



East St. Margaret's Elementary School **September 2020** Monthly Newsletter

8671 Peggy's Cove Road, Indian Harbour, NS B3Z 3P5 902-823-2463 esm.hrce.ca

Principal: Shelley Myra

Administrative Assistant: Missy Berringer



A Message from your new Principal!

I would like take this opportunity and welcome each and every one of you back to East St. Margaret's Elementary School for the new 2020-21 academic year! For those families and students who are new to our school, a warm welcome is extended to you as well and I am sure you will have a wonderful year of learning at this wonderful school of ours! The exceptional teachers here at East St. Margaret's Elementary School and your wonderful child(ren) have done a phenomenal job in adjusting, modeling and respecting the new COVID-19 norms. The students are happy to be back attending school again, happy to see their friends, their teachers and they have done a marvelous job settling back in our learning environment. As your new Principal, I would like to say that I am thrilled to be working at East St. Margaret's Elementary School. I am happy to finally be working in the community that is close to where I reside. So if, I see any of you at the local Tantallon Canadian Tire or Sobeys, please say hi even with our masks! :)

I would like to take this opportunity and introduce our school community to our new Administrative Assistant- Missy Berringer! Missy is extremely excited to be working within the community in which she grew up in and loves. Welcome back families and may we have a wonderful year of new learning together!

Thank you;

Your New Administration Team Shelley and Missy

and the Staff of ESM!



2020-21 School Bell Schedule

8:05 AM→ Teachers are at their Meeting Spots ready to receive their students. ****In the event of inclement weather conditions, your child's teacher will meet them at their new Entry/Exit door entrances and will lead them straight to the classroom.****

8:20 AM→ Teachers & students enter the building using their new Entry/Exit door entrance.

10:00-10:15→ RECESS. All Teachers are on DUTY with their cohort class.

12:00-12:55→ Lunch

2:25PM→Dismissal

Allergies

We have a number of students at East St. Margaret's Elementary who are allergic to specific foods, especially nuts. East St. Margaret's Elementary continues to be a Nut/Peanut Free School. Please send recess snacks and lunches that contain **only nut free products**.

Strongly scented products cause many children and adults to experience breathing problems, dizziness and/or headaches. Our school is a **Scent Aware School**. Please refrain from wearing strongly scented products when picking up your child. We appreciate your support, as it enables us to provide a safer environment for all.

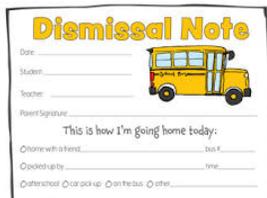


Curriculum Night

Due to the Public Health Regulations and COVID-19, we will NOT be having a curriculum night & ice cream social this year. Instead, our wonderful ESM teachers will be communicating with families through phone calls and emails surrounding the material covered this year. You will receive an email from your child's teacher during the week of September 21-25 outlining the curriculum and yearly plan for this year. After reading through the email information, please reach out to your child's teacher if you have any additional questions surrounding the material that will be covered this year.

Student Registration Forms

Student Registration forms have gone home this month. It is extremely important that you return these forms as soon as possible. Please ensure we have accurate information, paying particular attention to parent phone numbers, medical concerns and emergency contacts. If you have updated information, please ensure it is indicated on the form so that the Office and your child's classroom teacher has the correct information. In an emergency situation we will always contact the parent first, therefore it is important that the "alternate" be someone who is NOT the parent. Please print legibly as all information has to be entered by Missy(Mrs. B), our Administrative Assistant. **Remember to provide us with any changes throughout the school year.**



The image shows a 'Dismissal Note' form. At the top, it says 'Dismissal Note' in yellow text. Below this, there are fields for 'Date', 'Student', and 'Teacher'. To the right of these fields is a small illustration of a yellow school bus. Below the fields is a section for 'Parent Signature' and a line for 'This is how I'm going home today:'. Underneath, there are three options: 'Home with parent' (with a checkbox), 'Pickup by' (with a line for a name), and 'After school care/pick-up' (with a checkbox) and 'Other' (with a line for details).

