



WEST HEIGHTS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

October Newsletter



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October 27th, 2021

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Principal's Message

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

October is certainly one of the most beautiful months of the year with the changing colors of the leaves, fresh crisp air, and fall festivities, there are so many wonderful things to celebrate and look forward to. One notable fall festivity is our West Heights Pumpkin Patch brought to us by our amazing PAC. It was lovely to see the joy and excitement from our students' faces as they discover that our school forest turned into a magical Pumpkin Patch! The photo above captures this special day. A big thank you to PAC for making this all happen.

As October is drawing to a close, our students are also nearing the end of term 1, and parent conferences are just around the corner. Staff will be reaching out directly to schedule conferences with you for the month of November, so please stay tuned.

The end of October also marks Halloween celebrations, and we are looking forward to having a special visit from Sargeant Safety Bear to learn more about Halloween Safety Tips. As well, we are excited, eager and proud of our Gr. 6 basketball team who have been working hard practicing for their upcoming play dates!

Currently, we are continuing to be cautious with visitors and parent volunteers entering the school. These visits will continue to be made by appointment ahead of time with myself or your child's teacher, and the following of protocols: health check, wearing a mask, hand sanitizing and signing in for contact tracing.

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

Truth & Reconciliation Assembly:

At West Heights, we strive to connect and engage in Truth & Reconciliation activities throughout the school year, and in the beginning of October, we had our Orange Shirt Day virtual assembly. We read two stories together: "Phyllis' Orange Shirt Story" by Phyllis Webstad and "You Hold Me Up" by Monique Gray Smith.

Following, we had discussions around how we, as a school community, could take care of one another. We demonstrated our learning through a school-wide art activity which includes tracing our handprint and writing/drawing an example of how we can "hold each other up." It was beautiful to see how our students connected important themes including: love, building relationships and fostering empathy with one another.



Halloween Safety Session:

On Thursday, October 28th, we will be having a very brief Halloween Safety session with the Crime Prevention Office and our School Liaison Officer who is with the RCMP. They will be bringing Sargeant Safety Bear with them to help our students learn more about Halloween Safety Tips (i.e. planning a safe route, wearing reflectors, checking your candy, etc.) as we prepare for Halloween this weekend. We are really looking forward to their visit!

Halloween Costumes:

On Friday, October 29th, classes will be having their own Halloween/Fall celebrations in their classrooms. Students are invited to wear their Halloween costumes to school if they wish. Please note that the wearing of a Halloween costume is optional. If your child is planning on wearing a costume, all costumes must be school appropriate, which includes: no weapons, Halloween face masks, blood, gore, accessories, inappropriate clothing, etc.



Students Dressed for the Weather:

As the beautiful fall weather continues to be upon us, with much 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 or park in the drop-off zone, as buses and emergency vehicles must have access without being blocked.

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 our newest staff members who have joined our school community in October:

Mr. Brayden Conway – Gr. 5/6 Teacher
Ms. Manjula Sasikumar – Education Assistant
Ms. Samreen Bhullar – Education Assistant
Ms. Veenita Chand – Education Assistant
Ms. Jessie Chequis – Supervision Assistant
Ms. Shannalee Holhauser – Supervision Assistant

Basketball Team:

We are very excited to bring basketball back to West Heights this year! Ms. Alexandria Crump has been working hard coaching our Gr. 6 basketball team for the past few weeks to ensure we are ready for our play dates coming up. Our practices are Monday and Wednesday after school. This year, we will be hosting games at our site with specific health & safety protocols in place. Here are our game days:

Thurs, Oct. 28th Game Day 1 at West Heights

Thurs, Nov. 4th Game Day 2 at West Heights

Weds, Nov. 10th Game Day 3 at West Heights

Thurs, Nov. 18th Playoffs

Mon, Nov. 22nd Finals



Go Thunderbirds Go!

Spirit Days:

We are looking forward to having monthly Spirit Days throughout the school year. We will send home email communication to notify families of the upcoming Spirit Days. The first one will take place in mid-November. A special thank you to Ms. Coulthard's class for organizing the ideas and days for us!

Upcoming Dates:

Nov. 1st District Pro-D Day (students do not attend)

Nov. 10th Remembrance Day Assembly

Nov. 11th Remembrance Day (stat holiday – students do not attend)

Nov. 12th ½ Non-Instructional Day (students attend until 11:00 am)

Nov. 26th Non-Instructional Day (students do not attend)

Parent Advisory Council (PAC):

The next PAC meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 27th at 7 pm on Zoom. The meeting link is posted under our school website under Pac Information.

Morning Attendance:

Morning attendance is an important task that we work through every morning to ensure all of our students have arrived safely to school. This is just a friendly reminder to please contact the office if your child will be absent for the day. Please give the school a call first, and if you're not able to reach us, please send our Secretary an email: carol.harris@mpsd.ca Thank you very much 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. We have also posted the K-12 Health Check App on our school website.

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