

EASTERN PASSAGE EDUCATION CENTRE

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Principal

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SEPTEMBER 2016

Welcome to the 2016-17 school year! We look forward to working with your students, and supporting their success through junior high. I am very excited to be joining the EPEC team, and have already been getting to know the students last week. I have been impressed with the level of respect for teachers and one another, and can't wait to explore many opportunities with them this year. The staff here is amazing, and has a strong desire to know who their students are as learners. In order to keep up to date, I encourage you to check out our school website at <http://epe.hrsb.ca/> Most of the information you will need to access can be found here, and please follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/EPEC3> to help celebrate all of the opportunities your students will be engaging in through the year at together. We welcome any questions you may have, and encourage you to reach out when your child has any concerns.

☺ *Dorothy Hart, Principal*

Jamie Kavanaugh, Vice Principal

New Staff Members

We would like to welcome the following new staff to our school this year:

Andrew Tremaine----French Immersion/Core French

Angela White----Schools Plus

Eleanor Queripel----Resource/Science

Bill Hughes----Core French/French Immersion

Sheena Cooper----Math/Science

Mike MacKenzie----Core French/French Immersion

Patricia Voisey----Aboriginal Support Worker

Heather Barnes----Learning Centre

Curriculum Night 2016

This year we will be having our Curriculum Night on Wednesday, September 21st at 6pm. We will begin in the gym, and then teachers will have the opportunity to visit their students' classrooms to find out what they will be learning this year. During the event, coffee, tea and sweets will be available for purchase for \$1.00 an item to raise funds to support activities to increase student engagement.

Breakfast Program

Starting in October, we will be offering a grab and go breakfast program in the morning in the movement room. As we all know, it's hard to get students in junior high up and awake and fed before they head to school, so this can help alleviate that stress in the morning, and improve student focus in class. If you know of anyone interested in volunteering or donating things for our program, please contact us at the main office.

Video Surveillance

EPEC has video surveillance at areas inside and outside of the building. The purpose of the system is to enhance school safety and deter or take action in response to unlawful behaviours such as violent acts, vandalism and theft. Video will be viewed by school administration when necessary, and can be shared with the police to help with an investigation. We value the privacy and rights of our students, and their safety is our first priority. If you have any questions about video surveillance at EPEC, please contact Ms. Hart at the main office.

Volunteering

If you are interested in volunteering this year for school trips, events, or coaching, please make sure you bring a copy of your current criminal record check and child abuse registry to the main office. They are good for 3 years and they often take a bit of time to process and get sent back. We would love to have you involved!

Dates to Remember:

Sept. 15	Stand Up Against Bullying Day-Wear Pink!!!
Sept. 20	First School Advisory Council 3:30pm
Sept. 21	Bus Evacuation Practice Curriculum Night 6pm Coffee House
Sept. 30	PD Day (No Classes)
Oct. 3 Oct.5	Picture Day (AM) Grade 7 Immunization (AM)
Oct. 10	Thanksgiving (No School)
Oct. 28 Nov. 2	Provincial PD Day (No Classes) Retakes
Nov. 11	Remembrance Day (No Classes)
Nov. 14	Assessment & Evaluation Day (No Classes Elem and Jr High))
Nov. 21	Term 2 Begins
Nov. 24	Report Cards Sent Home
Dec. 1	(No classes) AM:PD Day PM:Parent Teacher Interviews 1-3 and 6-8
Dec. 8	Holiday Concert
Dec. 21	Last day of classes before break
Jan. 3	Schools Reopen
Feb. 1 - 28	Registration Month for 2017-18
Feb. 20	Mi'kmaq Heritage Day (no classes)
Mar. 13 - 17	March Break (no classes)
Mar. 22	Assessment & Evaluation Day(no classes)
Mar. 27	Term 3 Begins – Elementary & Jr High
Mar. 30	Elementary/Jr High Report Cards Home
Apr. 6	(No classes) AM – PD Day PM – Parent Teacher Interviews 1-3 and 6-8(<i>tentative evening time</i>)
Apr. 14	Good Friday (no school)
Apr.17	Easter Monday (no school)
May 19	Professional Development Day P-12 (no classes)
May 22	Victoria Day (no classes)
June 29	Assessment & Evaluation Day P-12 (no classes)
June 30	Last Day of School – Report Cards Home

Pop Up Library

Our first pop up library will be October 3rd. Students are reminded to bring their library card to check out books.

Student Safety

We have already had our first fire drill of the year which was very successful. In the next few weeks, we will be practicing lockdown and hold and secure drills as well. Emails were sent home regarding procedures for both drills. Please talk to your students about these events ahead of time, so they are comfortable and prepared.

Registration Verification

Forms will be going home this week to verify your information on PowerSchools. Please make sure you fill in the Self-identification section to help us better know our learners and support their success. Also make sure you fill in the School and Bus Cancellation section to make sure in the event that school is closed mid-day, that we can make sure your students have a plan to get home safely.

