



# Earl Kitchener School Elementary School

September 2022 ... **Welcome Back!**

**Dear Parents and Caregivers,**

On behalf of myself, Mrs. Macnab, and the staff of Earl Kitchener School, welcome back to what we expect to be another great year here at EK. I can tell you that we're excited to get going and that we very much look forward to getting to know you and your children as we work together to support students.

Our caretaking staff has done a fantastic job of preparing this 100+ year old gem of a school over the summer and the enormous HVAC replacement project that has been taking place here for the past 18 months is now complete also. Miss Kandi and Miss Heather in the office have dedicated much time and effort to communicating with families and gathering information in accordance with the 'beginning of school' protocols. Teaching staff, Early Childhood Educators and Educational Assistants began preparing late August and classrooms are welcoming and safe environments for your children to learn in. **Thank you for taking the time to complete the various online forms ([Parent Portal](#)) and included here is a 'walking trip permission form' that we ask families to complete annually** (please return to your child's teacher by no later than next Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup> and MORE INFO BELOW.

Caregivers are a critical part of students' learning experience at school. Your child's teacher should always be your first/primary 'go to' person and please do not hesitate to make contact directly with questions or concerns about your child's education. Also, please consider subscribing our EK website as well as the HWDSB website (*there is also now an HWDSB app available for download*) in order to receive notifications when new information is posted. Working together is the best way to support students to achieve their full potential!

**Upcoming dates to remember;**

- **Our FIRST School Council and Home and School** meetings for this school year will be held the evening of Tuesday, September 20<sup>th</sup> beginning at 7:00 pm in our Learning Commons (library). Please consider joining us to learn more about what's happening here at EK. There is also the possibility that we continue with a 'hybrid model' whereby virtual attendance could be an option (on MS Teams). Please consider reaching out for details if you are interested to either of the following;

**EK School Council:** earlkitchenerSC@hwdsb.on.ca

**EK Home and School Association:** ekhomeandschool@gmail.com

- **'Meet the Teacher'** night is **Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup>** which is roughly a week later than we typically plan on and this is to accommodate any potential changes to classes as part of the annual reorganization process at the end of September. Our current plan is for a BBQ from 5:00 – 6:00 out back followed by 'Meet the Teacher' in the school from 6:00 – 7:00. Please try to stop by and say hello!



## Items to note.

1. **Drop off, dismissal and safety!** As I'm sure most are aware, morning entry and end of day dismissal are challenging times at Earl Kitchener School given the large school population and limited space. Due to the number of students and caregivers typically at the school for 'drop off' and 'pick up', there are processes that have been established over the course of recent years that we will continue to adhere to. Specifically this means;

- ✓ Drop off for Kindergarten students is directly at the 'K pen' area located adjacent to Stanley Street (one class inside the Homewood gate).
- ✓ Drop off for students in Grades 1-5 is through either gate (Stanley Street side or Homewood Street side) and we ask that parents/guardians remain off the playground in order that children have space to play and appropriately safe supervision is possible.
- ✓ Prior to COVID, we had class 'line-up' indicators painted on the blacktop for students to assemble at bell time. These were removed as part of our transition to the use of PODS. We hope to have these added back by late September/early October and in the meantime, we do continue to use the pods simply due to the fact that children are familiar with them.
- ✓ At end of day (dismissal), Kindergarten to Grade 3 students are released directly to caregivers on the back playground and we ask that caregivers remain outside the fenced area until such time as staff and students are ready at which time we simply 'wave folks in'.

2. Traditionally at EK, with the help of parent volunteers, we have been able to provide a 'Nutritious snack' program (twice weekly), along with occasional Pizza days and 'milk and cheese' days. We expect to be able to do so again beginning in the not too distant future ... stay tuned!

3. **Student Agendas ...** we will once again be using a 'student agenda' (in Grades 1 – 5) as a vehicle for communication between the school and home. While we are mindful of beginning to move increasingly toward 'paperless' processes, the student agendas seem to be the simplest, and most consistently useful tool at this time. Teaching staff continually look for ways of ensuring that the use of the agenda is a meaningful part of each day for students. Agendas are currently on back order and we hope to receive them soon for distribution to students in Grades 1-5.

4. **Water bottles!** In addition to our drinking fountains, we have filtered water filling stations on each floor that students can access. Consider labelling a (non-glass!) water bottle with your child's name if you wish.

5. **Lost and found** ... we're never sure how it happens, but DAILY there are items left behind on the playground and in hallways that are added to our 'lost and found' pile. We attempt to display items from time to time and yet rarely have luck in finding owners for everything and eventually they are donated. **Please consider adding your child's name to items if/where possible in order that we can get things back to whom they belong to.**

6. **Walking trip form** ... included with this newsletter is a permission form that we use ONLY for classes/students to be able to walk with their teacher in the immediate neighbourhood occasionally (essentially areas/sidewalks that border the EK property without crossing streets). Teachers will let families know if ever this means a walk beyond the school property.

7. **Safe Schools Policy** ... parents often have questions related to, or included in the Board's 'Safe School Policy'. A reminder;

- ✓ Adults in schools ... **any adults entering the school are required to check in at the office.** Of course parents/guardians are welcome to assist their children with any needs (while at the office) from time to time, however parents are not to accompany students through the school. For our younger students, and/or if any assistance is required, we will always have staff help where necessary.

**As always, if you have any questions or concerns about this, or anything else, please don't hesitate to call or make arrangements to come in and talk. Thank you for the continued help and support in making Earl Kitchener School safe and a great place to be!**

**Mr. Thorne, Mrs. Macnab and the staff of Earl Kitchener School.**