

What's Up at Westi?



Westminster Public School

Check out our Facebook page at:

https://www.facebook.com/WestiWildcats



March, 2023

Parent Council Corner

Next Parent Council Meeting will be held virtually on April 4th at 6pm

Parent council are planning a Family Fun Night for June 14th to celebrate a great year of learning for our students and the upcoming summer holidays. If you want to help with the planning please contact the school. 613 345 5552

Principal Message

We are hopefully leaving the cold and snowy weather of winter behind as we move into March. As we shift gears heading into March you will notice that our calendar is full of events. We are very busy here at Westminster with lots of engaging learning activities and fun opportunities for our students. Check out our calendar that is attached to view all the events.



Kindergarten Registration and Open House

If you know someone who will turn 4 years old by December 31, 2023 we want to invite them to register for Kindergarten. You can do this by visiting My Family Room or calling the school.

Open House is April 4th from 5:30-7pm



Administration of Medication

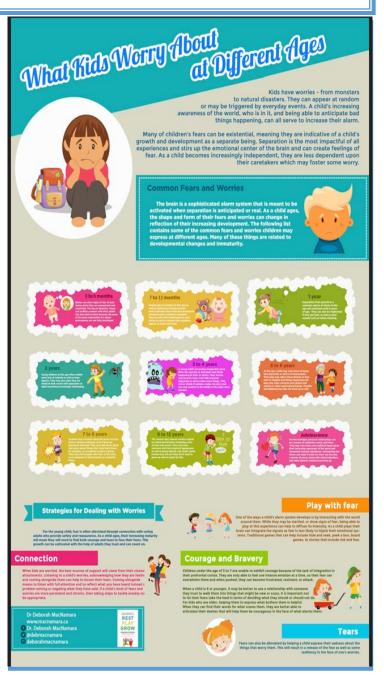
In order to keep everyone safe, all over-the-counter and Prescription medications cannot be at school with

at School



students unless the appropriate paperwork is completed. All meds must be in a secure place at the school and students must have adult supervision upon administration of these meds. The Board has a form to be completed if it's necessary for your child to be administered medications at the school. Over-the-counter meds like Tylenol, Advil, antihistamines, etc. can be taken at school but parents/guardians must complete the form first. All medications must be stored in their original packaging. For prescription medications, the doctor must complete the form and sign it along with a signature of a parent/guardian approving the administration of the medication at school. Again, these must come in the prescription bottle with all information clearly labelled.

Control, click to access the form here: Authorization for Administration of Medication (ucdsb.on.ca)



Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival: School begins at 9:30am each day. It is important that the students arrive at 9:25 each day to be prepared to enter the school when the bell rings (please do not come earlier then 9:25 as there is no supervision outside to keep watch over the students). Dismissal: We dismiss kids at 3:40.

Students who arrive late and leave early are missing valuable learning time. We need kids here daily and on time. We are aware this year has been difficult with various illnesses and understand that returning to regular routines can be challenging. Please take a moment to review the "Attendance Matters" document for ideas on how to support regular attendance for your child if this is something you are experiencing. Please reach out to your child's teacher if you require support. I have also included a graphic on how a child is affected by not attending regularly. Check it out.

STEO

If you have questions about your child's transportation, please contact "Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario" at:

1-855-925-0022.



Masks/Hand Hygiene

Masks are required for all students from grades K-6. Students will be taught how to store their masks as well as proper hand hygiene.

Please ensure you are washing your child/rens masks daily.







Many of our youngest students miss 10 percent of the school year—about 18 days a year or just two days every month. Chronic absenteeism in kindergarten, and even preK. can predict lower test scores, poor attendance and retention in later grades, especially if the problem persists for more than a year. Do you know how many young children are chronically absent in your school or community?



Who Is Affected

Kindergarten and 1st grade classes often have absenteeism rates as high as those in high school. Many of these absences are excused, but they still add up to lost time in the classroom.

1 in 10 kids

in kindergarten and 1st grade are chronically absent. In some schools it's as high as 1 in 4 1



2 in 10 low-income kids miss too much school. They're also more likely to suffer academically.1

2.5 in 10 homeless kids are chronically absent.² 4 in 10 transient kids miss too much school when families move.²







² Chang, Hedy; Romero, Mariajose, Present, Engaged and Accounted For: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in the Early Grades, National Center for Children in Poverty: NY: NY, September 2008.
² Chronic Absence in Utah, Utah Education Policy Center at the University of Utah, 201.

Why It Matters

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers.

Preliminary data from a California study found that children who were chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade were far less likely to read proficiently at the end of 3rd grade.

Who Can Read on Grade Level After 3rd Grade?









of kids chronically absent in K \underline{and} 1st (missed 18 or more days both years)

³ Attendance in Early Elementary Grades: Association with Student Characteristics, School Readiness and Third Grade Outcomes, Applied Survey Research. May 2011.

What We Can Do



Engage Families

Many parents and students don't realize how quickly early absences can add up to academic trouble. Community members and teachers can educate families and build a culture of attendance through early outreach, incentives and attention to data.



Fix Transportation

The lack of a reliable car, or simply missing the school bus, can mean some students don't make it to class. Schools, transit agencies and community partners can organize car pools, supply bus passer find other ways to get kids to school.



Address Health Needs

Health concerns, particularly asthma and dental problems, are among the leading reasons students miss school in the early grades. Schools and medical professionals can work together to give children and families health care and advice.



Track the Right Data

Schools too often overlook chronic absence because they track average attendance or unexcused absences, not how many kids miss too many days for any reason. Attendance Works has free data-tracking tools.

These are a few steps that communities and schools can take. How do you think you can help?

Weather is changing and the yard is getting messy! Please remember to encourage your

children to dress appropriately and send extra clothes for the weather to ensure they stay dry and happy during their outside time. We work hard to keep kids out of the mud and puddles but somedays it is just an impossible task.