Changes to Students' Afterschool Dismissal

If there is a change to a student's dismissal, please ensure you send in a note for the teacher or call the Office 902-823-2463. We understand that emergencies occur, however though we may be "small in student numbers", we are still a very busy school and teachers do not have time to check their emails as they are continuously teaching instruction or meeting to collaborate with one another surrounding instruction and how to continuously move our students forward surrounding his/her learning. Your support in this area is greatly appreciated.

No Child Without

Parents may wish to visit the website <http://www.nochildwithout.ca> to receive medical alert information available to parents. This is a charitable organization linked to children with medical needs wearing bracelets or necklaces.



Home & School Association & SAC

East St. Margaret's Elementary School Home & School Association is made up of a group of Parents, Guardians and School Representatives that organize various activities and fundraising events throughout the year, to build community and help purchase resources for the school. Our work will look a little different this year due to COVID-19, but we are always looking for people to participate and help make East St. Margaret's Elementary School the wonderful school that it is for our staff, students and families! Due to the Public Health Regulations and COVID-19 we will not be meeting in our traditional way. Instead we will have our first of the year H & S meeting as a ZOOM meeting and it will take place on Tuesday, Sept. 29th, 2020 beginning at 3:15 PM. A Zoom invite will be sent out to all members as the date gets nearer.

East St. Margaret's Elementary School SAC is a legally recognized body composed of the Principal and representatives of teachers and support staff, parents and community members who work together in an advisory capacity to increase the quality of education being provided at our school. The purpose of the SAC is to ensure that all students receive the best possible learning opportunities by engaging all partners in an ongoing process of problem solving and shared decision making. All SAC meetings are open to the public and we encourage any interested teachers or support staff, parents, or community member to attend our meetings. Due to the Public Health Regulations and COVID-19 we will not be meeting in our traditional way. The meeting for the month of September will be Tuesday, Sept. 29th, 2020 beginning at 2:45PM. A Zoom invite will be sent out to all members as this date gets nearer.



SAFE ARRIVAL Safe Arrival & Late Students

If your child is absent or going to be late, please call the SAFE ARRIVAL LINE **(902) 823-2463**. Please speak clearly, leave your name and the name of your child, your child's classroom teacher's name and the reason for their absence. Students are considered late for school if they arrive after the 8:25 bell.

New Back to School Plan and Public Health Guidance for Families

ESM Families we are seeing lots of questions on social media related to mask use. To ensure we here, at East St. Margaret's Elementary School are applying the most up-to-date public health measures, I am sharing the following information to all of our ESM families surrounding the following items:

Mask use at school, including outdoors

Students in grades 4 to 12 and all school staff, are required to wear masks in the school, when they are unable to physically distance by 2 metres. This includes hallways and common areas. In the classroom, this means that students will wear a mask if they are unable to be seated 2 metres apart and facing in the same direction.

Masks are not required for students when outdoors doing physical activity or during outdoor learning time. However, when outdoors without a mask, physical distancing of 2 metres, when possible, should be maintained.

Students in pre-primary to grade 3 only, are not required to wear a mask inside the school, including hallways and common areas. Although, if they choose to, their decision will be respected. There is one exception and that is for grade 3 students who are part of a split class with grade 4 students and above. They are required to wear a mask.

All children and students who ride a school bus are required to wear a mask when on the school bus, regardless of age or grade level.

We as a staff and school understand that families may have questions about why mask use and distancing are different when a student is in the school versus on the school grounds. We take our lead and direction from public health and medical experts. We have been advised that the evidence suggests it is less likely for COVID-19 to be transmitted outside; therefore, the use of masks is currently not required outside. However, it is still expected that individuals continue to maintain their physical distance of 2 metres/6 feet as per the Health Protection Act Order. I would encourage you, our ESM families to continue to have family discussions with your child(ren) about the safe public health measures that reduce the risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19. As you know, evidence is constantly evolving and guidance may change regarding mask use.

For more information on mask use, go to: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/masks/>
https://www.hrce.ca/sites/default/files/hrsb/shared_health_shared_responsibility.pdf

Our Shared Health, Our Shared Responsibility

The goal of Nova Scotia's Back to School Plan is to maximize in-person attendance while ensuring health and safety measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. This plan includes multiple public health measures that are most effective when they are layered together.