From the Gym:

Students are reminded that cell phones will not be permitted during class time due to privacy reasons, and should be kept in student lockers or in the gym office.

Student Vote

Once again, EPEC students will be participating in Student Vote. Last year, over 400 of our students voted in the Federal election. This year, they will be voting in the municipal and school board elections. This will take place the week of October 10-14, with the public polls opening October 15. For more information, contact Trevor Pierce at tpierce@hrsb.ca

School Advisory Council

We are looking for members for our SAC this year. The role of the SAC is to advise the principal on the perspectives, ideas and opinions of the parents, community and students. We will be looking for a community member (someone who does not have students at the school, but lives in our feeder area), parent members, and student representatives from each grade. If you are interested, please come to our meeting in the library at 3:30pm on September 20th. We meet at least 6 times per year and would love your input. If you are interested and unable to attend on the 20th, please send Ms. Hart an email to let her know you would like to join.

Student Success Planning (SSP)

We are entering our third year of our goals for our SSP. Our goal for Literacy is students will demonstrate improvement in reading comprehension of informational text. Our goal for Math is students will demonstrate improvement in the ability to apply and communicate their knowledge to solve problems in a variety of contexts. We will be implementing a variety of strategies and supports this year to help all of our students experience success that we look forward to sharing with you.

Powerschool Parent Portal

Please check your child's progress on powerschool regularly. Important information regarding attendance, course outcomes, and marks on assignments can be found there. If you need your parent portal login, please email jwilson@hrsb.ca Please make sure you call the school to report any absences at 462-8401

Minister's Action Plan

Here is a link to access Karen Casey, the Minister of Education's Action Plan:
https://www.ednet.ns.ca/files/2015/Education_Action_Plan_2015_EN.pdf .

School Clothing

EPEC clothing can be purchased online at <http://easternpassage.entripyshops.com/>

Medic Alert

If your child has a medical condition which requires a MedicAlert bracelet/necklace, you can access a MedicAlert memberships (from age 4 to their 14th birthday) through the *No Child Without*[®] program in HRSB schools at <http://www.nochildwithout.ca/>

Head Lice

It's back to school time! Here is some helpful information about head lice from the Department of Public Health: http://www.novascotia.ca/dhw/publications/Public-Health-Education/07135_HeadLicePamphlet_En.pdf

From Guidance Department:

Guidance Website - Ian Clark, the school counsellor, has a website with several links that may be of interest to both parents and students. These include topics such as mental health, substance abuse, sexual health, diversity, careers, as well as many others. The site can be found by clicking on the "Staff Directory" link on the EPEC homepage at <http://epe.hrsb.ca/>. Mr. Clark is also available to talk with parents around any concerns that you may have with your child. He can be reached at 902-462-8401 extension 5 or via e-mail at iclark@hrsbc.ns.ca.

Mental Health Counselling - The Phoenix Prevention Program on Young Street in Halifax offers free counselling to students and/or their families. Parents can be offered up to three counselling sessions even if their child is not interested in attending. To make an appointment call 902-444-3400 or visit <http://phoenixyouth.ca/services>. Services through the IWK can be accessed by calling 902-464-4110.

Teen Mental Health - For the most reliable information on mental health and mental disorders in teens, visit <http://teenmentalhealth.org/>.

MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning - Located at 50 Queen Street, Dartmouth, the Centre empowers youth between 12-19 who are facing barriers reaching their full potential. These barriers could include disengagement from school, mental health disorders or finances. They provide free programming in creative arts such as African drumming, music production, sketching and drawing, theatre, ukulele, Halcon, painting, guitar and photography. There is an open house Saturday, September 10, 10:00am-2:00pm and programs start Monday, September 19. For more information visit macpheedcentre.ca.

Parents and Children Together Resource Centre - P.A.C.T. is located at 1114 Cole Harbour Road. They offer programs for parents on such topics as communicating with your child, effective discipline, and how to help siblings get along. A new offering they have is the Parenting Journey Home Visitor Program which provides in home support to families in a way that best meets the family's needs. For more information please visit <http://www.parentsandchildrentogether.info> or contact Arlea Walsh at 902-219-2444 or by email at arlea.pact@gmail.com.

Parents as Career Coaches - On Monday, November 14, EPEC will be hosting a Parents as Career Coaches session from 6:30 to 8:40pm in the library. This event assists parents with helping their children make informed career choices. Specifically, it helps parents:

- **begin to explore their child's interests, skills and personal qualities, which will help them make career decisions**
- **find tools and resources to research numerous career options, education opportunities, and financing**
- **help their child select appropriate courses for high school**

Parents can register at no cost at <http://www.parentsascareercoaches.ca> under *Program Schedule/FAQ* or sign up at the school through Mr. Clark at 902-462-8401 extension 5.

Once you have read the newsletter, please email your child's name to Epec@hrsbc.ca to enter a draw for a chance for them to win school clothing!!