



Highland Heights Public School

December 2020



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[.ca](http://www.highlandheights.kprdsb.ca)

Transportation Information:

www.stsco.ca



Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Wow. It is December already – and we will all soon be on

Winter Break and celebrating the holidays. We recognize that some in our school community have just celebrated Diwali, while others will soon be celebrating Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanzaa. Most importantly, we recognize that all faith groups share the common values of goodwill toward others and the importance of family. Certainly, we all know how important it is to share this very precious time with our loved ones.

Holidays have often been a focal point of curriculum because of their wide appeal to both children and teachers. Through looking at holiday celebrations around the world, teachers have a great opportunity to promote the appreciation of diverse cultures, lifestyles and beliefs, as well as promoting awareness of the larger society and positive social interactions among children. Holidays also offer high interest vehicles for teaching skills in all academic areas. It is a time when we all try to express our gratitude for living in a wonderful country like Canada, where almost all of us have access to food, clean water and shelter.

As the holidays approach, many of us are also getting into the spirit of giving and sharing. This is a particularly special time of year when we think about loved ones, reflect carefully on how we can show good will towards others and work towards peace on earth. Through the example we set as adults, we hope that students will discover the real meaning of peace and goodwill towards others, not just in our own community but all over the world. After all, we really are just one global village on this planet and, now more than ever, we must learn to live together in harmony.

Upcoming Events

Nov 27th - PA Day ...No school

Dec. 18th – Last day of school before Winter Break

Dec. 21st - Jan. 3rd – Winter Break/Christmas Holidays

Jan. 4th – School Resumes

Please remember in your thoughts those who are less fortunate and encourage your older children to volunteer during this season and support others in the community. As you know, this time of year is often very difficult for some families, even at the best of times. As we navigate a very challenging pandemic, we encourage everyone to keep an eye out for those of our neighbours who may be finding this a lonely and difficult time. If we could all take a few moments to reflect on how fortunate we are in so many ways, perhaps we would see a lot more mutual respect around us!

On behalf of the staff at Highland Heights, we would like to wish you all the very best for the upcoming holiday season! Please stay safe and warm, enjoy the time with your family, and treasure these special moments together!

Sincerely,

Drew Beaton

December is “Little Spirit Moon” - Mnidoo-Giisoons (Anishinaabe First Nation)



Little Spirit Moon is the twelfth moon of Creation, a very spiritual time. At this time all Creation is being reminded of their journey set out by the Creator. During this time, the Little Spirit Moon journeys to Turtle Island as a healer and a seer in the hearts of all Creation. This is to ensure that the strength and power of the purist of Creation can flourish with the identity and diversity to make the journey from this world to the next.

Character Attribute for December is: R E S P E C T

I am polite, courteous and caring. I value myself and others. I treat all people with dignity and uphold their rights. I protect property and our environment.



Cold Weather Has Arrived!!

The cold weather has arrived! It is very important that students come to school wearing warm clothing. Sending an extra pair of socks, mitts and pants is a good idea. Extra mitts and hats are available at the school, if needed. This is a reminder that students do go outside. It can be very cold on the hill, so students need to be dressed appropriately.

Winter Blizzards & Busses

It's that time of year when the weather changes, the snow starts to fall, and the driving conditions become a little more dangerous. The bus companies monitor the roads and determine whether there will be bus cancellations. If your child/children take the bus to school, please visit the STSCO Website to review which bus routes are cancelled or delayed at www.stsco.ca and click on the Delay & Cancellation Information Icon on the right hand side. Cancellations will also be announced on local radio stations. **When busses are cancelled, schools will be closed to students due to current COVID-19 restrictions.** Please see detailed board meeting notes regarding this below.

Inclement Weather Days – School Closures

The KPR Board reviewed a report outlining the factors that affect school operation on inclement weather days. Administration has been considering the issue of managing inclement weather days, when bus transportation has been cancelled, as part of the board's ongoing Covid response planning. Specifically, the biggest issue is the inability of schools, on inclement weather days, to keep established student cohorts separate. Established practice within schools on inclement weather days is to consolidate attending students, to be supervised on an emergent basis, by the reduced number of staff on-site. This is not possible within current provincial directives with respect to student cohorting, and as a result, administration will be closing schools on a system-wide or regional basis when student transportation is cancelled.

“We appreciate very much this has been a challenging year for students, staff and parents, and one that continues to present unique or new issues to consider and resolve as we move forward,” says Diane Lloyd, Chairperson of the Board. “The closures of schools is not something we consider lightly, but we believe at this time, factoring current student safety requirements, it is the necessary choice.”

Administration's report reviewed a number of factors related to this issue, including:

- The need to maintain the independence of student cohorts, as part of the board's priority for student and staff health and safety. As part of this consideration, schools must have enough staff on-site during inclement weather to safely supervise attending students.
- Some of our largest elementary schools have staff complements who reside out of region and must drive at-distance to be on-site.
- Current practice of keeping schools open in inclement weather is based on the assumption that enough staff are able to attend/drive to their worksite to manage consolidated groups of students. Given the need to maintain distinct cohorts, that staff threshold is increased significantly.
- Board policy only requires staff to attend their nearest school/worksite on inclement weather days, not necessarily their assigned school and where staff may possibly be most needed.
- Any decision in this area must be an equitable, system wide approach where schools should not be penalized, nor advantaged, simply by where staff reside in proximity to the school.

"This is not a position that we arrived at without much consideration and thought. We know school closures are an inconvenience and hardship for parents and families. Ultimately, we need to always be able to operate our schools safely at all times, including being able to appropriately supervise everyone in our care," says Jennifer Leclerc, Director of Education.

