

## Welcome Back Message from the Principal

September 6, 2022

Dear Parents,

We have experienced a great deal of change in these last two years and I know that the return to school this year may be a time of great excitement for some and great anxiety for others. We have worked diligently to ensure that all our procedures and safety measures have been implemented to protect your child, staff and the community. We are asking that you read this letter and comply with all the requests within it.

Your support and goodwill will continue to define this community. Please feel free to communicate with us however is best for you. Please be aware that each Staff member does have their own extension with our new phone system, so when phoning the school be prepared to search them in the Staff directory. Also please use School Messenger, to record student absences.

A key to your child's success is effective and ongoing communication, so please communicate with your child's teacher regularly using email or the agenda and check your email daily for messages from the school. Together we will make a difference in your child's education.

This year we will continue to stress both achievement and student well-being, and to that end, the Board has developed several new resources The resources *Learn. Disrupt. Rebuild.* @HWDSB: *Building a Community of Care*, and **Re-Imagining Wellness 2.0** will support student mental health and building an inclusive and caring school community.

I would like to thank our caretaking staff **Mr. Wardell and Mr. Warek** for making sure the building and grounds are ready to go!

We have many staff changes for the start of the year: We have a new Kindergarten educator **Ms. Duimstra** in the Big Kinder room. We also have Mr. Madjeric doing a new role as our Music teacher (which is his passion) and Mr. Calabrese is now teaching Grade 3/4. We also welcome **Ms. Wilson** who will be teaching Phys Ed to some of our Primary classes two afternoons a week. Finally we welcome **Ms. Doody** in Class 1/2A filling in for **Ms. Trotti** until October 14. We also have a new EA on staff **Mr. Williamson**.

In preparation for a new academic year, we consider a variety of factors when grouping children into classes, including:

- Learning styles
- Social skills
- Academic strengths and needs
- **Size and make up of the school**
- And many other factors

**ALL** our classes are combined grade classes. Here's what the research says regarding this:

*All classrooms include students with a range of skills and abilities. Combined classes are neither better nor worse than single-grade classes. They are simply one of the many ways schools meet students' academic and social development needs. Canadian studies show that children in combined classes have **more opportunities for emotional and social***

**growth.** *Students in combined classrooms also benefit from a broader support structure. Younger children can ask students from the higher grade for help. Older students learn by explaining problems to their younger peers. In fact, peer tutoring can help higher achieving and older students reinforce their knowledge and positive social behaviours.*

#### **Keeping Playground as Safe and Germ-Free as Possible:**

We are asking that all parents of students in Grade 2-6 say goodbye to their child at the entrance onto the playground and NOT come into the Coned-Off Pathways. Parents of students in Kindergarten drop students off at the Kindergarten gate, and Parents of Grade 1 students, please stay within the Coned-Off Pathway to take your child to their line up area.

#### **Nut Safe Environment:**

Peanuts, spreads containing peanuts, or products which may contain peanuts are NOT to be brought into Buchanan Park School by students, staff and/or parents.

Thank you for helping keep our staff and students safe and healthy!

**Smoking/Vaping:** Please be reminded that the Smoke-Free Ontario Act prohibits smoking and vaping within the school or anywhere on school property. Thank You.

#### **Special Notes about Hats, Gum, Clothing and Electronic and other Equipment:**

**Hats:** Students are encouraged to wear hats for outside physical education classes and/or recess activities. Hats are to be removed upon entry into the building and kept in lockers or at coat hooks. Students who forget this expectation habitually may be asked to forfeit their hat to any staff member who requests it. The hat will be returned at the end of the day.

**Gum:** Gum chewing can be offensive to others. Gum that is disposed of improperly causes a cleaning problem. Gum chewing is not appropriate for a school setting and is not permitted except on special occasions with teacher permission.

**Appropriate Clothing:** Students, staff and volunteers are expected to wear appropriate clothing. The wearing of clothing that portrays any suggestion of assault, harassment, inappropriate language or drug use is not acceptable. Phys Ed classes will often be outside, so students need to dress appropriately. Nutrition Break recesses will be outside even in mild rain, so students should have outer wear that is appropriate if weather is inclement.

**Electronic Equipment and other Expensive items:** Electronic equipment such as MP3's, I-pods, as well as video and hand held games are not permitted in class. These are expensive pieces of equipment meant for personal use outside of school times and cannot be stored securely at school. Therefore they really should stay at home. Cell phones and personal i-pads **may** be permitted in class for research use **under strict teacher supervision.** Students must have the device above the desktop at all times and be ready and willing to provide a screen check to teachers within a split second of being asked. The school cannot be responsible for any loss of any of these items. Skateboards, rollerblades, bikes and Heelys are not safe for use on school grounds and should remain at home.

**Attendance:**

Parents it is your responsibility to report ALL absences, please remember DO NOT call the school, but rather report student absences at 1 (844) 506-4350 to report all student absences on a daily basis. The is an automated system and is always on, so please call anytime to report an absence.

**Future Newsletters:**

In order to facilitate more economic and efficient delivery of our school Newsletter, we are posting Newsletters electronically on the school website. **In order to save paper costs and the environment,** this is the only way we are distributing Newsletters this year. We will continue to send voicemail messages indicating that a new Newsletter is being posted to the school website.

In these trying times we will all work together (and yet apart!) to support and care for one another. We look forward to another Excellent year at Buchanan Park!

Sincerely,

Mr. B. Playfair  
Principal