He hopes that he was able to help and support teachers and students be successful and to reach their potential. To the new staff members, including the new principal, Mr. Carter tells them to always be open to learning new things, remember to see the positive side in every situation, and value kindness, diversity, and the Park West community. We wish Mr. Carter the best of luck in his future endeavors, as he says that he has bittersweet feelings about leaving, but is excited to embark on new adventures. Good luck, Mr. Carter, you will be missed!

- *Written by: Nealah Boutilier and Adam Saweczko (grade 9 students)*

New School Administration Next Year: As previously announced, there will be some changes to our admin team at the conclusion of this school year. Ms. Donna Olsen (one of our VPs) will be moving to her new assignment at Harold T. Barrett Junior High School. She will be replaced by **Ms. Abby Ferguson** (from Gorsebrook Junior High). As Mr. Carter is retiring, Ms. Benedette Anyanwu has been appointed the new principal. Mr. Brian Melanson (our other VP) will remain here as PWS as part of the admin team. He has vast experience as a school administrator, and knows our school and community intimately; having been here for the last 10 years. Our school will be in good hands.

New Bell Schedule: Effective September 7, 2021, there will be a new bell schedule for students and staff at PWS. It will be as follows:

8:05 am	Entrance bell rings for all grades / students enter building
8:10 am	National Anthem / Announcements / Attendance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must be in classrooms BY this time or will be considered late
8:15 am	Instruction/classes commence
9:45 am	1st elementary recess
10:00 am	2nd elementary recess
11:15 am	Lunch period begins
12:15 pm	Lunch period ends / students proceed to classrooms
12:20 pm	Attendance / Instruction and classes commence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must be in classrooms BY this time or will be considered late
2:25 pm	Dismissal (for all grades)

Report Cards: All report cards will be **emailed** to parents/guardians/students on **Wednesday, June 30**. If you have any issues or questions about report cards you should contact the appropriate teacher, or VP Mr. Melanson (for grades P – 4) or VP Ms. Olsen (for grades 5 – 9). If you do not receive a report

card please contact the appropriate vice principal. Issues and questions regarding report cards will only be addressed up until June 30, and then again in early September. School personnel are not available during summer vacation (July and August).

Late Registration: The school office will be open for late registration on Wednesday, August 25, 9:00-12:00 / 1:00-4:00. **Children who live within the Park West School boundaries are eligible to attend this school.** If new neighbours with elementary/junior high aged children move into the area over the summer please encourage them to register on this date. Proof of address, a birth certificate, and a Nova Scotia health card number are required to complete registration.

School Supplies: School supply lists for all grades for the 2021-2022 school year are posted on our school website and on the school office window during the summer months. Please don't stress if you can't find specific brands, colours, sizes, etc. requested on the supply lists. *Just do the best you can.* School supplies in quantities for the entire year do not have to be brought to school on the first day. You are encouraged to re-use previous year supplies whenever possible. It's not necessary to buy new if you have items that are in usable condition (binders, duotangs, pencils, coloured pencils, scissors, kitbox, etc.). Please label all materials before sending to school, unless otherwise requested by teachers.

Class Lists: Due to reasons of privacy and confidentiality class lists will not be publicly posted on the school premises prior to the first day of school. Students will be assigned to their new classes when our doors open for a new school year on September 7th. Parents and students should be aware that class lists are tentative. It is highly likely some students will be moved to other classes, and teacher assignments at some grade levels will change after September 7. These changes may be necessary due to changed enrollment at some grade levels, and in order to strive to conform to class size caps mandated by the EECD. At this time our enrollment for September, and beyond, is unpredictable. Traditionally we have some students move away over the summer months, and we receive many new students who register during the summer months. In September it may be necessary to reconfigure our classes and assign teachers to new grades/classes. It may also be necessary to make changes to comply with new school operations procedures due to COVID-19. **Class lists will not be finalized until early October.**

Lost & Found: Lost & Found items in our collection will be available for viewing outside our main doors on **Monday, June 28**, during school hours. The rain date is Tuesday, June 29. Parents are encouraged to check it out, and get re-united with lost items from home. Please observe all COVID protocols. All remaining unclaimed items will be disposed of by June 30.

