



ROCHESTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
411 School House Street
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30 September, 2014

Yesterday marked the beginning of our first full week of school and, for more than 70 children in our school, their first full day. While our start-up was a bit unusual, everyone pulled together and, all things considered, the first week went well. We had our children in their regular classrooms on Wednesday; many schools are doing this just today.

Our staff will meet very soon to discuss the upcoming school calendar. Normally these dates are set in May but this did not happen due to the recent job action. Nevertheless, once the dates are determined our school website calendar will be updated.

In the meantime, there are a number of important items for parents to note.

Rochester Elementary is a “Nut Aware” School

We have a number of children with nut allergies ranging from severe and life threatening to minor. Classes with children with these severe allergies will be designated “as no nut zones” and children with nut food products will have an alternate and supervised place to eat.

Absence or Lates

If your child will be late or absent, please submit an “Absence Report” (link is found on the home page of our web site at www.sd43.bc.ca/elementary/rochester). This is most efficient as it is available 24/7 and saves everyone time as it comes directly to the school office. No phone calls, busy lines or answering machines required.

Rochester PAC

As a Rochester parent or guardian, you are automatically a member of our Parent Advisory Council. We encourage you to come out to a PAC meeting to get to know other parents and to provide input. Our first PAC meeting is on October 8 at 7 pm in our library.

Drop off and Pick up

Please ensure your child knows their before school and after school plan. While we have limited supervision on the playground 15 minutes before and after school, this is not a substitute for after school care. Some parents pick up children at the classroom and others have an arranged location on the school grounds.

Parking

There will never be enough onsite parking with more than 400 children in this school. We have a handful of parking places and that is all. **The back lane way is reserved for staff parking and pick up and drop off in the city lane way is illegal.** City of Coquitlam enforces this bylaw. Please avoid this area with your car entirely; many of our children use the laneway to walk home and we all know cars and kids do not mix. The small parking lot located on Schoolhouse is limited as well and PLEASE DO NOT PARK ON THE GRASS.

Your best solution is to park, legally, on side streets and walk the short distance to school. While this requires a bit more effort, such choices will keep our kids safer, eliminate the possibility of getting a parking ticket, and reduce stress for all drivers. Having parking arguments with other parents does not fit with the safe and caring expectations in our school.

Extra Clothing

Because we live in a West Coast temperate, rainy climate, please expect that children will go outside at both recess and lunch – rain or shine. Please ensure your kids come to school in weather-appropriate clothing. We have covered areas outside so we encourage kids to make responsible choices outside. Children will need a change of clothes at the school.

*John Goheen
Principal*

At the beginning of each school year there are forms that we need you to complete. **The enclosed forms must be returned to the school by TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7 and include:**

STUDENT INFORMATION VERIFICATION FORM (buff) – review, make changes in red, sign the last page and return to school.

EMERGENCY RELEASE FORM (yellow) - a master copy will be kept in the office and each Teacher keeps a copy for quick access & reference in the event of an emergency. Your prompt action will help save us time as we must continue following up until all forms are returned.

Other PARENT E-FORMS are to be complete and submitted on-line (**Medical form** to be printed and hard copy brought to office) by following the link below:

<http://www.sd43.bc.ca/elementary/rochester/Parents/Forms/Pages/default.aspx>

1. **SCHOOL POLICIES** – included in this section are:
 - a. School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) Policies and Administrative Procedures
 - b. School Code of Conduct. Please submit the acknowledgement online that you have read and understood the behavioural expectations and consequences of inappropriate behaviour at Rochester.
 - c. Parent consent for Lost and Damaged Books; Walking Field Trips; Photo & Video Release; Circulation of Class Lists; Communication from Classroom Parent Volunteers; Internet Permission

If there are no online submissions for your child(ren), the school will assume that you have read, fully understood and YOU GIVE APPROVAL for items 1a, 1b and 1c.

2. **VOLUNTEER FORMS** – complete and submit the following forms if you plan on participating in class or on field trips. The Volunteer Form, Driver Volunteer Form and Criminal Record Check are all valid for the amount of time your child is in attendance at the school or 5 years (whichever is sooner). This means that **ONLY** the ICBC Driver's Abstract will need to be submitted yearly.

In order to participate in class, on field trips or to drive for field trips, the following forms **MUST** be completed and submitted online:

- a. **Volunteer Application**
 - b. **Driver Application** – Re-submit if you acquire a new vehicle or if insurance changes throughout school year.
 - c. **Criminal Record Check**
 - i. Check with school office to see if your previous check is still valid
 - ii. Print the Letter to RCMP from Principal to waive fees (on web site)
 - iii. Coquitlam RCMP are encouraging all volunteers to start the criminal record check process as soon as possible as it includes submitting fingerprints and can take weeks to receive your check. Download the form needed at: www.coquitlam.rcmp.ca and take it to Front Counter Services.
 - d. **ICBC Driver Abstract** – call ICBC at 1-800-950-1498 and ask them to fax your Driver's Abstract directly to the school at 604-937-8037.
3. **MEDICAL ALERT FORM** (only children with Health concerns) - If your child has special medical considerations that we should be aware of (i.e. bee-stings, allergy, peanut allergy, seizures, diabetes). **THIS MUST BE SUBMITTED EACH YEAR.** It is imperative that this information is printed and submitted to the office (with medication where appropriate) immediately.