

PWS UPDATE

Park West School Newsletter

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PTA Hallowe'en Family Dance Party and Costume Contest: This PTA fundraising event will be held at Park West School on **Thursday, October 26, at 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm.** Admission: \$10.00 per family in advance; \$15.00 per family at the door. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Come and have a blast and enjoy some yummy treats as well! All money raised from this event will be used to support teaching and learning here at PWS.

What's Going On at PWS?: Our school is a busy place. There's more going on than just teaching and learning in our classrooms. Due to the generosity of our staff members who are willing to volunteer their time we are offering lots of extra-curricular opportunities to our students. These include: JH Drama Club (Wednesdays @ 2:45 pm); lunch time intramurals (grades 4-9); grade 9 spring trip to Montreal & Quebec City; choir (Tuesdays 2:45-3:15 for grades 3-6); JH dances (first one is Nov. 9); Terry Fox Walk/Run; JH GirlSpace (Wednesdays at lunch); junior high soccer teams (girls & boys); junior high volleyball teams (girls & boys); cross country club (grades 4-9); running club (grades 4 – 9); badminton club (grades 4-9).

New Student Attendance and Engagement Policy: The Education and Early Childhood Development Dept. in Nova Scotia (EECD) recently introduced a new policy that sets clear and consistent expectations for regular and punctual attendance at all grade levels. One quarter of public school students in our province miss at least 16 days of school per year. Regular and punctual attendance at school promotes greater student success and achievement. The entire policy may be found at <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/student-attendance-and-engagement-policy> Some highlights of the new policy are:

- As per the Education Act, students are required to attend school regularly and punctually.
- All reasons for absence from school must be communicated to the school by the students' parent/guardian.
- Teachers and school administration may exercise their professional judgment and flexibility in cases of *extenuating circumstances*.
- Teachers are not required to prepare additional materials or release text materials prior to their release to the class.
- Teachers are not required to prepare 'work packages' for students on extended absences from school, unless medically related.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for monitoring and ensuring their children maintain regular attendance and arrive at school on time.
- In instances of *chronic* lateness and/or absenteeism parents/guardians will be contacted by the school.

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 (7-9)

- **If a student is late (after 8:30 / O Canada in the morning; after 12:40 pm after lunch; arriving to the next class) then he/she will serve a 20 minute after-school detention with the homeroom teacher on the day the student is late.**
- If a JH student arrives late for school (morning or afternoon) he/she must sign-in at the office before proceeding to class.
- The detention may be served on the following day at the discretion of the teacher if circumstances dictate that prevent the student from serving the detention on the day of being late (e.g. student had urgent family commitment, doctor's appointment, etc.).
- If a student is late both in the morning and after lunch then arrangements will be made for he/she to serve two detentions.
- Serving the detention will take precedence over the student participating in extra-curricular activities (egs. sports teams, clubs, rehearsals, etc.). Participation in extra-curricular activities is a privilege, not a right.
- If the student doesn't show up to serve a detention parents will be contacted and the detention served the following day.
- Before a detention is served parents will be contacted to inform them their son/daughter will be detained after school.
- "Excused" lates must be for legitimate reasons. Legitimate excuses may include, but not be limited to: medical appointments; family emergency.
- A written note, phone call, or email must be provided by the parent and submitted to the **school** secretary explaining the reason for being late.
- Teachers may exercise discretion for students with *exceptional circumstances*.

ELEMENTARY (P-6)

- **If a student is late (after 8:30 / O Canada in the morning; after 12:40 pm after lunch) then he/she will serve a 15 minute recess detention on the day the student is late.**
- Recess detentions may be served in classrooms with homeroom teachers, or the students may be sent to the cafeteria to serve the detention under the supervision of a teacher.
- Serving the detention will take priority over the student participating in extra-curricular activities at recess.
- The student serving detention will be permitted to eat a snack, and use the washroom (if necessary).
- Parents will be informed if a student is to serve a detention for being late.
- If the student doesn't show up to serve a detention parents will be contacted and the detention served the following day.
- "Excused" lates must be for legitimate reasons. A written note, phone call, or email must be provided by the parent to the **classroom teacher** explaining the reason for being late. Legitimate excuses may include, but not be limited to: medical appointment; family emergency.

- Teachers may exercise discretion for students with *exceptional circumstances*.

