

# PWS UPDATE

## Park West School Newsletter

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Principal: Mr. D. Carter Vice Principals: Ms. S. Masih Ms. T. Foster

September 16, 2016

Back-to-School Edition

*Dear Parents, Guardians and Friends of Park West School;*

On Thursday, September 8, we opened our doors for another new school year. We welcomed almost 800 students in 30 classes in grades primary to nine. The floors were sparkling, bulletin boards were waiting to be adorned with student masterpieces, and our teachers and support staff were enthusiastic and feeling revived after summer vacation. We have more students, some new staff members, and a few new initiatives to work on this year.

Despite our best efforts to plan ahead and prepare for the new school year, and the first day of school on September 8, we found ourselves with more students in our classrooms than we had anticipated (as has been the case in previous years). For instance, our grade primary classes had 33 students each! As you probably know Park West School is over capacity. Accommodating all our students in classrooms in our facility is an ongoing challenge. HRSB (Halifax Regional School Board) attempted to address our overcrowding issue several years ago with a Boundary Review Process. The majority of Park West parents were adamant they did not want their community's school to change from an *elementary/junior high* format to an *elementary* only format. The elected school board members agreed and voted in favour of keeping the status quo at Park West (permitting it to remain a grades Primary – Nine school). This week we found ourselves in a situation where most of our grades primary to six classes were over the maximum class size guidelines, as prescribed by the EECD (N.S. Dept. of Education and Early Childhood Development). So...we had to make some changes. These changes were implemented after consultation with, and direction from, HRSB (Halifax Regional School Board). Classes had to be re-configured based on the number of elementary classroom teachers we have been allotted (which is 21). Some teachers have been re-assigned to teach new grades. The number of students in each class had to be adjusted. Some students were re-assigned to new classes with new teachers. Our children are amazing; they are resilient and adapt quickly to change. As of today, all the changes have been made, and now we can get down to the business of teaching, learning, and growing. The transition was effortless, and disruptions to our routine were minimal.

We are delighted to welcome a new vice principal to our school...Ms. Tracy Foster. Our administrative team (Ms. Masih, Ms. Foster, and I) is committed to providing dynamic leadership to this school community in reaching our ultimate goal...ensuring every student succeeds. Our mission is to nurture a "culture of excellence and acceptance". We look forward to working with our students, their parents, our staff, and the school community of Park West to accomplish this.

Park West School is a "*home for the heart and the mind*". We care about our students. We want them to succeed. As we strive to ensure their success the following priorities will continue to guide our daily practice:

- **Our people** – We don't just teach subjects and outcomes...we teach kids! Our people are important (students, families, staff, community).
- **Connecting with each other, students, and their parents** – "No significant learning can occur without a significant relationship." "Human connection is the key." We want to build positive relationships.
- **School Success Planning (SSP)** – Our school improvement plan consists of goals and strategies for improving literacy and mathematics. There will be extra emphasis this year on developing mathematics skills.
- **Quality Teaching** - We recognize that high-performing educators and leaders make a difference in student success.
- **Student Engagement** – We will strive to capture the attention and interest of our students, and encourage them to make an investment in their learning, so they try hard to learn and take advantage of what school offers.
- **Culturally Relevant Pedagogy** – Instructional strategies that build on the lived experiences and strengths of our students.
- **Creating consistency** – We want to work cooperatively and collaboratively so we are effective and efficient.
- **Ensuring student success** – "The result of teaching should be learning"...and success.
- **Technology** – We recognize the value of technology in learning and teaching...and want to grow with it.
- **Supporting our teachers and support staff** – Appreciating, valuing, and supporting them as they strive to meet the needs of all students. We promise to do our best, but may make a few mistakes along the way. Please be forgiving.
- **Innovation:** Encouraging creativity, vision, imagination, resourcefulness, and thinking "outside the box". We want to develop talent!
- **Our diversity** – Diversity presents itself in many forms. We accept, embrace and celebrate it. Our diversity is our pride and strength. At Park West we thrive in a "*culture of acceptance*".

Under the direction of EECD and HRSB we are implementing some new initiatives this year, including: injecting new technology programs into our curriculum; a streamlined curriculum for grades four to six; and new Attendance and Retention & Promotion policies (coming soon). Details about these, and other initiatives, will be shared with you in the future.

There are many students and families new to our school, and to Canada. We all welcome you to "our family" with open arms.

We depend on you (parents, guardians, family, and community) to assist us in this daunting task of ensuring **every** student succeeds. Your engagement and support are vital. **We are all in this together!** Always believe that something wonderful is going to happen!

