

September 6, 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians,

First of all, 'Welcome Back!' and a warm 'Welcome!' to all new members to the James Park community. I hope you had a chance to spend some quality time with your children over the summer holidays.

As usual, it has been a super busy first week at James Park.

The purpose of this email is to provide you with some important information. Please read it carefully and do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

1) New, additional teacher and division at James Park!

We have more students this year than we had last year! In fact, I was informed Thursday afternoon that we will get a new grade 1 teacher at James Park. Instead of having 15 divisions, we will have 16. What does this mean? It means that the staff and I will have to make changes to our classroom organization. This will occur on Friday right after school. In other words, students will be assigned to their classrooms on Monday morning. On Monday morning, students are asked to go to the classroom they were in during this first week. After teachers take attendance, students will be led to their classrooms.

2) Montessori classes and students

Essentially, all of our four Montessori classes are full and will not be affected by the reorganization.

3) Safety, Kindness, Respect, Trust and Learning

We have focused on these core values and beliefs for our school during this first week. I am asking all of you to continue focusing on these beliefs outside of school. Please take time to discuss these values with your children. What does 'kindness' sound like? What does 'respect' look like? What does 'trust' feel like? I have asked staff to continue these discussions beyond the first week since I firmly believe that a focus on these topics will not only make James Park a great community, but will also improve student learning. For those of you who are new, all of our students and many of our parents and staff participated in establishing these five pillars two years ago by voting on a number of values. Safety, Kindness, Respect, Trust and Learning (in that order) received the most votes. We have focused on these topics ever since and have seen many benefits as a result.

4) School Supplies

School supplies should be brought to school on Monday. Kindergarten parents/guardians are asked to pay \$50 for their child's supplies.

5) CHEQ Survey

Information regarding this UBC survey was sent out to all new K parents and guardians before the holidays. K parents have an opportunity to complete this 30 min (approximately) survey on Tuesday, September 11 and Thursday, September 13 from 9:00 to 12:00 in Room 202.

6) Breakfast Program

What an amazing program our breakfast program has been last year – thanks to the incredible staff, parent and student volunteers we have had!!! On average, over 100 individuals came out for a FREE breakfast every day and we hope this will continue this year. Again, serving a quality breakfast to so many people would not have been possible had it not been for the volunteers as well as the Breakfast Club of Canada. This year, we are also grateful for having received a significant grant from President's Choice that helps us pay the bills. Many of you have seen the positive impact it has made on our community. The breakfast program is for all James Park students, parents/guardians and staff. A healthy, nutritious breakfast is served every school day starting at 8:00 a.m. until 8:40 a.m. Monday, September 10 will the first day breakfast is served this school year. **If you are interested in any way to help out, donate and/or volunteer for this program, please contact either Ms Ponsart, Ms McCoy or myself.** Perhaps most importantly, consider joining us for breakfast once in a while or on a regular basis.

7) School Cash Online

Did you know that the majority of the James Park parents now have a School Cash Online account? If you do not have one, I strongly recommend that you sign up for a free account. <https://www.schoolcashionline.com/> In fact, our school district recommends that parents have an account set up, which will make paying for school related items such as field trips so much easier. Field trip form will also be emailed to you if you have an account, which strongly reduces the chances of field trip paper forms getting lost or getting eating by your pet.

8) PAC

Our Parent Advisory Committee meets regularly and actively supports and organizes many initiatives and programs at our school. I encourage you to come to PAC meetings and get involved – even if you can make “only” one PAC meeting a year. The next and first PAC meeting of this school year is this coming Monday, September 17 at 6:30 p.m. Hope to see you there.

9) Freezie Sale

This is the PAC's first fundraiser. Freezies will be sold right after school tomorrow, Friday, September 7. Come and get your freezie! Even the principal usually buys one (quality check, of course).

10) Meet the Teacher Night and BBQ on Thursday, September 20 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Please mark your calendars for this event. This is a great opportunity to meet and greet our staff and enjoy a free hot dog or hamburger. TCBY Frozen Yogurts will be there as well, selling cold treats.

Regards,

Marco Jankowiak
Principal, James Park Elementary