

**Parent
Handbook
Chester
Elementary
School**

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Toronto, Ontario

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Principal: Sean Hume

School Council

The Chester Elementary School Council meets several times a year and follows the guidelines set out by the TDSB regarding roles and responsibilities, elections and membership. It is a partnership between parents, students, teachers, principals, the Board and the community, providing ways to better contribute to the overall education of our students. It's your best way to stay informed of changes coming down from the Board and Ministry— and features a regular report from the Principal on staffing, funding, and general activities. A School Council may make recommendations to the Principal or to the Board on any matter. School Boards and Principals must consult with School Councils on matters that affect student learning; consider their recommendations; and report back to them on how they plan to act on their advice. Please consider taking part in the Council activities. Parent engagement is a proven key to effective learning!

- **School Council Meetings: Once a month on Mondays 6:30 p.m.**

AGM September 22

Chester Elementary School

School Day and Office Hours

Grades FDK 8:45 am to 9:00am – Kindergarten Yard Supervised
 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. – School Day Begins
 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - Lunch
 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. – School Day Continues
 3:00 to 3:15 p.m. – Kindergarten Yard Supervised

Grades 1 to 5 8:30 am to 8:45am – School Yard Supervised
 8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. – School Day Begins
 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - Lunch
 12:30 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. – School Day Continues
 3:15 to 3:30 p.m. – School Yard Supervised

Office Hours 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Phone: (416) 396-2331 Option 1 (24 hour safe arrival voice mail)

e-mail: chesterES@tdsb.on.ca

There are two fifteen-minute recesses for grade 1-5 (at 10:15 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.). Students may be asked to remain after school to complete work, receive extra assistance or instruction, or to make up for inefficient use of time. If students are going to be kept past 3:30 p.m. by a teacher, parents will be called.

Communication

Communication between home and school is a high priority. The majority of our communication is done via e-mail. The school newsletter is emailed every Tuesday to each family that has subscribed to our list. A hard copy of the weekly newsletter is available for pick-up from the school office.

Parents may call our office at (416) 396-2325 to arrange to speak with a teacher or the Principal, or leave a message on our 24 hour **voice mail system**. Each staff member tries to ensure that calls are returned within a reasonable time frame. Including the urgency level with your message assists the staff to prioritize the promptness required for a return call.

Attendance

Safe Arrival Program

Our Safe Arrival Program is designed to support a child's safe arrival at school, and provide an account for a child's absence or lateness on a day to day basis. Attendance records on absences and late arrivals are taken twice a day; after both morning and afternoon entry.

The school must be notified when a child is going to be absent or late and be provided with the reasons for the absence. Please call the safe arrival number (416) 396-2331 Option # 1 to inform us about the absence. A 24-hour voice mail is attached so parents can access it at any time of the day or night. At school, if a child is "unaccounted for" the principal or designate will make every attempt to contact the parent/guardian. We expect parents to keep the school informed regarding all contact phone numbers and emergency contact people in the event that a parent cannot be reached at the number supplied to us. To ensure that the school is aware of students' whereabouts at all times, students are not to leave school property without permission, or before signing out in the office.

Late Entry or Early Exit

At times of late entry or early exit, students are required to sign in /out at the office so that attendance records can be updated. Students are considered late if they have not arrived in time to enter the building with their class. Late students are to enter the school through the court-yard doors.

If parents are planning on signing out a child for an early exit please send a note to the child's teacher and ask that the student be sent to the office at the time parents will be picking them up. Parents are asked to meet their children at the office when picking them up and sign the student out. It is important that parents contact the school as soon as possible regarding any changes to a child's scheduled involvement in any aspect of school life (i.e. lunch program, clubs, etc.).

Lunchroom Program

A mid-day break away from school has positive benefits for children and is encouraged if at all possible. The Lunchroom Program is intended to support those students who have no other option but to stay at school for lunch. Students eat in our lunchroom at pull out tables, supervised by lunchroom supervisors. Permission forms go home the first day of school to allow parents the opportunity to register their children for lunch at school. Special lunch arrangements that vary from the usual must be conveyed to the office in advance by phone or written notice. Children who eat lunch at school must remain on school property throughout the lunch time period and must obey behaviour expectations laid out for them to continue in the program. Children who participate in noon hour clubs and activities have the option of staying at school for lunch on those days, without having to sign up for the lunch program on a regular basis. However, a note must be sent to the school informing us that your child will be staying for lunch.

Sabrina's Law – Nut Free Schools

For the safety of our students, all TDSB schools are required to be “Nut Free Zones”. Therefore, students cannot bring food to school - either for snack, lunch, or for a classroom treat - that contain any type of nut. Some examples of safe snacks/food to send to school with your child are:

Fruits and vegetables	Cheese	Raisins and other dried fruits	Pudding Cups
Apple Sauce	Popcorn	Lunch meats	

Some types of cookies, granola bars and cereals

Please note: check the label of any food you would like to send with your child to school. Please do not send items when the label states “contains nuts” or “may contain traces of nuts” or “manufactured with the same equipment as used for products that contain nuts”

Also, as a further precaution, students are advised not to share their food with other students.

