



## February 2024

PRINCIPAL: Mr. Robbie Dhillon  
VICE PRINCIPAL: Mr. Bob Brooks  
SECRETARIES: Ms. Sandra Fox and Ms. Breonna Senini

<https://mg.schools.sd68.bc.ca/>

### FROM THE OFFICE

Dear Families:

What a wonderful time of year. Students have settled in nicely since the holidays. Staff and students are working very well in the building. I would like to thank families for having their student "school ready." This really makes this possible. Also, a thank you to PAC members who have added so much to our school this year, as things have returned to "more" normal.

It seemed like just yesterday we came back from winter holidays and here we are at over 50% done this school year. There has been a lot going on at McGirr the past little while. I would like to thank our teachers, educational assistants, and other support staff for their excellent work this school year.

### Planning Ahead for the rest of the year

Here are a few suggestions to ask your child.

"What were some important things you have learned so far this year?" or "What have been your favourite moments up to now?" Write these positive memories in the planner or in a journal.

What would you like to be able to do better? How can we work together to help you meet your goals? Review planners and notebooks for ideas.

Our second progress report will be emailed out prior to Spring Break. In addition to the above I would like to thank PAC for all of their efforts during the school year. Many of the opportunities our students have are directly attributed to PAC's efforts....thank you!

As always, if you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

Mr. Robbie Dhillon (Principal)

### 2024 CALENDAR

PAC (7 PM) .....	Mon Feb 26
Progress Report #2 .....	Wed Mar 6
Last Day before Spring Break/Easter .....	Fri. Mar 8
First Day back .....	Mon Mar 25
PAC (7 PM) .....	Mon Mar 25
Good Friday .....	Fri Mar 29
Easter Monday .....	Mon Apr 1
PAC (7 PM) .....	Mon Apr 15
Grade 3 to 7 Track Meet at Rotary Bowl .....	Tues Apr 23
Pro-D (students do not attend) .....	Mon April 29
PAC (7 PM) .....	Mon May 13
Victoria Day (school closed) .....	Mon May 20
Zone Track Meet @ Rotary Bowl (Gr 3 to 7) .....	Tues May 28
District Track Meet @ Rotary Bowl (Gr 3 to 7) .....	Thurs Jun 13

PAC (7 PM) .....	Mon Jun 17
Progress Report #3 (final) .....	Wed Jun 26
Last Day of School (school dismissed at 2:10) .....	Wed Jun 26
Curriculum Implementation Day .....	Thurs Jun 27
Administration Day .....	Fri Jun 28

\*if dates change these are communicated through the office\*

### ANTI BULLYING DAY (PINK SHIRT) WED FEB 28



On Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> we would like to encourage students and parents to wear pink to school for anti-bullying day.

The Ministry of Education has a guide developed to assist parents regarding bullying behaviour and other safety issues with the E.R.A.S.E. program. The guide can be found at [www.erasebullying.ca/](http://www.erasebullying.ca/)

### What is Bullying Versus Conflict?

Building respectful and safe schools proactively address bullying and all forms of unacceptable behaviour including harassment, discrimination or violence. The definitions below are adapted from various Canadian safe schools' networks including: The National Crime Preventions Strategy.

### What is Bullying?

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status, or other reasons.

Bullying may occur because of perceived differences, such as, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, body size and physical appearance, age or economic status. Bullying may be motivated by jealousy, distrust, fear, misunderstanding, or lack of knowledge. It can continue over time, is often hidden from adults, and will probably continue if no action is taken.

### Types of Bullying

There are four broad types of bullying:

- **Direct physical bullying:** includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, and pushing or damaging property.
- **Direct verbal bullying:** includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.
- **Indirect bullying:** is often harder to recognize and can be carried out behind the bullied

person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes: lying, and spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude someone, or damaging someone's reputation or social acceptance.

- **Cyber bullying:** is direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. Some examples include: harassment via cell phone/texting, setting up a web-bashing site or deliberately excluding someone and/or attacking them via social media sites like Facebook.

### What Bullying is Not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

- **Mutual conflict:** involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- **Social rejection or dislike:** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.
- **Single episode acts:** of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, this does not mean that single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression should be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours.

**It is important that all students recognize that they are each responsible for helping to create a safe, caring, and respectful environment.**

### 15 MINUTES OF FUN: LEARN WITH YOUR FAMILY



ABC Life Literacy Canada is encouraging Canadian families to have "15

Minutes of Fun" learning together. Learning can happen at any time. Practicing literacy together every day has tremendous benefits for both children and parents. Here are some great ways to get started:

1. Read a "wake up" story in the morning (after reading your bedtime story the night before).
2. Search online for fun places to go in your community. Pick out a spot for your next family day trip.
3. Make up a new recipe together and post it online.
4. Tell knock-knock jokes together while doing the dishes.
5. Create a story with your family: take turns writing one sentence at a time, then read the whole story aloud when you're done.

6. Write a review of a book you read together as a family. Send it to the author through email or snail mail.
7. Organize a book swap at your school or with your friends.
8. Track your trip to school, the park, and the grocery store on a map. Find a different route to take to each place.
9. Learn to play a musical instrument. What about the ukulele?
10. Write a note to include in a grown-up's lunch – ask them to write back!
11. Make a popsicle stick model with your family.
12. Write your names graffiti-style using chalk on your sidewalk – you may need to shovel first!
13. Play a board game together.
14. Look up the words to your favorite song online. Have a sing-off with your friends!
15. Count how many steps it takes to get from your bedroom to your kitchen. Find out who in your family has the most steps to a snack!

### INTERNET SAFETY –KEEPING YOUR CHILD SAFE

Internet safety for children is an important subject and something many parents are concerned about. The internet does have many good points, but there are dangers, and parents and children should be particularly cautious.