Parent Concern Protocol:

- If you have a question or concern regarding your child, the channel of communication begins with your child’s **teacher**, or the teacher with whom you have the concern. A teacher deserves the first opportunity to address your concerns. Communication can be done via telephone or email, or make an appointment to meet in person.
- If an issue cannot be resolved to your satisfaction with the teacher, please contact the Principal or Vice Principal.
- Parent concerns related to school administration/operation issues should be addressed with the Principal or Vice Principal. Mr. Carter, Ms. Masih and Mr. Melanson are very approachable and are happy to address your concerns.
- Email, telephone calls (we have voicemail), and meetings by appointment work best for effective communication. If you drop by the school office unexpectedly we cannot guarantee that we will be instantly available to meet with you.
- Matters of Discipline:** Minor discipline issues are handled by teachers. Discipline issues of a more serious nature are addressed namely by our **Vice Principals**. Fortunately major discipline issues at Park West are rare. We have awesome students.

Shared Responsibility: Park West is a large school comprised of over 850 students (in grades Primary to 9) in 32 classes, and 90 people who work in our building on a daily basis. That’s almost 1000 people! They all have needs, and require attention and support. In order to provide the support and assistance they need, and operate our school effectively and efficiently, we have divided administrative responsibilities among our principal and two vice principals (our admin team). For instance, some of the responsibilities assigned to Mr. Carter (the principal) include: finances, grade 9 trip, building maintenance and cleaning, primary orientation, and diversity. Mr. Melanson’s (Vice Principal) responsibilities include: technology, athletics, lunch program, substitute teachers, and hiring new staff. Ms. Masih (Vice Principal) is responsible for health & safety, scheduling, assessments, PowerSchool, and school photos. To better assist and support teachers, their classes, and parents we have divided our homerooms between the two VPs as follows:

Ms. Masih	Grades: primary, 1, 2, 3 and 4	Please contact the appropriate Vice Principal (depending on your child’s grade assignment) to assist you at any time with issues, concerns, and matters of behaviour and discipline.
Mr. Melanson	Grades 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9	

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
Monday, Dec. 11 @ 1:15 PM	1-Griswold, 1-Kostlac, 1-Morine, 2-Griffiths/Labor, 2-Ssebazza, 3-MacDonald
Tuesday, Dec. 12 @ 1:15 PM	P-Cavanaugh, P-Dorey/Whitehouse, P-Walker, 2-MacIntyre, 2-Webber, 3-McNally, grade 3’s in 3/4-Thurston

Concerts will be presented in the afternoons (1:15 PM) on those dates. Concerts will be 45 – 60 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.

No Child Without: The Canadian MedicAlert Foundation is a charitable organization which is the leading provider of emergency medical information services linked to customized medical bracelets and necklaces. They are pleased to be able to offer MedicAlert memberships to students (from age 4 to their 14th birthday) through the *No Child Without* program at Park West School. The financial support of the Government of Canada and Lions Clubs allows students to receive the MedicAlert membership for FREE. For more information and to register your eligible child visit www.nochildwithout.ca

Relocation Site: In the unlikely event we have to vacate our school building during the day all students and staff will be evacuated to the **Canada Games Centre** on Lacewood Drive. We would walk there in classes using paths, accompanied by teachers and school staff. Parents, guardians and our community would be informed of the relocation (via telephone and media) and instructed to pick up children at that site. We strive to be prepared for all emergencies and urgent situations.

NSTU Conference Day: **Friday, October 27**, is NSTU Professional Conference Day. There is **no school for students on that day**. Teachers and support staff will be engaged in professional development opportunities to improve teaching and learning.

Let’s Party...At Home: We must insist that parents refrain from sending birthday cakes, treat bags, and other party treats/favours to school on their children’s birthdays. Please do not show up at the classroom door with these items and assume the teacher will cease teaching and learning to conduct a birthday party for your child. These celebrations should happen at home. What happens in our classrooms is governed by strict guidelines from the EECD. Time has to be dedicated to address curriculum outcomes. As well, we must also abide by strict Healthy Food in Schools Policy guidelines. Some of our students have severe food allergies, so we strictly regulate food consumption in our school. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

Dates to Remember:

October		
25	Immunization clinic (grade 7)	
25	Grade 9 Trip Information Meeting (for students and parents)	6:00 PM
26	PTA Hallowe’en Family Dance	6:00 – 8:00 PM
27	Conference Day (schools closed)	
November		
2	School Photos re-takes	
9	Junior High Dance (\$6.00 admission)	6:30-8:30 PM
10	Remembrance Ceremony	10:30 AM
13	Remembrance Day (schools closed)	
15	SAC and PTA meetings	6:00 PM / 7:00 PM
16	PTA Family BINGO	6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
22	Assessment & Evaluation Day (no school for students)	
24	PTA Popcorn Day (\$1.00 per bag)	