Epi-Pens

Children with anaphylactic allergies are required to have two Epi-pens at school, one to be carried with them at all times and one in the office. Related medical forms must also be completed

Code of Conduct

The Toronto District School Board has a Code of Conduct that can be found at the following link: <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/AboutUs/Policies,ProceduresForms/Detail.aspx?docId=1714>. At Chester, we focus on highlighting the positive contributions and actions of all members of the Chester School community.

Students are expected to:

- Stop, think and act with respect
- Be honest and responsible
- Keep your hands to yourself and your feet on the ground

Progressive discipline encompasses a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, disciplinary measures should be applied within a framework that shifts the focus from one that is solely punitive to a focus that is both corrective and supportive. Progressive discipline is a process designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behaviour leading to the discipline and that the previous disciplinary history of the student and all other relevant factors will be taken into account. Progressive discipline must take into account the needs of the individual student by showing sensitivity to diversity, to cultural needs, and to special education needs.

In most cases, discipline is handled effectively by teachers in the classrooms. The Ministry of Education has provided school boards with guidelines for consequences. In disciplining a student, the teacher selects from appropriate consequences that could include verbal reprimands and warnings, detentions, voluntary withdrawals from class for short periods of time (time out) etc. In selecting consequences, the teacher (or subsequently if referred to the office, the principal) must take into consideration the:

- nature and circumstances of the incident
- number of individuals involved
- degree of harm caused to the victim or the school community
- intent to cause harm
- age of the individuals involved
- history of offences
- willingness of the individual to accept responsibility and undertake restitution
- extenuating circumstances

- student's Individual Education Plan and identified special needs
- consistency of consequence application across the school board

Behaviour referrals are made to the office when an infraction occurs outside the classroom setting (recess, etc.) or when the type or persistence of the infraction demands that a stronger message be delivered to a student. Notes are kept and parents are contacted when there is a repetitive or persistent aspect to a problem behaviour (where prior warning has been given), or when the problem is serious in nature. Parents are often consulted in determining effective consequences for repeated problems. The most severe consequences, involving a recommendation for suspension or expulsion are only carried out with consultation, collaboration and teamwork between the Principal and the Superintendent of Schools. Under Ministry instructions, the police must be involved for certain types of infractions.

School Yard Safety

General Playground Rules: It has been our experience that play-fighting, rough play and hazardous games (piggybacking or tackling) can quickly escalate into safety concerns, students will be requested to refrain from such rough play. Throwing projectiles like stones, sticks, sand, snowballs, ice, etc. presents a serious risk of injury and cannot be permitted. The use of certain types of sports equipment - such as hockey and lacrosse sticks, sports rackets, sleds of any kind, and baseball bats - is limited to authorized and supervised class activity times. To ensure safety and appropriate supervision, students must obtain teacher permission to retrieve items that escape their control and land off school property.

Chester Recess Reminders:

- Keep your hands and feet to yourself
- Say nice things or don't say anything at all
- If an accident happens apologize immediately
- The adults are there to help solve the problem

Schoolyard Boundaries for Play: It is important that students be in areas appropriate to yard duty supervision and easily visible to the staff on duty. For this reason students will be requested to remain in the areas that include the paved playing surface, the playscapes and the field. The following areas are out of bounds to play within the school day because they present safety hazards or are difficult to supervise adequately:

- the front of the school
- the parking lot
- Westwood Middle School's field and paved area
- behind the storage sheds
- the playing field in wet conditions (when announcements indicate that the fields are closed and/or orange pylons indicate an unsafe area of play).

Climbing Apparatus Rules:

- Students should not be on the equipment without adult supervision.
- Go down the slides on your bottom, feet first, head up.
- Only one person at a time on the slides, ladders, or climbing walls.
- No pushing or barging past others – wait your turn.

- No hanging onto anyone.
- Do not block exits or entrances.
- Do not run, chase or play tag on or around the structure; use the field for these games.
- Bare hands only when climbing (no mittens or gloves).
- Students should not be on the equipment before 8:30 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m. without adult/parental supervision.

Bicycles, In-line Skates, Scooters and Skateboards: Students must walk their bicycles onto school property. All bicycles are to be locked in the bicycle racks. The bicycle racks are out of bounds except to students with bicycles and only at entrance and dismissal times. Motorized scooters are not permitted on school property. For the safety of pedestrians we request that bicycles, in-line skates, scooters and skateboards not be used on the school grounds between 8:30 a.m. and 3:45 p.m.

Dogs and Pets: For the health, safety and comfort of our students and staff, we request that you be respectful of parents, children and the community when bringing dogs to school. If you need to bring your pet, please have your dog on a leash and wait for your child at one of the school ground entrances. In this way, those community members who have fears or allergies can wait for their children on school property without having to feel at risk.

