



Parkland Elementary School

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Principal: Chris Hunter
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July 1, 2017

Hi Parkland Kindergarten families,

I am writing this letter to provide you with some information about what the first couple of weeks of school will look like for all students entering Kindergarten in September.

Please note: this schedule has been made based on our current tentative school organization plans. I thought it was important to give you an idea of what it is likely to look like in advance but please understand that we will likely need to make changes to this gradual entry schedule as our registration is not finalized until the first week and our class placement plans are likely to change.

Gradual Entry – September 5th – 15th

During the gradual entry period our students will be attending in small groups so they can get to know their teachers well and receive a high level of support initially to learn classroom routines. At this point we are not able to determine which group your child will be in as our enrollment is continuously changing, but hopefully knowing the general plan will assist you in making arrangements for your child during the first two weeks.

Tuesday, September 5, 2017 @ 9:00 – 9:30 – Meet in the School Library

In all Coquitlam schools, students in all grades attend for a short time on the first day back at school so that we can do an attendance check and have a brief conversation about the plans for the first week. Parents are welcome to stay with their child or head down to the gym for coffee provided by our PAC (Parent Advisory Council).

For the remainder of the day staff is involved in confirming attendance, updating registrations, and adjusting our organization to accommodate any changes that occurred over the summer (new registrations or students who moved away).

Wednesday September 6th, Thursday September 7th, and Friday September 8th

Students attend in small groups at the following times – we will let you know which group your child will be in as soon as we can – hopefully during the last week of August.

Group #1: 9:00 – 10:20

Group #2: 10:30 – 11:50

- Kindergarten students will meet the teachers in the Library and will then work with a teacher in a small group to get to know classroom routines, other students, and the teachers.
- Please send your child with a healthy snack.

Monday, September 11th

No School for Kindergarten Students

Welcoming Conversations (K students attend a conversation with their parents on Monday or on Wednesday afternoon)

Tuesday September 12th

Group #1: 9:00 – 11:30

Group #2: 12:15 – 2:45

- Kindergarten students will meet the teachers in the Library
- Please send your child with a healthy snack.

Wednesday September 13th

Group #1 & #2: 9:00 – 11:30

- Kindergarten students will meet the teachers in the Library
- Please send your child with a healthy snack.

Some **Welcoming conversations** will be held on Wednesday afternoon

Thursday and Friday, September 14th and 15th

- **All Kindergarten Students: 9:00 – 1:00** - Please send your child with a healthy snack and lunch.

Monday, September 18th

9:00 – 2:58 for all students

Welcoming Conversations

Please note: on these days Kindergarten students are to come with their parent(s) for this conversation. Other than coming for this conversation, **there is no school for Kindergarten students on Monday the 11th**. Please check in at the office and Susan (our secretary) will let you know what room to go to for your meeting.

Frequently Asked Questions:

When will I know who my child's teacher is?

We have already planned our classroom groupings tentatively. During the first week we will be determining if we need to make any adjustments due to registration changes. We expect to have finalized our organization and informed families about classroom placement by Monday, September 11.

Why is gradual entry necessary when most children attended preschool and/or daycare?

Even though many children have been through preschool and daycare, the child-adult ratio in Kindergarten is substantially different than they will ever have experienced. Preschool and daycare ratios are approximately 1:6 or 8, Kindergarten can be up to 1:22. Gradual entry allows us to welcome our students in much smaller groupings for a few days to help them get used to the environment and develop attachments to the adults prior to being involved in the larger group.

Why do Kindergarten students attend school less than other students?

In the school act the Ministry of Education identifies how many hours students need to attend during the school year. Kindergartners are assigned 25 fewer hours to allow for a gradual entry period. The schedule we have planned has them attending for only 23 fewer hours. We have reserved 2 hours so that we can utilize them in the Spring to accommodate our Welcome to Kindergarten Program. Kindergarten students will be dismissed early on one day in April for this.

My child has difficulty with separation anxiety, how can I prepare him/her for school? Is it OK for me to stay with him/her during gradual entry?

If you are concerned that your child will be anxious being left at school please take a look at the following resources as they provide some great advice for parents as they prepare for the first days of school:

- [Helping Your Kindergartener with Separation Anxiety](#) (Video)
- <https://www.anxietybc.com/sites/default/files/Separation%20Anxiety%20Doc%20FINAL-2.pdf>

It is best for most students if parents follow this advice carefully and resist the urge to stay with their child. Please let us know if you have any concerns.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me over the summer.

Sincerely,

Chris Hunter
Principal,
Parkland Elementary
chunter@sd43.bc.ca