



COAST SALISH ELEMENTARY NEWSLETTER

"A LEARNING COMMUNITY CONNECTING THROUGH SHARED HISTORIES,
STORIES AND PLACE"

FEBRUARY 12, 2026

FROM MR. PEARSE

School Attendance

Since COVID, school attendance in Canada has declined significantly. Monitoring our school attendance patterns this is also the case at Coast Salish. Traditionally, students who missed more than 10% of school days were considered to have chronic absenteeism, based on this 20% of Coast Salish students are chronic non-attenders.

The subject is difficult as although we want students to stay home when they are sick, we also need them at school when they are well enough to learn. Most families are aware that at Coast Salish we limit vacations to a maximum of 20 consecutive days during the school year. This was done as in the past we were having students away from school for months at a time, but now has me worried that it is sending the message that missing 20 days of school is a good idea – as educationally it is definitely not!

Recently we are finding that more and more families are choosing to pull their children out of school for a few days here and there for an extra vacation, because grandma is in town, or for activities that could likely be scheduled outside of the school day (haircuts, shopping, etc.). When combined with regular illness absences these lead to gaps in students learning.

This change appears to have come about following COVID at the same time as the 'work from home' options in many sectors of our workforce. In educational circles attendance concerns are currently being discussed and I am expecting some messaging to come out from the province / district. No real action on this one at this time, just a message that it's a lot easier to educate children is we see them everyday (Except when they are sick)! 😊

Upcoming Events

Lunar New Year

The Year of the horse begins on Feb 17th, and to celebrate Lunar New Year this year we will be hosting an assembly on February 20th @ 9:00 in our gym. As always parents are welcome at all of our assemblies. Students and families are encouraged to wear traditional cultural attire on this day if they wish!

Students will also be participating in some Lunar New Year activities on this day, and we have a group of parents who are helping organize this event. If you are interested in helping out with the event, or have a student who can help out with some "Paper Cutting" prior to the event, please let Mr. Pearse know (fpearse@sd43.bc.ca). We are also looking for some decorations and activities for Lunar New Year that are in varied languages to help represent all of our families who celebrate Lunar New Year from different parts of the world, if you have access to any of these or are available to help out on that day please let Mr. Pearse know.

RAC Week

This week is Real Acts of Caring week at Coast Salish. Students and staff have been busy bringing positivity and joy to each other this week

Pink Shirt Day

Pink Shirt Day is on Wednesday, Feb 25th. All students are encouraged to wear Pink on this day and celebrate inclusion and kindness! We will be hosting an assembly on this day at 1:00 in our gym. As always parents are invited to join us for our assemblies.

LITERACY LEARNING AT COAST SALISH

Foundational Reading Skills:

Over the past several years, our staff has been strengthening literacy instruction based on scientific research about how children learn to read and write. These evidence-based practices help ensure all students develop strong, lasting literacy skills.

In our primary grades, students learn to read through systematic and explicit phonics instruction, building a solid understanding of how letters and sounds work together. In the intermediate grades, students are learning about word parts—such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots—to support vocabulary growth and deeper word understanding.

Reading Comprehension:

This year, our focus has expanded to learning about what the science says about reading comprehension instruction. Research shows that background knowledge is one of the strongest predictors of reading comprehension. When students know more about a topic, they understand what they read more deeply and find it easier to remember new information that is in the text. For this reason, we are intentionally connecting literacy learning with science and social studies, helping students build knowledge about the world while strengthening reading skills.

At our recent Professional Development Day, Teachers explored strategies to help students understand complex texts, including the use of text sets—groups of texts on the same topic at different reading levels and in various formats. Text sets help students build knowledge and confidently engage with grade-level material.

How Families Can Help at Home:

Families play an important role in literacy development. Here are some simple ways to support learning at home:

- Read together often. Read aloud to your child and listen to your child read. It's important to read to your child throughout their elementary school years.
- Talk about learning. Conversations about science, social studies, current events, nature, books and family experiences build background knowledge that supports reading.
- Encourage curiosity. Visit the library, explore topics of interest, watch documentaries, and ask questions like "What did you learn?" or "Why do you think that happened?"
- Value all kinds of reading. Books, magazines, recipes, instructions, and informational texts all help develop strong readers.
- Support multilingual learning. Reading and talking in your home language builds vocabulary and comprehension skills that support learning in English as well.

By working together, school and home can help students become confident readers who understand, think deeply, and enjoy learning.

AROUND THE SCHOOL

Lice

Recently there has been lots of chatter around the school community regarding lice. Yes, even the word makes my head a little itchy. As a parent I have dealt with lice many times over the past 13 years, however as a school administrator it hasn't really been an issue since March 2020 (apparently keeping kids 6 feet apart helped stop the

spread of lice!). From talking to principals at other schools it seems like this is the year that the lice really managed to take hold again in our communities.

In classes where we have had an increase in cases of lice teachers have taken some measures to keep kids jackets apart, are trying to remind kids to keep their heads apart and not to share any clothing. We have also noticed that many families are choosing to put long hair up in braids or buns (great idea) and I would encourage families to use a little product in hair (Gel, Hairspray) as this also helps deter lice.

Our PAC is working on a plan to bring in the Vancouver Lice Clinic to conduct confidential lice checks and help us educate our community on how to deal with these pests when they are present, expect to see more information about this in the days ahead!

Spare Clothes

Although we are almost through the worst of the wet weather (Hopefully) we have recently found that many students do not have a spare set of clothes in their bag. Making sure that students always have a spare set of clothes helps save you from the phone call to bring extra clothes when they get wet!

UPCOMING CALENDAR ITEMS

- February 4 – Hot Lunch Day
- February 13 – Pink and Red Day
- February 20 – Lunar New Year Event
- February 25 – Pink Shirt Day
- March 12 – Term 2 Learning Updates (Report Cards) home
- March 16 – 27 – Spring Vacation (no school)
- May 3 - PAC Spring Fair
- May 14 - Grade 5 parent night Minnekhada – Parents Only

COMMUNITY EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS



KidSport So ALL Kids Can Play!
USED EQUIPMENT SALE sponsored by: *Saputo*

RIVERSIDE SECONDARY
2251 REEVE STREET PORT COQUITLAM
Admission by donation or non-perishable item to the SHARE Food Bank

SAVE on your family's sports equipment!
The KidSport Used Equipment Sale has everything from bikes and hockey gear to fitness equipment, wetsuits, and more!

Open to EVERYONE!
equipment for ALL kids and adults!
Outfit a child for lacrosse or hockey, including helmet, stick, and/or skates for approximately \$100!

GIVE back! Donate your gently used* equipment
From February 21 – March 6, donate your used equipment at the following locations:

- Port Moody Recreation Complex (main lobby)
- Poirier Sport & Leisure Complex (main lobby)
- Port Coquitlam Community Centre (lower arena lobby) www.kidsporttricity.ca

*gently used equipment is:
• less than 6 years old
• in good condition
• wearable for league sports



KIDS SPRING BREAK PROGRAMS
AT JAMES PARK SCHOOL

16-27 March For Grades K-Gr5

ACTIVITIES
ART/DANCE, MULTISPORTS, SEWING, BASKETBALL AND MPOWER

Register Here: 