Are you in the Right School? Only children who reside within the Park West School boundaries with parents or legal guardians are eligible to attend this school. Addresses provided to the school may be investigated if there is suspicion the information is not accurate. If a child registered at and/or attending Park West School is found to be **not** residing in our area his/her parents will be directed to register at the appropriate neighbourhood school. This includes students who **were** living in our area and moved out of bounds **during** this school year, but remained at Park West to finish the year.

Are You Moving? If your children attended Park West this year, but you'll be moving away over the summer, please inform us as soon as possible. We need to know if they won't be here in September. **Note: only students who reside within our school boundaries are eligible to attend Park West School in 2021-2022.** Email us at parkwest@hrce.ca

Back to School: The first day of school for the 2021-2022 school year is scheduled to be **Tuesday, September 7**. Students should arrive by **8:05 AM**. Parents and students must not enter the school building until the entrance bell rings at **8:05 AM**. Signs will be posted on exterior doors with directions for entry to the building and assemblies for class placement. Next year we are hoping all students (and their parents) will make it their priority to be **on time for school** on a regular basis. Check the PWS website at the end of August for more **First Day of School** information.

Registration for Pre-Primary and EXCEL: Park West School offers EXCEL (before and after school childcare program) and, beginning in September, the Pre-Primary Program. To register for either of these programs visit the HRCE website:

- Pre-primary information and registration: <https://www.hrce.ca/search/node/pre-primary%20registration>
- EXCEL registration: <https://www.hrce.ca/search/node/EXCEL>

For More Information: For information during the summer months don't forget to check out:

- the Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) website at www.hrce.ca
- the Park West School website at www.pws.hrce.ca

Office Hours: The school office will close for the summer months on **June 30**. Plans are to re-open in late August for the new school year. Dates are to be determined. Regular office hours will resume in the fall.

Staying for Lunch Next Year? All students who wish to remain at school over the lunch period for the 2021-22 school year **must be registered** for the lunch supervision program. Registration forms for all students in grades P – 9 who wish to take part in this program, free-of-charge, will be sent home in early September.

Proud to be Canadian!: **Monday, June 28**, is “Canadiana Day” at Park West. We are not a perfect country. Mistakes have been made. There are injustices. We have some work to do. We must do better. Reconciliation must continue. However...there is still so much worth celebrating, and for which to be grateful. Here at PWS we are celebrating Canada Day early...and showing our pride in being Canadians. On that day students are invited to wear the colours of Canada (red & white), the maple leaf, and other symbols of Canada to school. Let's show pride in our magnificent country and people.

We Need OUR STUFF Back: Students and parents...please make sure 'our stuff' gets returned before the end of the year. We're looking for textbooks (especially from Junior High students). They're expensive! The average textbook costs the school \$85 each. Many of our textbooks are missing. All library books (many are missing from our shelves!) should be returned too. Please return them to us before you leave for the summer. If a Chromebook was borrowed from the school to accommodate at-home learning it must be returned to the school (along with the charging cable) immediately.

School Photo Day: ...for the 2021-2022 school year will be **September 30th**. Our new school photographer is **Paul Adams Photography**.

Next Week: Schools will be closed (no school for students) on **Tuesday, June 29**, for Assessment and Evaluation Day. The last day of school before we close for summer vacation will be **Wednesday, June 30**. Students will be dismissed at 10:00 am on that day.

Mr. Carter, Ms. Olsen, Mr. Melanson, and the entire staff of Park West School thank you for supporting us in our efforts to provide your children with the best educational experience possible during the 2020-2021 school year. We're proud of our students and our school. We wish the families of Park West a summer that is safe, relaxing and filled with lots of fun.

