



WEST HEIGHTS COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY

September Newsletter

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September 28th, 2021

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— WELCOME —
BACK TO SCHOOL

Principal's Message

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

September has certainly flown by quickly. Over the past few weeks, the school staff have worked incredibly hard to ensure that everything is in place for a terrific year ahead. It has been wonderful to meet so many families, and I look forward to meeting many more for the weeks to come. Our students are settling in their classrooms nicely, and we are eager to begin the school year with many exciting events coming up!

Currently, we are being cautious with visitors and parent volunteers entering the school. If you wish to meet with your child's teacher or administration, please send us an email or call the school ahead of time to arrange for an appointment. At this time, most meetings will be held over the phone or virtually. The following protocols apply when visiting the school: health check, wearing a mask, hand sanitizing and signing in for contact tracing.

Monthly newsletters will be issued during the last week of each month with email updates throughout the year as well. Newsletters will be sent to our families as well as posted on our school website.

If you have any questions/concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me: isabella.lam@mpsd.ca

Welcome Back Assembly:

We had our first virtual assembly on Thurs, Sep. 23rd to welcome our students back for another school year! We engaged in a school-wide read of the story "I Am Peace, a Book of Mindfulness" by Susan Verde, and connected the story to our school's Code of Conduct: *Be Kind, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe*. Additionally, we reviewed school rules, and finished the assembly off with the activity; 2 stars and a wish, as an opportunity for me (new principal) to learn more about your child, and all the wonderful things that happen at West Heights!

Picture Day:

Picture Day is scheduled on Monday, October 4th and photos will be taken in the gym. We will be sending a reminder with more information closer to the date.

Students Dressed for the Weather:

At West Heights, we believe in the importance of having children outside, getting fresh air, and playing, for recess and lunch breaks. With the beautiful fall weather upon us, both cooler temperatures and lots of rain, it is important for students to bring an umbrella, wear a rain jacket and boots. A change in clothing to be kept at school is also helpful, especially socks.

Parking:

This is just a friendly reminder that our school parking lot can become very congested before and after school. Please do not leave your vehicle unattended, park or pick up/drop off in the yellow bus lane zone, as buses and emergency vehicles must have access without being blocked. Thank you for your support.

Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA):

Our grade 4 students will have the opportunity to complete a Foundation Skills Assessment from October 4th to November 12th. This is an annual assessment provided by the Ministry of Education. This assessment may be used to inform students' literacy and numeracy skills. I hope that all students will participate.

Staff News:

We are pleased to welcome two of our newest staff members who will be joining us this year. Ms. Hogg, our new Teacher-Librarian and Ms. Kienas, our new Grade 5/6 Teacher. Welcome to West Heights!

Parent Advisory Council (PAC):

The first PAC meeting for the 2021-2022 school year will take place on Wednesday, Sep. 29th at 7 pm on Zoom. The meeting link is posted on our school website under Pac Information. This is a wonderful way to meet other parents, learn about the incredible opportunities and programs the PAC is organizing, as well as becoming involved with the school community. We hope to see you there!

Upcoming Dates:

Sep. 30 th	National Day of Truth & Reconciliation (stat holiday – students do not attend)
Oct. 4 th	Picture Day
Oct. 11 th	Thanksgiving Day (students do not attend)
Oct. 21 st	Picture Retake Day
Oct. 21 st	Shake Out BC
Oct. 22 nd	Provincial Pro-D Day (students do not attend)

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Sep. 30th):

Thursday, September 30, 2021 is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. It is our traditional Orange Shirt Day and this year it is a statutory holiday. This is a gentle reminder of the special, historic event taking place on the first ever National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. Phyllis Webstad is speaking at Fraser River Heritage Park. The event is open to the public, and will go ahead rain or shine. Please see the poster below for more details.

Open to the Public:
Come hear Phyllis Webstad speak for the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation!



Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of the St. Joseph Mission (SJM) Residential School (1891-1981) Commemoration Project and Reunion events that took place in Williams Lake, BC, Canada, in May 2013. Former student Phyllis (Jack) Webstad told her story of her first day at residential school when her shiny new orange shirt, bought by her grandmother, was taken from her as a six-year old girl.



Where: Fraser River Heritage Park, 7494 Mary Street, Mission, BC (covered area)
When: Thursday, September 30, 2021 starting at 11:00am
Please wear orange and bring your own lawn chairs, water, snacks and if you wish, a drum.
Elder Parking available onsite. Contact Marcy Buell at marcy.buell@mpsd.ca or 604 826-3103 for Elder Parking Pass. Additional parking at Heritage Park Middle School and Windebank Elementary.
Contact Vivian Searwar at vivian.searwar@mpsd.ca for questions.

Partnerships: S'wal Si'wes Indigenous Department, SD75, City of Mission, Mission Friendship Centre

Orange Shirt Week (Sep. 27th to Oct. 1st):

Students will be engaged in meaningful Truth and Reconciliation activities this week in their classrooms. This year is the year of **sqelá:w, the Beaver, shxwlheq'lomet, Wisdom**. We are encouraging students to wear an orange shirt or something orange this week to commemorate Orange Shirt Day.

School Garden:



We are pleased to announce that our school garden has begun. Garden boxes have been delivered, and we are looking forward to planting our garden soon. Many thanks to Mrs. Schweers and Ms. Chris for all their hard work with getting our garden up and running! The school has now been certified as the Wildlife-friendly Habitat through the Canadian Wildlife Federation.

Personal Items:

A friendly reminder to please ask your child to keep personal items at home (including electronics, toys, trading cards, etc.). We want to make sure all of these items are stored safely at home. Thank you for your support.

Covid-19 Health and Safety Reminders for Parents:

Please continue to complete a daily health check of your child before sending them to school. It is important that they are not experiencing any new symptoms. If they become sick at school, we will call home to have them picked up until they are feeling better. Here are some resources that may help you.

Parents/caregivers and students can use the [K to 12 Health Check App](#)

Staff and other adults can refer to BCCDC's [When to get tested for COVID-19](#)

Staff, students and parents/caregivers can also use the BCCDC online [Self-Assessment Tool](#), call 8-1-1 or their health care provider