"Without the ability to bring smaller groups together for the day, we are concerned we would be unable to meet that obligation, and could potentially be putting student health at-risk."

Schools will provide at-home learning to students in the event of school closure due to inclement weather. Virtual school programming on snow days will continue as normal.

#StoptheSpread

And, finally, the recent rise in COVID-19 cases in Ontario and around the world is an unfortunate reminder of the importance of taking preventive measures to #StoptheSpread. This includes wearing masks correctly, washing hands frequently, limiting social contacts to the immediate family, physically distancing from others, self-screening daily at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>, staying home if ill, and downloading the free COVID Alert app from <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/covid-alert.html>. We have had few cases of COVID in KPR schools thus far, thanks to everyone's vigilance, and we want to keep it that way!

Anaphylactic Allergies

Again this year, we have several students who have severe anaphylactic reactions to peanuts or nut products. Currently, we ask everyone not to send peanut products in their children's lunches. However, we believe we can continue to do more. In school, these students are not only exposed to their classmates, but to others on the yard. Taking this into consideration, we ask that all parents continue to avoid sending peanut butter and other nut products to school. Although this request will cause some inconvenience, if you reflect upon the potential tragedy that could occur, we believe you will agree that this is a reasonable request. Although we cannot guarantee a Nut Free school, we can certainly aim toward this goal. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in helping to keep a safe environment for all our students.

Highland Heights Spirit Month

Friday Dec. 4	Backwards Day 
Friday Dec. 11	Crazy Sock Day 
MONDAY Dec. 14	HOLIDAY HATS 
TUESDAY Dec. 15	HOLIDAY CHARACTER 
WEDNESDAY Dec. 16	RED & GREEN 
THURSDAY Dec. 17	PJ DAY 
FRIDAY Dec. 18	UGLY/FESTIVE SWEATERS 



Bullying Prevention Measures



At Highland Heights, we take the issue of bullying extremely seriously. We believe that everyone has the absolute right to be safe and feel safe at our school, and we consistently strive to make our school environment a secure place for everyone. Students are given consequences such as restricted recess times or community service for smaller issues, and they are suspended for more serious infractions. Research indicates, however, that sometimes children don't report when they are being bullied, so we rely on you for information. Please call Mr. Beaton at the school if you ever think your child is either being bullied or is bullying others.

School Council December Report



The "Under One Sun" fundraiser has gone well, and thanks to everyone who participated. We were able to raise about \$100.00 this year.

To find out what happens at our meetings, please visit our School Council page at: <https://highlandheights.kprdsb.ca/Community/School%20Council>. Agendas detailing all matters under consideration are available there and you can also see our financials and the minutes of previous meetings. The next virtual meeting is January 25th, 2020 at

6:30 p.m at this link: https://kprdsb.webex.com/meet/drew_beaton. Any and all parents/guardians are welcome any time and we would love it if you could join us. Your input is greatly appreciated – and there is no commitment required on your part. If you have any comments, questions, suggestions or feedback for your School Council, please don't hesitate to reach out to your School Council Chair, Ms. Angela Bolton, at angela_bolton@live.ca.

Fundraising Efforts:

Lunchbox Orders: Although we are fully prepared to get Lunchbox Orders started again this year, we are currently not allowed to run the program by Public Health. As things change and more information becomes available, we will let you know.

Flip Give: Once again we are also running the Flip Give fundraiser as well. For those of you who are familiar with the program, the Code for Highland Heights is: NZLBHW

Thanks! Merry Christmas! Happy New Year! And we hope you are able to join us at a meeting soon! 😊

Highland Heights Spirit Wear

Exciting news from Highland Heights Spirit Wear team! We are in the process of getting the Highland Heights Spirit wear ready for staff and students to order! Keep your eyes peeled the first week of January for some new colour options this year to help us represent our favourite school!

Online Math Fun at Home

If your child is not already playing this game at home, please check out the Prodigy Math Game. Prodigy allows children to practice the math skills they learn in class in a fun, Pokemon-style video game. The game continues to improve students' confidence, abilities and test results in math, and continues to earn rave reviews from kids. You can sign up for a free parent account at www.prodigygame.com. If you have any questions about how your child can take full advantage of this fantastic online opportunity, please contact your child's teacher.

Literacy Lens

As parents, we are always looking for ways to help our children succeed in school. Parents are a child's first teachers and much learning takes place in the home. Here are some suggestions on how to use the time you have together to engage your child in fun, quick, and simple activities that impact learning in reading, writing, math and science:

- Read cereal boxes, signs, and labels, advertisements, logos, billboards. Media is a natural teacher of our children. Discuss the positive and negative messages that are being taught.
- Read the comics in the newspaper with your child.
- Use everyday experiences to promote literacy.....helping with writing their favourite foods on the weekly shopping list, finding the specials and the costs.
- Read directions together and follow the steps needed to prepare a recipe or to plan an event.
- Encourage writing to a friend or relative either on paper or through email.
- Play word games, such as scrabble and boggle.
- Read to your child daily and with older students have them give you a summary of their chapter or describe the setting, main character etc.
- Give positive comments about your child's work whenever possible.

Enjoy these activities over and over again. These fun activities will enhance your child's learning, bring you closer as a parent and child, and show your child you care about his or her education!

2021-22 School Year Calendar Survey

We would like your input on the school year calendar for 2021-22. We are considering two options. Option A would make the Friday before March Break 2022 a regular school day, not a holiday, and include one PA Day for staff before the start of classes. Option B would make the Friday before March Break 2022 a holiday, and include two PA Days for staff before classes begin. For details and to complete the survey, please visit

http://kprschools.ca/en/our_schools/resources/schoolcalendars.html