



Whonnock Elementary

27471 112th Avenue, Maple Ridge, B.C. V2W 1P9

Principal: Mr. Stuart Richardson T: 604 462 7612

Website: schools.sd42.ca/Whonnock srichardson@sd42.ca

Message from the Principal:

Welcome back! September is always such an exciting time to be in a school. There is newness all around: the floors are shiny, there are new staff and classmates to meet, and there are many opportunities for growth presented by a fresh start. Everyone is older, which students love but the adults not so much! Some changes to note this year: we have 12 divisions, we have a new child care worker at our school for a day and a half, we'll have access to a multi-purpose room for small group work, cooking and building, and it's a BOO HOOVILLE YEAR!

Student cell phone use

We have also met as a staff to address student use of cell phones and respectfully request the following: students are permitted to bring phones to school but they will need to stay in their backpacks from 8:25- 2:20 inclusive. If a student needs to contact you they have two options: come to the office to call you on the school landline, or ask Ms. Jennings or I to call on their behalf. I also have a school district cell phone which I am happy to offer to students if need be. We are trying to address the issue of students taking their phones to the bathroom to either text, play games, or take mirror selfies. If a student chooses to ignore our policy, they will be asked to turn their phone in to me and I will keep it for the remainder of the day. They will then be expected not to bring it to school for one month as a consequence. We are very lucky at Whonnock as there is a long standing and strong history of most students not misusing their phones, however we did have some instances of concern last year. Students are welcome to connect with you on their phones before and after school. I hope you understand and as always, I welcome your thoughts on this.

Upcoming Events

September 16

Kindergarten Start Full Day

September 17

Division 9 – Applebarn Fieldtrip

September 19

Picture Day

September 20

Open House 8:00- 8:30 am

September 23

District Pro-D – No School

September 27

Terry Fox Run 1:00

NOTE: READ newsletter carefully and keep as a reference as there are numerous important school information items. Many of these items will not be repeated in future newsletters.

New forest to explore

Another change is that we have agreed to is to open the forest on the South West corner of the school property to students to explore and play during recess and lunch. It will be supervised by staff and the usual expectations around safe stick use and play will apply.

Bell schedule changes

Two things have changed as regards bells: firstly, we now will start recess 10 minutes later at 10:20 and end at 10:35 and will also start lunch 10 minutes earlier at 11:50. At 12:10 students will come in from playing and eat their lunch in class from 12:10- 12:30. This change is to accommodate the new teacher preparation schedule which allows for 110 minutes of prep time per week. The second change is that we have agreed to have fewer bells during school. Now bells will only ring as follows:

8:25 Warning bell, classes start at 8:30

10:35 "...recess is over!"

12:10 time to come in and eat lunch

There you have it, the beginning of another great year at Whonnock! I'm really looking forward to getting to know you all better and to working hard together to give your children the best possible educational experiences we can. I am available to you any time, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Respectfully,

Stuart Richardson 604 626 1772 srichardson@sd42.ca



PORTAL News

District consent forms have been sent out through the portal. Please complete them ASAP. Remember to click on each individual form to complete and sign, this indicates to the district that you have read the forms. If you have any issues, or questions please come and see Mr. Richardson.

Important School News

WELCOME NEW STAFF: We are happy to have the following new staff members join us this year: Ms. Summers (Job share in Div. 4) with Mrs. Kieneker. Ms. Wilson our new Child Care Worker, and Ms. Altenried our new ELL teacher.

MEDICAL FORMS: If your child has any health care needs that require support at school, including the administration of any medications, medical forms **MUST** be completed and brought into the office. The school cannot assist with any medical intervention unless these forms are completed. Please contact the school as soon as possible to complete a form. If you have an existing form on file, please let us know if anything needs to be updated. This procedure complies with the policy regarding the health care needs of children at school. If there are any questions, please contact the school.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE: Kids Plus™ Accident Insurance reimburses for accident-related medical and dental expenses not covered by provincial, extended health or dental plans. If interested, please visit web site at www.iapkidsplus.com. Forms are available in the office as well.



WESTCOAST RECESS: We strive to have 'West Coast' Recess/lunches (students outside on rainy days); therefore, sending your child with boots, rain-gear, hats, gloves, is necessary and appreciated. Please ensure your child has a pair of dry indoor shoes and an **extra change of clothes** –just in case they fall down and get wet. By sending an extra change of clothes, this alleviates office pile up at the phone to call home and wasted learning time. Thanks for your assistance.

BRING YOUR WATER BOTTLE: Students are reminded to bring their water bottles every day. Some Primary classes have alternate arrangements with individual cups. However, it is solely at the discretion of the teacher. In past years the office had given out small disposable cups to students who had forgotten their cup for the day. The office cannot supply cups to students all year, please remember to bring a water bottle.

STUDENT VERIFICATION FORMS: We will be sending Student Verification Forms home with each student in the near future. These forms are kept in the office and used for emergency situations. Please review ALL the information and make any corrections on the sheet and return to your child's teacher as soon as possible. ***DON'T FORGET TO SIGN THE BACK OF THE FORM.**

PHONING IN: Please remember to phone the school if your child is going to absent or late. You can also send in your child's absence/late through the parent portal. For the safety of your child we will be phoning home if we do not know your child is going to be absent. Thank you for your help!

VISITORS: All Visitors/Volunteers must sign into the office if. We need to be able to account for all staff and visitors to our school.



OPEN HOUSE: We will be hosting an open house on Friday, September 20th from 8:00 am to 8:30 am. Please come in and see our school and your child's classroom.

PAC NEWS: Our PAC meetings are generally held on the second Monday of every month (with a few exceptions due to holidays). This is your opportunity to find out what's happening at the school, meet other parents, address any concerns regarding the school community and, if you choose, participate in our fundraising activities by volunteering. Everyone is welcome. We look forward to meeting you.

First Meeting Date: TBD

School Safety Notification System

The Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows School District has updated its *School Safety Notification System* in collaboration with the Ridge Meadows RCMP. The revised notification system follows provincial recommendations and covers the six following scenarios:



Drop, Cover, and Hold – Used in the event of an earthquake, explosion, or any event that shakes the school.



Hold and Secure – Used when there is a security concern, such as a police incident, in the neighborhood of the school.



Lockdown – Used to prevent intruders from entering occupied areas of the school, or in times when it is necessary to isolate students and staff from a danger outside or within the building.



Shelter in Place – Used as a short-term measure to protect students and staff from potential dangers outside the school (e.g. environmental weather-related emergencies, dangerous wild animals on school grounds, or a missing child).



Room Clear – Used to move people away from a hazard contained in one room/area.

You can find more information about the revised *School Safety Notification System* on the district website at <https://www.sd42.ca/school-safety-notification/>

WHO IS AN ABORIGINAL STUDENT?

Aboriginal Ancestry is determined on a voluntary basis through self-identification. This includes First Nations (status or non-status), Metis or Inuit Ancestry. No documentation is required and the ancestry can go back several generations. Ministry of Education funding is provided to support the success of all Aboriginal students through culturally appropriate educational programs and services.

We encourage all students of First Nations, Metis, or Inuit Ancestry to complete a self-identification form as this allows you to access a various supports and programs during the school year if you wish. If you have any questions about this process please do not hesitate to contact:

Kirsten Urdahl-Serv

Acting Principal Aboriginal Education

SD 42 – Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows

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