**July 14, 2015**

**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 class placement 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 may need to make changes to this gradual entry schedule if our registration or class placement plans changes.**

**Tuesday, September 8, 2015** @ **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). In June we tentatively placed all students into classroom groupings, but prior to assigning teachers and communicating placement to parents we need to ensure that our organization is finalized.

**Gradual Entry – Group A**

During the gradual entry days our students will be attending at two different times. **Your child is in Group A and will be attending at the highlighted times below:**

**Wednesday & Thursday, September 9, 10**

**Group A: 9:00 – 10:15**Group B: 10:45 – 12:00

* 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.

**Friday, September 11**

**Group A: 9:00 – 11:30**Group B: 12:15 – 2:45

* Kindergarten students will meet the teachers in the Library and will then work with a teacher in a small group.
* Please send your child with a healthy snack.
* When you pick your child up on **Friday** please make sure to add your name to the **“Welcoming Conversation” Schedule**. These conversations will take place **on Monday, September 14th, and Tuesday, September 15th**. If you are not picking up your child we will contact you on Friday afternoon to arrange a time.

**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 14th or Tuesday the 15th**.

**Monday, September 14** & **Tuesday, September 15:**

* Please attend your scheduled welcoming conversation **with your child**. When you arrive at the school please check in at the office and Susan (our secretary) will let you know what room to go to for your meeting.

**Wednesday, September 16:**

All students attend for the full day. Further information about where your child will meet at the beginning of each day and where their class dismissal zone is will be sent out during the first week.

**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 14.

***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 higher than they will ever have experienced. Preschool and daycare ratios are approximately 1:6 or 8, Kindergarten is 1:22. Gradual entry allows us to welcome our students in much smaller groupings for a couple of days to help them get used to the environment and develop attachments to the adults prior to being involved in the larger group.

***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 this video as it has some great advice for parents as they prepare for the first days of school: [Helping Your Kindergartener with Separation Anxiety](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_5eiYIo1XM) . It is best for most students if parents follows this advice carefully and resist the urge to stay with your child. Please let me know if you have any concerns.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me over the summer. I am out of the country from July 21st to August 10th but will be able to reply to questions when I return.



Sincerely,

Anita Strang

Principal,

Parkland Elementary

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