So, what can you do to protect your children when they are online?

#### Use A Child Safe Browser

These are browsers that block websites with content that is not appropriate for children to view. Although you can never be completely sure it will block everything, it will at least go some way to protect children from content that is not child friendly.

#### Observe Children When They Are Using The Internet

It may not always be possible, but where it is, you should observe what your children are looking at, or at least be in the same room as them.

#### Limit Internet Usage

There are many reasons to limit the time your children spend on the internet. Spending too much time on the computer is not healthy, and the less time they spend online the less chance of them coming across something they shouldn't.

#### Stay In Touch

Parents should keep abreast of the latest online threats, so they know the dangers their children could face. It is a good idea to read up on the subject occasionally. If you are educated on these matters, you can educate your children, thus protecting them from internet dangers.

The better placed you are to protect your children the better, but children themselves also need to be aware. So, what should parents tell their children to do and not to do when using the internet?

#### Don't Give Away Personal Information

Parents should tell their children not to give information such as their telephone number, their address or their age to people online. There are times when they cannot be sure who they are talking to and who will see this information.

#### Don't Meet Up With Online "Friends"

Children should not meet up with someone they have met online. The problem here is that it is easy to hide

your identity online, so you never know who you will really be meeting.

### **Don't Give Information About You Away**

Any information children would not be comfortable with everyone knowing should not be shared online. Whether true or not, this could be seen by anyone and may not disappear in a hurry. If there is something they wouldn't share with their entire school it should not be revealed online, because all of their friends (and even people they don't know) may be privy to this information.

### **Don't Post Pictures Of Yourself Online**

Any pictures posted online have the potential to get anywhere. They can even be manipulated. For obvious reasons children posting pictures of themselves online could lead to problems.

### **Don't Tell People Your Plans**

Again, this could be seen by anyone. If people know where children will be and when, then they will easily be able to find them. This means they could be tracked down by anyone, from school bullies to child predators.

### **Don't Respond To Messages If Not Comfortable Doing So**

If a child is sent a message online they should not respond unless they feel comfortable. All they have to do is ignore it or delete it or turn their computer off.

### **SCHOOL CLOSURES**



It is that time of year again, when the school district would like to remind parents about school closure procedures. The most common reasons that schools might be closed are dangerous road conditions due to a heavy snowfall

or ice. If you are wondering if schools are open on a particular day, for the most current updates listen to local radio stations (WAVE 102.3 FM and WOLF 106.9 FM) in the mornings.

We also attempt to put an announcement of any school closure on the school district website, [www.sd68.bc.ca](http://www.sd68.bc.ca), and on Twitter and Facebook, but our ability to do so could be affected by such things as power outages and technical issues. If there is no announcement on the website or social media, please be sure to listen to local radio stations.

We would like to remind **families it is their right to make the final decision** as to whether it is safe for their children to travel to school on any given day. While the district strives to make the best decision possible for students across the district, there may be circumstances in your neighborhood that lead you to decide to keep your children home, even though schools are open.

### **APPROPRIATE CLOTHING FOR WEATHER CONDITIONS**



The cool wet weather will arrive and there will be many days students will ask the question "Is it an inside day?" The answer on most days is no. Students will be going outside to play at recess and lunch unless it is raining heavily. We thank you for ensuring your child comes to school with appropriate rain and cool weather clothing.

At McGirr we believe in the importance of fresh air and outside play for all students and appreciate your

assistance in this regard. **It is also advisable students have a change of clothes in their school bags, including socks.** Warm gloves are always a good idea as well.

### **RULES FOR PLAYING IN THE SNOW**

As we approach that time of year when Nanaimo can get snow, we'd like to remind families of the "snow" rules at McGirr. The following rules are enforced for the safety of students:



- There is "no snowball throwing" on the grounds
  - Students are not to participate in activities that may injure other students – face washing with snow, kicking chunks of snow/ice, etc.
  - No crazy carpets, sleds, slides brought to school
- It is important that our students understand the rules and our concern that snowballs can cause serious injury. Within these rules there are many opportunities for students to enjoy their time outside in the snow at recess.

### **YOU CAN HELP THE OFFICE BE MORE EFFICIENT BY CONTINUING TO:**

- Email student absences to [info.mg@sd68.bc.ca](mailto:info.mg@sd68.bc.ca) is the preferred communication for general student absences. **(please include your child's first and last name, teacher name** and reason if needed.



Also copy (ie cc) this email to your child's teacher. Please avoid only direct emails to staff

for absences as sometimes staff can be absent. Please ensure [info.mg@sd68.bc.ca](mailto:info.mg@sd68.bc.ca) is included.

- Or call the school in advance (**preferably before 8AM**) and leaving a message on the answering machine that is on 24 hours a day if you know your child will not be attending school on that day.
- **Non Emergency Early pick up:** please send an email to [info.mg@sd68.bc.ca](mailto:info.mg@sd68.bc.ca) (also copied to your child's teacher) preferably as early as possible (on the day of) so we can ensure your child's teacher is aware. (include teacher's name and your child's first and last name and time of early pick up).
- **Non-Emergency Pick up at end of day (1:50-2:10).** We are a large school, with a busy parking lot, and students are not always in their assigned classrooms towards the end of the day. From gym, to library, to outside PE, buddies, music, band, support rooms, the list goes on, so this email is a crucial part in allowing us to have the time to have your child ready as quickly as possible. If you are showing up without this notice, there will be a longer wait. **If requesting non-emergency early dismissal close to the end of the day bell (ie 1:50-2:10) please ensure you have given the office good lead time as above. In an ideal day, students would not need to leave early during that last part of the day.**