Our shared health depends on our shared actions at home, on the bus and at school.

Together, we've got this!

AT HOME...



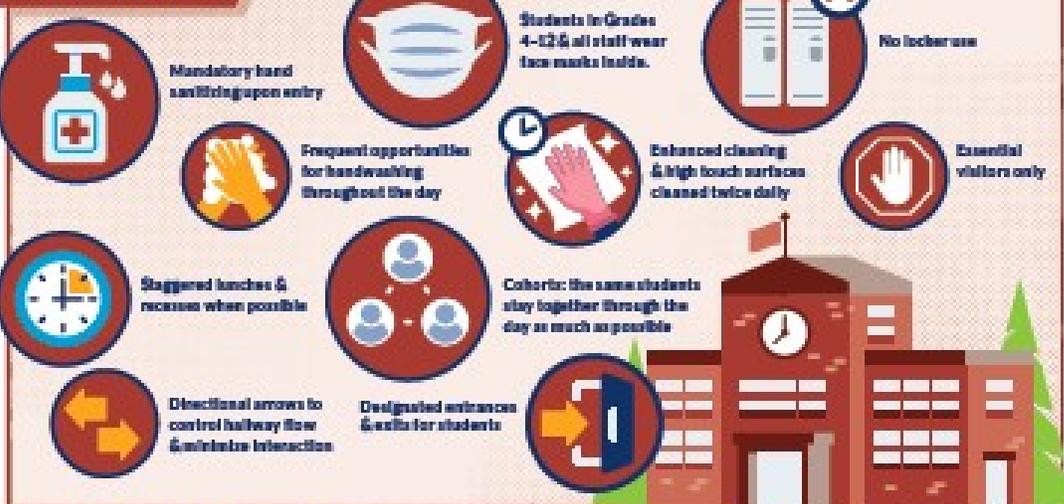
- Keep children home if they are unwell
- Monitor child's health using the [COVID-19 Daily Checklist](#)
- Have a plan in place to pick children up from school if they become unwell
- Teach & model proper handwashing, cough & sneeze etiquette
- Send a full water bottle to school
- Ensure children know how & when to wear a face mask

ON THE BUS...



- All riders & drivers wear masks
- Riders from the same household sit together where possible
- Twice daily cleaning & high-touch surfaces cleaned between runs

AT SCHOOL...



- Mandatory hand sanitizing upon entry
- Frequent opportunities for handwashing throughout the day
- Staggered lunches & recess when possible
- Directional arrows to control hallway flow & minimize interaction
- Students in Grades 4-12 & all staff wear face masks inside
- Enhanced cleaning & high touch surfaces cleaned twice daily
- Cohorts: the same students stay together through the day as much as possible
- Designated entrances & exits for students
- No locker use
- Essential visitors only

IN THE CLASSROOM...



- As much space as possible between students & staff
- To limit movement, staff will go to students, not students to staff
- Caring is NOT sharing
- Hand sanitizing upon entry and before & after eating
- Technology & other common items cleaned between uses

OUTSIDE...



- Continued cohorts during outside play
- Maximize opportunities for outdoor learning

Families it is equally important that you know that while we as a staff are abiding by the public health measures in place, we are also taking a common sense approach to the needs of our ESM students. As students adjust to mask wearing throughout their day, it's important that we as a staff are flexible. For example, if students need a drink of water, they can temporarily lower their mask, take a drink, and put it back up. If students require a mask break, our teachers are so understanding of this fact and will happily provide opportunities for students to remove masks temporarily as long as appropriate physical distancing can be maintained. Taking students outside is a great way to take a mask break.

I know we can all agree that this school year is very different than any other and some students may need additional support or accommodations in the first few weeks of school. Please know, we as a staff are doing the very best we can and are working hard to ensure the continued safety and well being of your child(ren). We as a staff believe the best place for our ESM children is in the school, and together with your family support and understanding, we as a staff are able to provide the opportunity for all of our ESM students to benefit from a rich learning environment even under these new norms.

I want to thank all of our ESM families in advance for the continued support in helping us as a staff, navigate through these uncharted waters. And remember, if you have any questions or concerns continue to reach out to me.

***Kindest Regards;
Shelley***