Best regards,

*Mr. Carter*

## Park West School Staff for 2016-2017

<b>Principal</b>	Mr. D. Carter	<b>Guidance</b>	Ms. Aucoin
<b>Vice Principal</b>	Ms. S. Masih	<b>MUSIC</b>	Ms. K. Servant / Ms. H. Moen
<b>Vice Principal</b>	Ms. T. Foster	<b>Band (4-9)</b>	Ms. V. Wilson
<b>Admin Assistant</b>	Ms. B. Landers	<b>Strings (3-6)</b>	Mr. B. Joyce
<b>Admin Assistant</b>	Ms. E. Johnston	<b>Art</b>	Ms. A. White
<b>Primary</b>	Ms. C. Walker	<b>Core French 4-6</b>	Ms. M. Mockler & Ms. C. Saoud
<b>Primary</b>	Ms. A. Dorey	<b>Core French 7-9</b>	Mr. P. Howell
<b>Primary</b>	Ms. M. Young	<b>Tech Ed./Phys Ed.</b>	Mr. J. d'Entremont
<b>One</b>	Ms. K. Whitehouse	<b>Phys Ed.</b>	Mr. C. MacCormack
<b>One</b>	Ms. P. Morine / Ms. D. MacIntyre	<b>Phys Ed.</b>	Mr. J. Piercey
<b>One</b>	Ms. E. Kostlac	<b>EAL</b>	Ms. K. Brewer
<b>One</b>	Ms. R. Ssebazza	<b>EAL</b>	Ms. S. Haikings
<b>Two</b>	Ms. M. Webber	<b>Early Literacy Teacher</b>	Ms. S. Doucet
<b>Two</b>	Ms. J. Griffiths / Ms. S. Labor	<b>Resource</b>	Ms. D. Allan
<b>Two/Three</b>	Ms. A. Moore	<b>Resource</b>	Ms. L. Hayes
<b>Three</b>	Ms. T. MacDonald	<b>Resource/Learning Ctre.</b>	Mr. S. Sullivan
<b>Three</b>	Ms. T. Crummer	<b>Learning Centre</b>	Ms. V. Allen
<b>Three/Four</b>	Ms. M. Muise	<b>EPA</b>	Ms. K. Corbett
<b>Four</b>	Ms. W. Poitras	<b>EPA</b>	Ms. A.M. Graham
<b>Four</b>	Ms. J. Walsh / Ms. D. MacIntyre	<b>EPA</b>	Mr. B. O'Connor
<b>Four/Five</b>	Ms. M. Chute	<b>EPA</b>	Mr. S. Hopkins
<b>Five</b>	Ms. A. Howell	<b>EPA</b>	Ms. A. Graham
<b>Five/Six</b>	Ms. L. MacDonald	<b>EPA</b>	Ms. T. Mailman
<b>Six</b>	Mr. M. Corbett	<b>EPA</b>	Ms. L. Sutherland
<b>Six</b>	Mr. A. Nelson	<b>EPA</b>	Ms. J. Keating
<b>Six</b>	Ms. C. Bennett	<b>EPA</b>	Ms. J. Langley
<b>Seven</b>	Ms. S. Morgan	<b>Jr. High Support</b>	Mr. J. Moshett
<b>Seven</b>	Ms. K. Stewart / Ms. T. Hickey	<b>Library</b>	Ms. A. Comeau
<b>Seven</b>	Mr. A. Driscoll	<b>YMCA Newcomer Support Worker</b>	Ms. M. Spencer
<b>Eight</b>	Ms. J. Attwater	<b>EXCEL/ Lunch Program</b>	Ms. W. Nizam
<b>Eight</b>	Mr. T. Cobean	<b>Head Caretaker</b>	Mr. L. Lee
<b>Eight</b>	Ms. C. White	<b>Night Cleaners</b>	Mr. R. Turcotte & Mr. S. Hickey
<b>Nine</b>	Mr. G. Beattie	<b>Cafeteria Operator</b>	Ms. J. Scrymgeour
<b>Nine</b>	Ms. T. Riddell	<b>School Psychologist</b>	Ms. H. Boucher
<b>Nine</b>	Ms. S. Pindera	<b>Speech/Language</b>	Ms. W. Oliver
		<b>Social Worker</b>	Ms. S. Grant-Robertson

**Annual Park West PTA Back-to-School Community BBQ:** The Park West School Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) is celebrating the new school year by hosting a community barbeque here at our school on **Thursday, September 22, 5:30 – 7 pm**. There will be lots of good things to eat at minimal prices, including: hamburgers (\$3), veggie burgers (\$2), hot dogs (\$1), cold beverages (\$1), popcorn (\$1), and frozen treats (\$1). Bring your family, friends, and neighbours. For more information, or to volunteer to help out, please contact Lynn Anderson at [glennanderson@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:glennanderson@ns.sympatico.ca)

**Practicing to be Safe:** The safety and security of our students and staff is a top priority for Park West School and the Halifax Regional School Board. In recent years we have been implementing a number of measures as part of a comprehensive plan aimed at ensuring our school remains a safe place. One of the procedures schools have been employing is a **lock down** drill. During a lock down regular school operations are suspended. All exterior doors are locked, and no one is permitted to enter or leave the building. Classroom doors are secured, and teachers and students remain hidden inside classrooms until instructed by school administration to resume their activities. Students are isolated within the school when circumstances make it safer to stay in the classroom rather than evacuate the building. Just as we prepare our students to properly respond to a fire drill, they also need to be aware of the proper response during a lock down drill. Another drill we practice is **hold & secure**. During a hold & secure situation all exterior doors to our facility are locked; no one is permitted to enter or exit. Our regular routine continues within the building. This type of drill is initiated if there is a safety concern for our students within our school neighbourhood. These drills should be treated with the same level of importance as fire drills. School staff will be discussing the importance of these procedures with students prior to running the drills. We will also take time after the drills to remind them that it was only a practice and there was no danger. Please take the time to speak with your son/daughter about these procedures and reinforce their importance. We practice these drills to ensure our school remains a safe place for teaching and learning. **Lock down and hold & secure drills** will be held at Park West School on **Friday, Sept. 23**.

**Dates to Remember:**

September		
<b>19</b>	Late Policy effective today (student s who are late will receive a detention)	
<b>21</b>	SAC and PTA Meetings	<b>6:00 pm and 7:00 pm</b>
<b>22</b>	PTA Community BBQ	<b>5:30 - 7:00 pm</b>
<b>23</b>	Lock Down and Hold & Secure Drills	
<b>29</b>	Curriculum and Meet the Teacher Night	<b>6:30 pm</b>
<b>29</b>	Student Fees Due (\$20 per student)	
<b>30</b>	Professional Development (PD) Day <b>(no school for students)</b>	