Cell Phones and Technology

Cell phones have become increasingly common possessions among our students. The TDSB has a policy that states cell phones must be turned off during school time. This means that:

- students will not be allowed to make calls during school time – they are welcome to use the phone in the office
- students will not receive incoming calls – parents are asked to please contact the school if they need to get in touch with their children
- cell phones cannot be used to take pictures during school time

Other electronic devices (ie. iPods, hand held gaming devices, Blackberries, etc) are strongly discouraged from being brought to school. These items run the risk of getting lost, stolen or damaged. They also become a distraction during instructional time.

Dress Code

At Chester Elementary School, students should be suitably dressed for learning as well as the outdoors. Any clothing which is offensive (i.e. advertises drugs or alcohol, promotes or glorifies violence or vulgarity, offends an identifiable social group or suggests racial intolerance) is not allowed. No hats, with the exception of religious attire, may be worn inside the school at any time by any one. In general, tops must meet bottoms and bottoms must meet tops. Staff will speak to students who are wearing clothing that does not meet the standard. We appreciate your support in implementing this code.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION INFORMATION AND INTRAMURAL INFORMATION/PERMISSION

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Physical activity is essential for healthy growth and development. Growing bones and muscles require not only good nutrition, but also the stimulation of vigorous physical activity to increase the strength and endurance necessary for a physically active lifestyle. Active participation in games, fitness activities, dance, gymnastics, and outdoor pursuits provides opportunities for students to discover and trust themselves and gain the confidence necessary to play and work co-operatively and competitively with their peers. Both curricular and co-curricular Physical Education programs provide opportunities for students to experience “the fitness feeling” and to help them understand and make decisions regarding personal fitness and the value of physical activity in their daily lives.

During Physical Education classes, including stand-alone Daily Physical Activity sessions, students will participate in a variety of activities.

Students will also have the opportunity to choose to participate in intramural activities that are offered outside of classroom. Permission is required for students to participate in intramural activities.

Please be advised that some Physical Education classes, Daily Physical Activity sessions and intramural activities, such as cross-country running, power walking, softball, and soccer, may take your child off the school grounds and into the immediate community. Supervision will be provided.

ELEMENTS OF RISK NOTICE

The risk of injury exists in every athletic activity. However, due to the very nature of some activities, the risk of injury may increase. Injuries may range from minor sprains and strains to more serious injuries. These injuries result from the nature of the activity and can occur without fault on either the part of the student, or the School Board or its employees or agents or the facility where the activity is taking place. The safety and well-being of students is a prime concern, and attempts are made to manage the foreseeable risks inherent in physical activity as effectively as possible.

It is important that your child participate safely and comfortably in the Physical Education, Daily Physical Activity and intramural programs. In your child’s best interests, we recommend the following:

- a) Students should have an annual medical examination.
- b) Students should bring emergency medications (e.g., asthma inhalers) to Physical Education classes, Daily Physical Activity sessions and intramural activities.
- c) Appropriate clothing should be worn for safe participation (e.g., T-shirt, shorts or track pants, and athletic running shoes appropriate for the environmental conditions). Jewellery must be removed, if possible. Jewellery that cannot be removed and that presents a safety concern (e.g., medical alert identification or religious requirement) must be taped, or the activity must be modified.
- d) An eyeglass band and shatter-resistant/shatterproof lens should be worn if your child wears glasses that cannot be removed during Physical Education classes, Daily Physical Activity sessions and intramural activities.

- e) Attention should be paid to protection from environmental concerns (e.g., sun, hypothermia, dehydration, frostbite, and insect bites and stings).
- f) Safety inspection should be done at home of any equipment brought to school for personal use in class and intramural activities (e.g., skis, skates, helmets).
- g) When it is necessary to use a water bottle, students should use a personal water bottle that is not shared.

Loans of Books and Equipment

We stress with students their responsibility to take good care of loaned books and equipment. While we recognize that there is some wear and tear on books and equipment over time, we hold students and their parents financially responsible for severely damaged or lost items.

Lost and Found

Parents are strongly encouraged to label all clothing in the event that it ends up in the lost and found. Lost and found items are placed in a box across from the main office. Items will be kept for two weeks. After that, they will be donated to charity.

Year at a Glance – 2014/2015

September

2 First Day of School

22 School Council Meeting

27 Terry Fox Run

November

11 Remembrance Day Ceremony

14 PA Day

January

5 Classes Resume

23 PA Day

March

16-20 March Break

May

18 Victoria Day

May 25-June 4 – Grade 3 EQAO

October

13 Thanksgiving

31 Halloween

December

5 PA Day

19 Last Day of Classes

February

14 Valentine's Day

15 PA Day

16 Family Day

April

3 Good Friday

6 Easter Monday

June

5 PD Day

24 Grade 5 Farewell

25 Last Day of Classes

26 PD Day

Please Note:

Dates subject to change; please consult the weekly NEWSLETTER for official dates.